

Call for Applications for Doctoral Researchers Study Right at the University of Turku Graduate School, Doctoral Programme in Biology, Geography and Geology (BGG)

1. Short description of the doctoral programme

The research areas covered by the Doctoral Programme in Biology, Geography and Geology (BGG) are traditionally strong fields at the University of Turku. The Doctoral Programme creates a multidisciplinary and internationally active framework for scientific research. The research at the doctoral programme covers ecology, evolutionary biology, physiology, genetics, environmental science, biodiversity, human geography, physical geography, geoinformatics, economic geography, geology and mineralogy and quaternary geology. [Link to the website of the BGG doctoral programme](http://www.utu.fi/BGG) (www.utu.fi/BGG).

2. Application period and what can be applied for

During the application period 24 October-7 November 2025, you can apply for the right to study for a doctoral degree at the University of Turku Faculty of Science, at the Doctoral Programme in Biology, Geography and Geology (BGG) from January 1, 2026 onwards.

3. What is expected of you

- You are required to have completed a relevant Master's degree awarded by a university or a university of applied sciences, or a relevant study programme abroad which in the awarding country gives eligibility for the corresponding level of higher education (Universities Act 558/2009, 37§). If the degree which gives you the eligibility for doctoral studies has not been completed by the closing date of this call, you can still apply to this call. However, you must complete your degree and submit scanned copies of your degree certificates by 31 December 2025 to the University of Turku email sci-docstudies@utu.fi. Until then, the selection is conditional.

- You must fulfil the University of Turku language skill requirements. [Link to language requirements in the web page of the university's graduate school.](#)
- You are required to fulfil the prerequisites set by the Faculty of Science for granting a right to study. For more information, see section "Evaluation of applications".

4. How to apply

The right to pursue the doctoral degree is applied for by filling in an electronic application form in My Studyinfo service and attaching the application documents in pdf form. The application documents are specified below. The form will be accessible as the application period begins on 24 October 2025 and closes at 4 pm (16:00, local time in Finland) on 7 November 2024. [A link to the website of the doctoral programme where the application forms of the doctoral programmes will be published.](#)

It is recommended that application documents are written in English. All of the required documents must be submitted before the end of the application period. Applications that arrive after the application period has ended will not be processed. The application documents will not be returned to the sender.

During this application round the applicant may apply to only one doctoral programme at the University of Turku. You can only have one valid study right at a time for a doctoral degree at the University of Turku. When the application period has ended, you cannot change the doctoral programme you are applying for, or any other information.

Application documents:

- **Curriculum vitae**

[Link to curriculum vitae template.](#) You can choose to do a free-form resume, as well.

- **List of publications**

[Link to list of publications template.](#)

- **Research plan**

The research plan (maximum length of research plan is four A4 pages including references, font Times New Roman 12pt, margins 2,5cm and spacing 1) should include the name of the applicant, title of the planned research project and describe the research objectives, methods and required infrastructure or other resources, as well as the current status and planned timetable of the research.

The research plan should follow the guidelines for the responsible conduct of research (Link to the guidelines: [Responsible Conduct of Research \(RCR\) | Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK](#)). The research plan can be checked with the Turnitin OriginalityCheck plagiarism detection software. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) to assist in the preparation of the research plan wider role than checking grammar or generating short expressions should be clearly indicated in the research plan.

- **Motivation letter**

A motivation letter is a freeform document, in which you are expected to describe your motivation in pursuing doctoral studies and in conducting research. Maximum length of motivation letter is one A4 page, Times New Roman 12pt or equivalent.

- **Verification of language proficiency**

The University of Turku follows the Rector's decision (15 Aug 2019) on the means of verifying one's language proficiency. [Link to language requirements on the www page of the university's graduate school.](#)

- **Supervision plan signed by supervisors, a research director and the applicant**

A supervision plan is a mandatory attachment of the application. [Link to the www page from which the supervision plan form can be found.](#)

- **Degree certificates and transcripts of study records**

- a) If you have completed your former degree at a higher education institution in Finland, you must attach to the application:

