UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

Call for Applications

27 October 2026

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

In this call for applications, you may apply for the right to pursue a doctoral degree within the University of Turku Doctoral Programme in Biology, Geography and Geology (BGG) at the Faculty of Science.

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 (www.utu.fi/BGG).

Application period and what you may apply for

During the application period 1 December 2026 – 15 December 2026 at 23:59 (local time in Finland) you may apply for the right to pursue a doctoral degree in the University of Turku BGG Doctoral Programme at the Faculty of Science from 1 April 2027 onwards.

Requirements for applicants

• 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 by 31 March 2027. Until then the selection is conditional.
• You must meet the University of Turku language proficiency requirements. Link to the Graduate School's web page on language requirements.
• You must meet the faculty and doctoral programme requirements for granting the right to pursue a doctoral degree. More information is provided under "Selection criteria and evaluation of applications".

How to apply

Applications for the right to pursue a doctoral degree are submitted via the Studyinfo (Opintopolku) service by completing an electronic application form and submitting the required attachments.

The required attachments are described in more detail at the end of this announcement (Appendix 1).

Links to the application forms will be published on the University of Turku Graduate School web pages.

Apply for the right to pursue a doctoral degree by filling the electronic Studyinfo form and submitting the required attachments (see Appendix 1). The Studyinfo form opens at the start of the application period on 1 December 2026 and closes on 15 December 2026 at 23:59 (local time in Finland). A link to the Graduate School web pages where the links to the application forms will be published.

In this application round, you may apply for admission from only one doctoral programme at the University of Turku. You may only have one valid doctoral degree study right at the University of Turku at a time.

Late applications will not be considered. The chosen study programme (doctoral programme) cannot be changed and the application cannot be amended after the application period has ended.

Selection criteria and evaluation of applications

The doctoral programme's steering group will evaluate applications after the deadline and may use external experts as necessary. Research plan may be checked with Turnitin OriginalityCheck for plagiarism in accordance with the University's quality system; the use of artificial intelligence and how it was used in preparing the research plan may also be assessed.

Granting the right to pursue a doctoral degree requires that the applicant:

- meets the eligibility criteria determined in the Universities Act (558/2009, Section 37); More information is provided under "Requirements for applicants".
- meets the University of Turku language proficiency requirements;
- fulfils the requirements set by the Faculty of Science and BGG Doctoral Programme for granting the right to pursue a doctoral degree.

In addition to the eligibility criteria for doctoral degrees determined by Universities Act and the required language skills, 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.

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, an 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 a follow-up committee to provide further support. If the applicant does not submit a signed supervision plan that meets the faculty supervisor requirements, the application will be rejected.

Decision on selections

The vice-dean responsible for doctoral education in the faculty decides on the granting of the right to pursue a doctoral degree on the basis of the doctoral programme steering group's proposal and the statement from the department. All applicants will be notified of the decisions personally by 26 February 2027.

An admitted applicant must confirm acceptance of the study place in accordance with the instructions given in the decision by 16 March 2027 at 23:59 (local time in Finland). 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.

Applicants who have completed their prior degree in a country other than Finland and who are granted a right to pursue a doctoral degree 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 24 May 2027 at the latest. If the admitted applicant does not deliver the required certificates by the deadline, they forfeit the study right. A link to the instructions on delivering certificates and country-specific requirements.

Further information

Link to BGG web pages (www.utu.fi/bgg)

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Contact address of the Faculty of Science: sci-docstudies@utu.fi, Chief Academic Officer Sanna Nordman, University main building, University hill, FI-20014 University of Turku, Finland.

Appendix 1: Attachments to the application when applying for a right to pursue a doctoral degree

Please ensure that all attachments are high-quality, easy-to-read, full-colour scans or photographs of the entire required document. Attachments must be submitted in PDF format. Attachments that do not meet these requirements may be rejected. Name each attachment so that the file name clearly indicates both your name and the document type (for example: surname-firstname-CV).

All application documents are recommended to be written in English. Attach attachments to the electronic application form.

1) Degree certificate and transcript of study records

- the scanned or electronic original certificate of the higher university degree (e.g. Master's degree),
- the scanned or electronic original transcript of study records of the higher university degree
- or 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.
- other study certificates relevant to the selection criteria (for example, studies completed outside the degree that relate to the doctoral degree you are applying for).
- if the documents are not in Finnish, Swedish or English, you must also submit an official translation into one of those languages; an official translation is accepted if issued by the degree-awarding university or produced by an authorised translator. A Diploma Supplement (DS) issued by a European higher education institution may be accepted instead of an English translation of the degree certificate and transcript, provided it contains the details of the study records.

2) Certificate of language proficiency

The University of Turku follows the Rector's decision (8 June 2026) that defines acceptable ways of verifying language proficiency. You should read the University of Turku's guidance on language proficiency carefully: Link to the webpage on language requirements.

As an attachment to your application, you must include a scanned certificate of a language test approved by the University of Turku, unless the guidance on language proficiency states otherwise.

3) Research plan

When preparing the research plan, you must follow the principles of good scientific practice (link to TENK's guidelines on good scientific practice). The research plan may be checked with the Turnitin OriginalityCheck plagiarism-detection system. Any use of artificial intelligence (AI) as an aid in preparing the research plan must be clearly declared in the application.

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 realistic assessment of the current status and planned schedule of the research and for completing the doctoral degree.

4) Copy of 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.

5) Curriculum vitae

Link to curriculum vitae template. You can choose to do a free-form resume, as well.

6) List of publications

Link to list of publications template.

7) 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 and as an attachment of the application. A doctoral researcher may hold only one doctoral degree study right at the University of Turku at a time.

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

Supervision plan is a mandatory application document for study right application. Link to the web page from which the supervision plan form can be found.