

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE RIGHT TO STUDY FOR A DOCTORAL DEGREE AT THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE or THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE or THE FACULTY OF TECHNOLOGY IN DRUG RESEARCH DOCTORAL PROGRAMME (DRDP)

Drug Research Doctoral Programme (DRDP)

The doctoral candidates of Drug Research Doctoral Programme (DRDP) carry out their doctoral studies at the Faculty of Medicine or at the Faculty of Science or at the Faculty of Technology. The degree requirements for the doctoral candidates are stated in the Academic Post-graduate Study Guide for 2022-2024 of each Faculty. In addition, the doctoral studies in DRDP are guided by a doctoral programme specific study guide ([Faculty of Medicine](#) or [Faculty of Science](#) or [Faculty of Technology](#)).

Doctoral candidates of DRDP will carry out their doctoral studies in research groups with high scientific standards at the University and in companies. Each doctoral candidate focuses on a specific topic relevant for drug development, according to a research plan prepared with their supervisor(s) for their application. DRDP doctoral candidates work on target identification and validation, drug design, synthesis and preclinical testing of novel drug molecules, clinical drug research, pharmacoepidemiology, and development of methods and diagnostics supporting drug research. DRDP serves as a postgraduate programme for graduates of the Master's Degree Programme in Drug Discovery and Development at the University of Turku, but it is open to all applicants with a suitable M.Sc. level education and an interest in drug research.

DRDP training prepares for work in wide and demanding expert and development tasks in the field of drug development and research internationally. The graduates work in academic and commercial institutes, the health care sector, and as regulatory authorities. DRDP training provides a general view of the drug development process, starting from molecular and mechanistic levels and continuing to preclinical and clinical drug research, pharmaceutical development, and pharmacoepidemiology, as well as transferable skills relevant to drug development. In addition, the training provides networking opportunities locally, nationally and internationally, and supports career planning in the field of drug research. DRDP is part of the strong national FinPharmaNet network of drug research programmes in Finland.

DRDP began industrial doctorate training (iPhD) in 2019, in collaboration with industrial partners. The aim of industrial doctorate training is to train doctors with strong scientific thinking in combination with applied research expertise, and capabilities to work in both academic and industrial research environments as well as in their interface. Doctoral candidates on the iPhD track will carry out their research primarily (>75 % of total 4 years) in an industrial environment, and are supervised by both industrial and academic supervisors. The academic training is composed of academic secondments (akateeminen työskentelyjakso, max 25 %), and post-graduate education courses at the UTU. Applicants to the iPhD track select the iPhD track in their application, and of Medical Faculty applicants attach the special [iPhD Supervision plan](#) as an appendix. At *the Faculty of Science or the Faculty of Technology* the applicants to the iPhD track add to Supervision plan to the place for "**Other things agreed**" that they apply to iPhD track.

Application period and what can be applied for

General guidelines for postgraduate studies in doctoral programme specific study guide

[Faculty of Medicine](#) and
[Faculty of Science](#) and
[Faculty of Technology](#)

During the application period 28 February–28 March 2024, you can apply for the **right to study for a doctoral degree in the Faculty of Medicine or Faculty of Science or Faculty of Technology at the University of Turku from 1 August 2024 onwards.**



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§) as well as the eligibility criteria for the right to study for a doctoral degree at the Faculty of Medicine or at Faculty of Science or Faculty of Technology.
- You must fulfil [the University of Turku language skill requirements](#)

Degree specific prerequisites for pursuing a doctoral degree are written in the [Study Guide 2022-2024](#) of the doctoral programmes. → on the postgraduate studies → go to the study guide of the doctoral programme of your choice → Drug research doctoral programme → Faculty of Medicine / Faculty of Science / Faculty of Technology → Show description

How to apply

The right to study for a doctoral degree is applied for by filling in an electronic form My Studyinfo service and attaching the required additional documents. [A link to the electronic form will be published on the website of the graduate school.](#) The form will be accessible as the application period begins on 28 February 2024 and closes at 3:00 pm (local time in Finland) on 28 March 2024.

Research plan and other documents should be in English. All attachment documents must be in PDF format.

During one application round the applicant may apply to a maximum of three 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.

All required attachments 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.

Eligible applicants with a research topic fitting the scope of DRDP can apply. The motivation to apply to DRDP is presented in the motivation letter. Each applicant should have two supervisors* with at least one supervisor affiliated with University of Turku and holding an UTU -account to use the UGIS system. One member in the follow-up committee should be familiar with the practicalities of doctoral training in the faculty and in DRDP. To plan the theoretical studies, applicants should take into account the Learning outcomes of DRDP, their research project and individual career plans.

*At the Faculty of Medicine: When only one supervisor for doctoral training is proposed, the supervisor's justified plea for approval of only one supervisor must be attached to the application.