- Scans of the original degree certificate or the electronic degree certificate of the degree which make you eligible for doctoral studies (e.g. Master's degree certificate)
 - Scans of the original transcript of records or the electronic transcript of records of the degree which make you eligible for doctoral studies (e.g. transcript of records of the Master's degree)
 - Other educational documents which may be of relevance in the student selection (e.g. studies you have completed outside the degree that are related to the right to study you are applying for).
- b) If you have completed your former degree(s) at a higher education institution abroad (i.e. outside of Finland), you must attach to the application:
- Scans of the original degree certificate or the electronic degree certificate of the degree which make you eligible for doctoral studies (e.g. Master's degree certificate in the same language as the degree was completed in)
 - Scans of the original transcript of records or the electronic transcript of records of the degree which make you eligible for doctoral studies (e.g. transcript of records of the Master's degree in the same language as the degree was completed in)
 - Other original educational documents which may be of relevance in the student selection (e.g. studies you have completed outside the degree that are related to the right to study your are applying for).
- c) If your former degree is not complete by the end of the application period, an up-to-date transcript of study records is required.
- d) If the original degree certificate, transcript and/or other educational documents are not written in English, Finnish or Swedish, official translations to one of these languages must also be submitted. An official translation here refers to a translation of the educational documents issued by the awarding institution or a translation made by an authorized translator. A transcript or degree certificate in English can be replaced by a Diploma Supplement awarded by a European

educational institution if it contains the information about completed courses and other study attainments.

- **Copy of a valid passport**

Attach a copy of your valid passport or official identification card with photo and information on citizenship. If you have a Finnish personal identity code and you have entered it on the application form, you do not need to attach a copy of your passport.

Please make sure that all attachments are good-quality, easy to read, full colour scans or photographs of the complete required document. Attachments that do not meet these requirements may be rejected.

5. Evaluation of applications

Applications are reviewed by the steering committee of the doctoral programme. Applications may also be sent for evaluation to national and/or international reviewers. A department, where the doctoral researcher will belong to, gives a statement of the applicant who is recommended by the doctoral programme.

When admitting the right to pursue for a doctoral degree, the eligibility criteria of the applicant must be fulfilled. In addition to the eligibility criteria for doctoral degrees (Universities Act 558/2009, 37§), the educational and research-related merits, the quality of the research plan, and the research potential based on the application are used as admission criteria. In the selection process, applicant's motivation, merits and completed studies will be taken into account.

In order to be accepted as a doctoral researcher, an applicant is required to have completed the advanced studies in the Master's degree with at least grade "Good" or equivalent (Grade 3 in the Finnish grading system). If this is not the case, or if the subject of the Master's degree differs from the field of research of the intended postgraduate studies, researchers will be asked to supplement their knowledge and skills to achieve the required level. A research director nominated for the doctoral researcher will give a statement of possible required bridging studies in these exceptional cases. The doctoral researcher's research topic must fit in with the doctoral programme's research profile and the chosen applicants must have a good knowledge of the English language.

The applicant has to agree on the supervision arrangements with the Department in question before submitting the application (Supervision plan form). A doctoral researcher should have a research director, a principal supervisor and at least one other supervisor. The research director should have an employment contract to the department where the major subject of the doctoral degree is based and the title of the research director should be a professor. In an exceptional case, if there is no professor available, the associate professor can be nominated as a research director. The principal supervisor should be a professor, associate professor, assistant professor or adjunct professor/docent and in most of the cases have an employment contract to the University of Turku. Other supervisors should hold a doctoral degree. In addition, a doctoral researcher is recommended to have an advisory group to provide further support.

6. Decisions

The Vice-Dean of research affairs of the Faculty of Science decides on granting the right to study for a doctoral degree, based on the proposals of the steering committee of the Doctoral Programme and the statement from the department.

The admission decisions are made by the 5 December 2025. All applicants will be personally informed about the decision.

An admitted applicant has to notify the University of Turku of their acceptance of the study place by 15 December 2025 at 3:00 pm (Finnish time) according to the instructions given in the admission notification. If the admitted applicant does not give the notification by the end of the allotted time period mentioned above, the applicant forfeits the study place. A person admitted to more than one university or polytechnic degree programme only notifies the one educational institution at which they choose to accept the study place. Notification, i.e. accepting a study place, is binding and may not be cancelled or changed later.

According to Finnish university legislation, an applicant may accept only one study place leading to a higher education degree in Finland during one academic term (autumn term 1 Aug – 31 Dec or spring term 1 Jan – 31 Jul). This rule applies to all higher education, i.e. Bachelor's and Master's level degrees awarded by Finnish universities of applied sciences, Bachelor's and Master's degrees awarded by Finnish universities, and Licentiate and Doctoral degrees awarded by Finnish universities. This regulation is not applied to study

rights received in transfer student selections, from the Åland University of Applied Sciences, from the Police University College, and from institutions of higher education outside Finland.

The applicants who have completed their prior degree in a country other than Finland and who are granted a study right in this call, need to deliver either the original degree certificates or certified copies of the original degree certificates and their translations to the University of Turku, as instructed in the admission notification, on 6 March 2026 at the latest. If the admitted applicant does not deliver the required certificates (in a paper form) by the deadline, they forfeit the study right. [Link to instructions on providing original educational documents and country-specific requirements.](#)

7. Further instructions

[Link to BGG www pages](http://www.utu.fi/bgg) (www.utu.fi/bgg)

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