

Call for Applications

18 June 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 and/or for a fixed-term doctoral researcher position funded by the University of Turku Graduate School (UTUGS).

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 25 August 2026 – 8 September 2026 at 23:59 (local time in Finland) you may apply for:

a) The right to pursue a doctoral degree in the University of Turku BGG Doctoral Programme at the Faculty of Science from 1 January 2027 onwards

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

A doctoral researcher position begins on 1 January 2027 or by agreement during the year 2027.

When determining the length of the employment, previously awarded funding for doctoral studies as well as the planned schedule and stage of the doctoral degree will be taken into account. The duration of a UTUGS-funded fixed-term doctoral researcher position is at most four years, but not beyond 31 December 2030. The basis for the fixed-term employment is doctoral researcher's work related to their doctoral studies.

In addition, up to one-year positions for 2027 are available for applicants in the final stages of the doctoral research. The aim is to submit the dissertation for pre-examination during 2027.

A person who already holds a doctoral degree cannot be selected to a doctoral researcher position. The doctoral researcher position requires working in Finland and the place of work is Turku. The doctoral researcher works either at the Department of Biology, Department of Geography and Geology or Department of Biodiversity Sciences.

The position is intended for full-time doctoral research and doctoral studies. Participation in teaching and other duties should be arranged so that the dissertation can be completed within the planned timetable. The employment contract is based on a total annual working time of 1,612 hours, which gives the doctoral researcher flexibility to arrange working hours. As a rule, teaching and other duties may account for up to 5% of the annual working time (approximately up to 80 hours per academic year).

Salary is based on the salary system of the University's teaching and research staff. Salary will consist of a task-specific salary component and a personal performance salary component. The task-specific salary component of a doctoral researcher varies between levels 2 to 4, depending on the stage of the doctoral degree. In addition, a personal performance salary component is paid. The salary of a doctoral researcher ranges roughly from € 2,400 to € 3,300 depending on progress of the doctoral research and the experience and skills of the person concerned. The level of task-specific salary component of a new doctoral researcher is generally assessed as level 2. The probationary period is six months, however not more than half of the employment period.

c) Both of the above (a and b)

Requirements for applicants

A. When applying for the right to pursue a doctoral degree:

- 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 December 2026;**
- 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 "Criteria for granting the right to pursue a doctoral degree".

B. When applying for a doctoral researcher position:

- 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 that gives eligibility for admission must be completed by 8 September 2026;**
- You must hold an active study right to pursue a doctoral degree at the University of Turku in the Faculty of Science, BGG Doctoral Programme. In addition, when acquiring the degree or otherwise, you are required to have demonstrated the ability to undertake postgraduate studies and the capacity to complete a doctoral degree in accordance with the research plan. (University of Turku Rules of Procedure 13.12.2024).
- or if you have not yet been granted right to pursue a doctoral degree, you must apply for the right to pursue a doctoral degree in the BGG Doctoral Programme in this call via the Studyinfo (Opintopolku) service (see the instructions under "How to apply for the right to pursue a doctoral degree"). The right to pursue a doctoral degree is a prerequisite for being selected for a position of a doctoral researcher;

- You are planning to pursue or pursuing your first doctoral degree;
- You have not previously received four years of full-time funding for doctoral studies.
- The doctoral researcher position requires working in Finland and the place of work is Turku.

How to apply

Applications for the right to pursue a doctoral degree are submitted via the Studyinfo (Opintopolku) service and applications for fixed-term doctoral researcher position with an employment contract are submitted via the University of Turku recruitment system (TalentAdore) by completing an electronic application form and submitting the required attachments.

Note that if you apply for both the right to pursue a doctoral degree and a doctoral researcher position with an employment contract, you must submit applications with the required attachments in both systems (see details below).

The required attachments are described in more detail at the end of this announcement (Appendix 1 & Appendix 2).

[Links to the application forms will be published on the University of Turku Graduate School web pages.](#)

A. How to apply for the right to pursue a doctoral degree

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 25 August 2026 and closes on 8 September 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 to up to two doctoral programmes 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.

The Studyinfo service is used solely to apply for the right to pursue a doctoral degree; if you also wish to apply for a fixed-term doctoral researcher position, you must submit a separate application for that position (see the instructions under “How to apply for a fixed-term doctoral researcher position with an employment contract”).

