



**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE RIGHT TO STUDY FOR DOCTORAL DEGREE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TURKU GRADUATE SCHOOL, AT THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE IN DOCTORAL PILOT PROGRAMME IN IMMUNOLOGY (IMMUDOCS)**

**1 Doctoral Pilot Programme in Immunology (IMMUDOCS)**

Doctoral Pilot Programme in Immunology (ImmuDocs) serves as a postgraduate programme for doctoral researchers in the ImmuDocs Doctoral Education Pilot at the University of Turku. The doctoral researchers of Doctoral Pilot Programme in Immunology carry out their doctoral studies in the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Technology or Turku School of Economics. The doctoral researchers follow each faculty's study guide for postgraduate studies 2024-2027 for degree requirements, including requirements of the doctoral thesis. In addition to the provisions of the study guide, doctoral training is governed by the doctoral pilot programme curriculum. The main objective of the doctoral pilot programme is to provide its doctoral researchers with a high level of scientific training in the fields of immunology and immunology-based drug development and diagnostics, thus providing the knowledge and skills for both professional research careers and other career paths requiring a high level of expertise.

The ImmuDocs Doctoral Education Pilot focuses on immunology including all types of inflammatory diseases. They all are driven by aberrant immune responses, and immunological interventions are at the heart of their prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. Healthcare urgently needs specialists who understand these immunological areas.

Diseases stemming from immune system malfunction impose substantial economic and societal burdens. They lead to high healthcare costs, loss of productivity, and a significant impact on quality of life. Addressing the escalating demand for immunology specialists necessitates a concerted effort in training and collaboration among researchers, industry, and healthcare professionals. There is a pressing need to cultivate a new generation of immunology experts with diverse skills, ranging from health economics to cell and structural biology, bioinformatics, and clinical practice. Simultaneously, researcher training will boost scientific innovations, thereby driving disease prevention, diagnosis, monitoring, and treatment through the versatile tools offered by immunology.

**The application period to Doctoral Pilot Programme in Immunology at the Faculty of Medicine is 3.3.-14.3.2025 (ends at 4:00 p.m. Finnish time). The right to study for a doctoral degree will start on 1 August 2025.**

**2 What is expected of you**

**When applying for a right to study from the Doctoral Pilot Programme in Immunology:**

- You are planning or pursuing your first doctoral degree; a person who has already completed a doctoral degree or who has been granted the right to study for a doctoral degree before 1.11.2023 are not eligible to apply to the pilot programme.
- 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§) as well as the eligibility criteria for the right to study for a doctoral degree at the Faculty of Medicine
- You must fulfil [the University of Turku language skill requirements](#).
- You are required to fulfil the prerequisites set by the ImmuDocs doctoral pilot programme and the Faculty of Medicine for granting a right to study. See the following section 'Before applying'.

### 3 Before applying

The doctoral researchers of ImmuDocs pursue a doctoral degree either in the Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Technology or Turku School of Economics. During this application period the right to study for a doctoral degree can only be applied in the Faculty of Medicine.

Please read carefully the instructions of the Faculty of Medicine well in advance before the actual application period (below), since there are many things that need to be agreed on or arranged before applying (supervisors, research plan, postgraduate study plan, possible language test etc.).

#### Faculty instructions for applicants

##### [Faculty of Medicine](#)

#### Supervisors

A prerequisite for admission is that at least two persons have agreed to act as supervisors and fulfill the qualification requirements for supervisors.

Please follow the instructions of the faculty in question. Links to the supervision plan of the Faculty of Medicine can be found below in the section 'How to apply? Application and instructions', subsection 2. Signed supervision and study plan.

#### Follow-up committee

The aim of the follow-up committee is to ensure the progress of the doctoral researcher's thesis work and studies, to provide an outside perspective to their research, and to support both the doctoral researcher and the supervisors in possible conflict situations. The applicant negotiates with their supervisors to assemble the follow-up committee and agrees with the members of the committee on annual monitoring practices.

#### Doctoral Pilot Programme in Immunology instructions

Eligible applicants with a research topic fitting the scope of Doctoral Pilot Programme in Immunology can apply. Each applicant should have two supervisors with at least one supervisor affiliated with the ImmuDocs Doctoral Education Pilot and a follow-up committee consisting of supervisors and 2-3 other researchers familiar with the research topic, two of whom must be from outside the doctoral researcher's own group according to the rules of the Faculty of Medicine. A postgraduate study plan should follow [the curriculum of the Doctoral Pilot Programme in Immunology](#).

Prepare also the documents mentioned in the section 'How to apply? Application and instructions'.

