



# **Call for Applications for a Doctoral Researcher Position at the University of Turku Graduate School Doctoral Programme in Biology, Geography and Geology (BGG)**

## **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 natural scientific research on humans, populations and the environment. The research at the doctoral programme covers ecology, evolutionary biology, physiology, genetics, environmental biology, environmental science, biodiversity, human geography, physical geography, geoinformatics, economic geography, geology and mineralogy and quaternary geology. The research fields are connected by the research and teaching activities. BGG operates in the following thematic research profiles of the University of Turku: Biodiversity and Sustainability, Future Technologies and Digital Society, Sea and Maritime Studies and Cultural Memory and Societal Change. [Link to the website of the BGG doctoral programme](http://www.utu.fi/BGG) (www.utu.fi/BGG).

## **Application period and what can be applied for**

During the application period **29 August–16 September 2022**, you can apply for:



**a) The right to study a doctoral degree at the University of Turku Faculty of Science, at the Doctoral Programme in Biology, Geography and Geology (BGG) from 1st January 2023 onwards**

**b) A fixed-term doctoral researcher position under an employment contract**

The position of a doctoral researcher is set to begin on 1 January 2023 at the earliest and for the duration of a maximum of four years (up to until 31 December 2026). The positions are primarily intended for full-time doctoral dissertation research and for carrying out doctoral studies with the aim of completing the doctoral degree in four years. Duties other than those related to doctoral dissertation research, such as teaching duties, must be proportioned so as not to compromise the completion of the doctoral dissertation within the planned schedule. As a rule, up to 5% (a maximum of about 80 hrs per academic year) of the annual working time of the doctoral researcher can consist of departmental duties including teaching.

When determining the length of the employment contract, prior funding granted for pursuing a doctoral degree is taken into the account. The maximum length for a doctoral researcher position is four years. A person already awarded with a doctoral degree cannot be chosen as a doctoral researcher under an employment contract. A doctoral researcher position requires living in Finland for the duration of the employment contract.

The Doctoral Researcher works either at the Department of Biology, Department of Geography and Geology or Biodiversity Unit. The salary is based on the salary system of the university's teaching and research staff. It consists of a task-specific salary component and a personal performance salary component. The task-specific salary component of a doctoral researcher is at level 2–4. The component based on personal performance is 6–50% of the task-specific salary. The salary of an entry-level doctoral



researcher is typically around 2300 € per month. When the doctoral dissertation work is nearly completed the salary is typically around 2900 € per month. A probationary period of six months applies.

### **c) Both of the above (a and b)**

Those applicants who are not citizens of an EU/EEA country and who have been granted a right to study for a doctoral degree at the University of Turku in the spring 2022 application round or who are granted a right to study in the autumn 2022 application round may apply for the Finland Fellowship funding for the year 2023. [Link to Finland Fellowship web page](#). The funding is applied for by checking the corresponding field on the application form.

## **What is expected of you**

### **When applying for a right to study:**

- 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§). The degree, which grants the applicant the eligibility for the study right for a doctoral degree must be completed either within the application period, or after the application deadline on the condition that the applicant graduates and submits a scanned degree certificate and a transcript of study records to the University of Turku email [sci-docstudies@utu.fi](mailto:sci-docstudies@utu.fi) by 16 November 2022.
- 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 “Admission criteria for the right to study a doctoral degree”.

### **When applying for a fixed-term doctoral researcher position under an employment contract:**

- You are required to have an active right to study in the BGG doctoral programme. If you have not yet been granted a right to study, you must apply for a right to pursue a doctoral degree in the BGG doctoral programme within this call for applications. A right to study is a prerequisite for an applicant to be chosen for a fixed-term doctoral researcher position under an employment contract;
- You are planning to pursue or pursuing your first doctoral degree;
- You have not previously been granted a full-time four-year funding for pursuing a doctoral degree.

## **How to apply**

The right to study for a doctoral degree and/or fixed-term doctoral researcher positions are applied for by filling in an electronic form and attaching the required additional documents (in pdf form). [Link to the University of Turku Graduate School web page, where the application form can be found.](#) Application documents are specified at the end of this call for applications (Appendix 1). It is recommended that application documents are written in English. Detailed application guidelines can be found from at the BGG web pages. [Link to BGG web page describing admission criteria and giving detailed instructions for applicants.](#)

The form will be accessible as the application period begins on 29 August 2022 and closes on 16 September 2022 at 11:59 pm. Applications that arrive after the application period has ended will not be processed. The application documents will not be returned to the sender.



## 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. Shortlisted applicants for the fixed-term doctoral researcher position may be interviewed.

## Admission criteria for the right to study a doctoral degree

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. New doctoral researchers have 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 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.

## **Evaluation of applications for a fixed-term doctoral researcher position under an employment contract**

In addition to the eligibility criteria related to the right to pursue a doctoral degree, criteria used in the selection of doctoral researchers for fixed-term doctoral researcher positions include:

- The quality of the research plan in terms of science and realism to produce a doctoral thesis in four years of full-time doctoral studies;
- Applicant's motivation for conducting the planned research;
- Applicant's competence evaluated on the basis of (when relevant) the grade of the MSc thesis (or equivalent), completed doctoral studies, work experience, capability to conduct the research planned, scientific publications, international activities and mobility e.g. in a form of the Cotutelle agreement;
- Research environment evaluated on the basis of supervisor's commitment and fit of the research planned to the profile and knowledge basis of BGG.