B. How to apply for a fixed-term doctoral researcher position with an employment contract

Doctoral researcher positions are applied for by completing the electronic application form in the University of Turku recruitment system (TalentAdore) and submitting the required attachments (see Appendix 2). The recruitment form opens at the start of the application period on 25 August 2026 and closes on 8 September 2026 at 23:59 (local time in Finland).

Doctoral researcher positions will be advertised in the University of Turku's [Open Positions](#) and on the [Graduate School web pages](#) at the beginning of the application period.

Applicants must submit all required attachments by the application deadline; late applications will not be processed and the chosen doctoral programme cannot be changed nor can the application be amended after the deadline.

Selection to a doctoral researcher position requires an active right to pursue a doctoral degree in the BGG Doctoral Programme; **if you have not yet been granted study right, you must apply for one in Studyinfo** (see "How to apply for the right to pursue a doctoral degree").

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

A. Criteria for granting the right to pursue a doctoral degree

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.

B. Selection criteria for fixed-term doctoral researcher position with an employment contract

Applicants selected for UTUGS fixed-term doctoral researcher positions must meet the eligibility requirements defined in the University of Turku Rules of Procedure (13.12.2024).

In addition to the eligibility criteria related to the right to pursue a doctoral degree, the following aspects are evaluated in the selection of doctoral researchers up to four years positions:

- The quality of the research plan in terms of science and feasibility to produce a doctoral thesis the planned schedule. Fixed-term doctoral researcher positions are targeted to the first four years of doctoral studies;
- Applicant's motivation for conducting the planned research;
- Applicant's competence evaluated on the basis of 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. For applicants who have already been granted the right to study for a doctoral degree, the progress of doctoral research and studies is assessed with respect the duration of their doctoral studies. The duration of doctoral studies is counted from the date the doctoral study right has started, excluding any absences for legal reasons, and periods of non-attendance. Prior funding received for the completion of the doctoral degree may be taken into account when determining the duration of a doctoral researcher position.

Evaluation of applications up to one-year thesis finalization positions targeted for submitting the dissertation for pre-examination during 2027 will be done as an overall assessment using the following criteria:

- Applicant's competence evaluated on the basis of 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;
- The realism, including a detailed plan and schedule, for submitting the dissertation for pre-examination during 2027.

BGG is multidisciplinary and aims to promote all research fields, which may be taken into consideration when positions are filled.

Decision on selections

A. Decisions on the right to pursue a doctoral degree:

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 30 November 2026.

An admitted applicant must confirm acceptance of the study place in accordance with the instructions given in the decision by 15 December 2026 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 8 March 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 the instructions on delivering certificates and country-specific requirements.](#)

B. Decisions on the fixed-term doctoral researcher position with an employment contract:

The decision on appointment to a doctoral researcher position is made by the head of the relevant department on the basis of the doctoral programme steering group's proposal. All applicants will be notified of the programme's decision personally and the names of the persons offered positions will be published on the doctoral programme web pages; selected applicants must confirm acceptance of the position in accordance with the instructions in the decision.

Further information

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

Appendices

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

Appendix 2: Attachments to the application when applying for doctoral researcher position with employment contract

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](#).

Appendix 2: Attachments to the application when applying for doctoral researcher position with employment contract

Fill in the electronic application form. The attachments listed below must be submitted as part of the TalentAdore system's electronic application form unless otherwise instructed. Ensure that all attachments are high-quality, easy-to-read, full-colour scans or photographs of the entire required document. Attachments should be submitted in PDF format. Attachments that do not meet these requirements may be rejected. Name each file so that the filename clearly shows both your name and the document type (for example: surname-firstname-CV).

Application documents are recommended to be written in English.

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
- other study certificates relevant to the selection criteria (for example, studies completed outside the degree that relate to your doctoral degree).
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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. **If the research plan exceeds the maximum length, the application will not be considered for evaluation.**

3) Curriculum vitae

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

4) List of publications

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

5) 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.

6) 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 study system and attach it to the application.

7) Supervisor's assessment

The UTU supervisor's assessment of the applicant is a free-form letter which should contain an assessment of the applicant, describe the commitment of the supervisor towards the completion of the thesis project, the duration of the supervisor's employment at the University of Turku and a project funding plan (both secured and planned funding). The supervisor's assessment should also include a realistic assessment of the current status and planned schedule of the research and realistic estimate of time of the defense (month / year 20xx). **Supervisor sends the supervisor's assessment to the University of Turku email sci-docstudies@utu.fi by the end of the application period.**

If applicant already have a study right for a doctoral degree in another university, faculty or doctoral programme in the same research topic, the supervisor of applicant should in their evaluation 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.