The application should include the following attachments:

At Faculty of Medicine:

The application should include the following:

1. **Motivation letter** (Max 1 page) 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.
2. **CV** of the applicant (it is mandatory to use this attached [CV model](#))
3. **Structured research plan** approved by the supervisor (max 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 use of artificial intelligence (AI) to assist in the preparation of the research plan should be clearly indicated in the research plan.

4. Supervision and study plan – [the Faculty's form](#) (Fill in electronically, print and sign together with the supervisor/-s and the head of subject) [Subjects in doctoral training and heads of doctoral training](#)

Applicants to the iPhD track select the iPhD track in their application, and of Medical Faculty applicants attach the special [iPhD Supervision plan](#) as an appendix

5. Degree certificates and transcripts of study records

- a) 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 degree certificates, transcripts of study records and other educational documents which may be of relevance in the selection to the electronic application form.
- b) 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:
 - a. scanned original degree certificates (in the language that the degree was completed in)
 - b. scanned original transcripts of study records (in the language that the degree was completed in)
 - c. scanned other original educational documents which may be of relevance in the student selection and that you are applying based on.

If the original degree certificates or transcripts of study records 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 and a translation made by an authorised translator. A transcript in English can be replaced by a Diploma Supplement (DS) awarded by a European educational institution, provided that it contains the information about completed courses and other study attainments.

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.

6. Verification of language proficiency

The University of Turku follows the Rector's decision 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.



7. 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.

8. The supervisor's justified plea for approval of only one supervisor

Only when one supervisor for doctoral training is proposed. See [Before applying / Doctoral training at the Faculty of Medicine](#) under section Supervision.

At Faculty of Science and Faculty of Technology:

1. **Motivation letter** (why do you wish to perform doctoral studies in this doctoral programme)
2. **CV** of the applicant (it is mandatory to use attached [CV model](#))
3. **Structured research plan** approved by the supervisor (max 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.

The research plans attached to the application may be checked with the Turnitin OriginalityCheck plagiarism detection software in accordance with the University of Turku quality assurance system. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) to assist in the preparation of the research plan should be clearly indicated in the research plan.

4. Supervision plan – Postgraduate study plan

Use this [Supervision plan](#) at Faculty of Science and

this [Supervision plan](#) at Faculty of Technology

The applicants to the iPhD track add to **Supervision plan** to the place for “**Other things agreed**” that they apply to iPhD track.

5. Degree certificates and transcripts of study records

- a) 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 degree certificates, transcripts of study records and other educational documents which may be of relevance in the selection to the electronic application form.
- b) 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:
 - a. scanned original degree certificates (in the language that the degree was completed in)
 - b. scanned original transcripts of study records (in the language that the degree was completed in)
 - c. scanned other original educational documents which may be of relevance in the student selection and that you are applying based on.



If the original degree certificates or transcripts of study records 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 and a translation made by an authorised translator. A transcript in English can be replaced by a Diploma Supplement (DS) awarded by a European educational institution, provided that it contains the information about completed courses and other study attainments.

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Assessment of applications

The Steering Committee of the doctoral programme will evaluate the applications with the help of outside experts, when needed. The applicant's motivation, merits, previous studies, and the ability to complete a doctoral degree, as well as the quality and feasibility of the research plan (drug research) are taken into consideration when selecting doctoral candidates. Selection process is stepwise and applicants will be invited to interview after preliminary selection. The invitation will be sent by email. Research proposals may be checked by using Turnitin Originality Check (system for electrical plagiarism detection) before the selection in accordance with the University of Turku quality assurance system.

Decisions

The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine or Faculty of Science or Faculty of Technology decides on granting the right to study for a doctoral degree (1 August 2024 onwards) based on the proposals of the Steering Committees of the Doctoral Programmes. The admission decisions are made by the end of May 2024. 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 3:00 pm (local time in Finland) on 14 June 2024 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, 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 September 2024 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 or the Faculty of Science or Faculty of Technology within 14 days of the official publishing of the results.

Other information

In spring 2024, the faculty will be updating its curricula and the guidelines and regulations for doctoral studies, which may result in changes to the regulations for doctoral studies and doctoral dissertation form 1 August 2024. An approved applicant will complete their studies in accordance with the regulations that will come into force on 1 August 2024, and instructions for updating the personal study plan will be provided separately.

Additional information

Faculty of Medicine:
Chief Academic Officer Outi Irjala

Faculty of Science and Faculty of Technology:
Chief Academic Officer Sanna Ranto

Additional DRDP information:

DRDP director, professor Ullamari Pesonen, ullamari.pesonen@utu.fi
Coordinator, PhD Verna Louhivuori, drdp@utu.fi