The evaluation is carried out as an overall assessment, but the career ladder step has an impact on the evaluation e.g. completed doctoral studies or scientific publications are not expected of applicants who are at the beginning of their research career. Fixed-term doctoral researcher positions are targeted to the first four years of doctoral studies. Any other funding received by the applicant for doctoral studies is taken into consideration



when determining the duration of the doctoral researcher position. BGG is multidisciplinary and aims to promote all research fields, which may be taken into consideration when positions are filled.

## Decisions

The Vice-Dean of research affairs of the Faculty of Science will decide 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 Heads of the Department of Biology, Department of Geography and Geology and Biodiversity unit will decide on recruitment of the applicants for a fixed-term Doctoral Researcher positions, based on the proposals of the steering committee of the Doctoral Programme.

All applicants will be personally informed about the decisions. The names of the persons who have been selected for the funded positions will be published on the website of Doctoral Programme ([www.utu.fi/BGG](http://www.utu.fi/BGG)) by the end of November 2022.

An admitted applicant has to notify the University of Turku of their acceptance of the study place by 15 December 2022 at 3:00 pm (local time in Finland) 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 3 March 2023 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.](#)

## Additional information

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

BGG Coordinator Sari Järvi, sari.jarvi(at)utu.fi, p. +358 50 358 4596

Contact address of the Faculty: [sci-docstudies@utu.fi](mailto:sci-docstudies@utu.fi), Chief Academic Officer Sanna Ranto, University main building, University hill, FI-20014 University of Turku, Finland.



## Appendix 1. Application documents

Please, fill the electronic application form and attach the required application documents into it, if not otherwise stated. **The application documents should be in pdf-format.**

- Attachments A-F are required from all applicants.
- If you do not yet have the right to study a doctoral degree at the BGG Doctoral Programme, University of Turku, attachments G-I are required in addition to attachments A–F.
- If you already have the right to study a doctoral degree at the BGG Doctoral Programme, University of Turku, attachment J is required in addition to attachments A–F.

### A. Curriculum vitae

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

### B. List of publications

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

### C. 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 your name, title of the planned research project and description the



research objectives, methods and required infrastructure or other resources, as well as the current status and planned timetable of the research. If the research plan exceeds the maximum length, the application will not be considered for evaluation. By attaching the research plan to the application form, you give permission to check the research plan with Turnitin OriginalityCheck software (a system for electronic plagiarism detection).

## **D. Motivation letter**

A motivation letter is a one-page-long freeform document, in which you are expected to describe your motivation in pursuing doctoral studies and in conducting research. If you have a right to study for a doctoral degree at another university or in another doctoral programme at the University of Turku, you must provide reasons for changing over to BGG of the University of Turku in the motivation letter. A doctoral researcher may hold only one doctoral degree study right at the University of Turku at a time.

## **E. Supervisor's statement**

A statement from the main supervisor of the doctoral thesis, which includes supervisor's assessment of the applicant, the commitment of the supervisor towards the completion of the thesis project, the duration of the supervisor's employment at the University of Turku, project funding plan (both secured and planned funding), and an estimate of when the doctoral dissertation will be defended (autumn/spring of year 20xx). Supervisor will personally send the statement to coordinator.

If applicant already have a study right for a doctoral degree in another university, faculty or doctoral programme in the same research topic, the supervisors of applicants who are at the time of this application enrolled in another doctoral program should in their letter additionally confirm that (1) authorship agreement and data management for all chapters planned to be part of the applicant's doctoral



dissertation as listed in the application have been agreed upon following TENK guidelines ([Link to TENK guidelines: Agreeing on authorship](#)) and (2) that the application of the doctoral researcher to enroll in BGG has been approved by all persons listed as author in this authorship agreement. The previous supervisor will personally send the statement to coordinator.

## **F. Transcript of study records of the former degree**

- i) If you have completed your former degree(s) that make you eligible for doctoral studies at a higher education institution in Finland, you must attach your scanned original transcript of study records to the electronic application form.
- ii) If you have completed your former degree(s) that make you eligible for doctoral studies at a higher education institution abroad (i.e. outside of Finland), you must attach the following items to the electronic application form:
  - Scanned original transcript of study records in the same language as the degree was completed in
  - If the original transcript of study records is not written in English, Finnish or Swedish, official translations of the documents 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 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.
- iii) If the degree that gives eligibility for the study right for a doctoral degree is not completed by the deadline of application time, an up-to-date transcript of study records must be attached to the application.

## **G. Degree certificate of the former degree**



- i. If you have completed the former degree(s), which make you eligible for doctoral studies at a university in Finland, the scanned original degree certificate, and other educational documents, which may be of relevance in the right to study a doctoral degree selection must be attached to the electronic application form.
- ii. If you have completed your former degree(s) that make you eligible for doctoral studies at a higher education institution abroad (i.e. outside of Finland), you must attach the following items to the electronic application form:
  - Scanned original degree certificate (in the same language as the degree was completed in)
  - Scanned other original educational documents, which may be of relevance in the right to study a doctoral degree selection.
  - If the original degree certificate or other educational documents are not written in English, Finnish or Swedish, official translations of the documents 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.

## **H. 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 in the web page of the university's graduate school](#). You must carefully study the instructions on language requirements of the University of Turku. The language test result is a mandatory attachment of the right to study application, if not otherwise stated in the University of Turku graduate school web page. If you are required to prove your language proficiency with a language test, a scanned certificate of a completed language test must be attached to the application.



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

[Link to the web page from which the supervision plan form can be found.](#)

**J. Study transcript for the doctoral degree**

If you already have a study right in the BGG doctoral programme, University of Turku, you must upload an up-to-date study transcript for the doctoral degree from Peppi and attach it to the application.