### 4 How to apply? Application and instructions

During the application period 3 March–14 March 2025, you can apply for the right to study for a doctoral degree in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Turku from 1 August 2025 onwards. A link to the electronic application form, the list of required attachments and a guide for filling in the form will be available during the application period.

During one application round the applicant may apply to two doctoral programmes 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.



Applications that arrive after the application period has ended will not be processed. When the application period has ended, you cannot change the doctoral programme you are applying for, or any other information. The right to study for a doctoral degree is applied for by filling in an electronic form in the My Studyinfo service. A link to the electronic form will be published on the website of the graduate school. You will need to attach the required additional documents (in PDF form). It is requested that application documents are written in English. Application documents are specified at the end of this section.

**Apply here for a right to study:** [Link to the University of Turku Graduate School web page, where the application form can be found.](#)

### Application and document preparation

Each applicant should have two supervisors and a follow-up committee with contact details to be proposed in the application. A structured research plan of the applicant must be approved by the supervisor. To plan the theoretical studies, applicants should take into account the [curriculum of the ImmuDocs doctoral pilot programme](#) in the relevant faculty, their research project and individual career plans. In addition to the signatures of the applicant and all supervisors, the supervision plan must be signed by the head of the doctoral subject (Faculty of Medicine).

**The application should include the following attachments** (*The application documents will not be returned to the sender*):

**1. Structured research plan** approved by the supervisor (3-5 pages).

The plan should consist of: abstract, background, aims and hypotheses, significance, how will the plan be carried out in practice, research environment, timetable and funding plan.

By attaching the research plan to the application form the applicant gives permission for checking the research plan with Turnitin Originality Check (system for electrical plagiarism detection).

The research plan should follow the guidelines for the responsible conduct of research (see [Responsible Conduct of Research \(RCR\) | Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK](#)). The research plans 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 should be clearly indicated in the research plan.

**2. Supervision and study plan** (Fill in electronically, print and sign together with the supervisor/-s and the head of subject)

- Faculty of Medicine [supervision and study plan](#)
  - **Please read the instructions on the Faculty of Medicine web page before making your application.**
  - Faculty of Medicine [Subjects in doctoral training and heads of subjects](#)

**3. Degree certificates and transcripts of study records**



- **scanned original degree certificate or original electronic degree certificate** (in the same language as the degree was completed in)
- **scanned original transcripts of study records or original electronic study transcript** (in the same language as the degree was completed in)
- If the original degree certificates and study transcripts 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 and 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.
- The applicants who have completed their prior degree in a country other than Finland and who are granted a study right, 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. 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](#)

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.

#### 4. Verification of language proficiency (if needed)

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

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.

#### 5. 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 Assessment of applications

The Steering Committee of the Doctoral Pilot Programme in Immunology will assess the applications with the help of outside experts, when needed. The quality and feasibility of the research plan and supervisor arrangements are taken into consideration when selecting doctoral researchers. Research proposals may be checked before the selection with the Turnitin OriginalityCheck plagiarism detection software in accordance with the University of Turku quality assurance system.



### **Assessment criteria**

- Research plan: Quality of the plan. Research topic included within fields of ImmuDocs doctoral education pilot based on the immune system such as immunology, immunology-based drug development, and immunology-based diagnostics.
- Supervision arrangements: Minimum of 2-3 supervisors of which one must be affiliated to the ImmuDocs doctoral education pilot and be a principal supervisor of an ImmuDocs doctoral project.

## **6 Decisions**

The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine decides on granting the right to study for a doctoral degree (1 August 2025 onwards) based on the proposals of the steering committee of the doctoral pilot programme. Admission decisions are made by 30 May 2025. All applicants will be personally informed about the decisions.

An admitted applicant has to notify the University of Turku of their acceptance of the study place by 3:00 pm (local time in Finland) on 13 June 2025 according to the instructions given in the admission notification. If the admitted applicant does not give the notification by the end of the allotted period of time mentioned above, they forfeit the study place. A person admitted to more than one university or polytechnic degree programme only notifies the one educational institution at which they 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, a student 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 and Master level degrees awarded by Finnish universities of applied sciences, Bachelor and Master 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 5 September 2025 at the latest. If the admitted applicant does not deliver the required certificates by the deadline, they forfeit the study right. Instructions on delivering certificates and country-specific requirements.

### **Appeal for rectification**

If an applicant is dissatisfied with the result of the student selection (right to study for a doctoral degree), they have the right to submit an application for the rectification of the decision to the Faculty of Medicine within 14 days of the official publishing of the results.

### **Additional information**

Faculty of Medicine:  
Chief Academic Officer Anni Halonen  
anni.halonen(at)utu.fi

### **Further information / ImmuDocs doctoral pilot programme**

ImmuDocs coordinator PhD Marja Peura, marja.peura(at)utu.fi