



# **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 ([www.utu.fi/BGG](http://www.utu.fi/BGG)).

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

During the application period **28 August–13 September 2024**, 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 2025 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 2025 at the earliest and for the duration of a maximum of four years (up to until 31 December 2028). The positions are intended for full-time doctoral dissertation research and postgraduate studies. 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, planned schedule and current phase of the research are taken into 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 working in Finland. The place of work is Turku. The University of Turku has flexible opportunities for remote work. The doctoral researcher works either at the Department of Biology, Department of Geography and Geology or Biodiversity Unit.

The salaries are determined in accordance with the University salary system for teaching and research personnel. 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, depending the progress of the doctoral project. The personal performance component, added on top of the task-specific base salary is also paid. For a doctoral researcher, the salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience and will be approximately 2500–3100 €/month, depending on the progress of the doctoral project. The position has a probationary period of six months.

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



## 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 15 November 2024.
- 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. In addition, you must demonstrate the ability to undertake doctoral studies and complete a doctoral degree in accordance with the research plan (University of Turku Rules of Procedure 16.1.2022). 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 by filling in an electronic form in My Studyinfo service (for details, please, see section "How to apply the right to study for a doctoral degree"). 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

**Please note, that when applying for both the right to study and a fixed-term doctoral researcher position, you will need to fill in the application with the required attachments to the separate online systems (see more information below).** The right to study for a doctoral degree is applied for by filling in an electronic form in the My Studyinfo service and the fixed-term doctoral researcher positions are applied for by filling in an electronic form in the University of Turku recruitment system (TalentAdore). For both applications you will need to attach the required additional documents (in pdf form). Application documents are specified at the end of this call for applications (Appendix 1 & Appendix 2). It is recommended that application documents are written in English.

### How to apply the right to study for a doctoral degree:

The right to study for a doctoral degree is applied for by filling in an electronic form in My Studyinfo service and attaching the required additional documents specified in Appendix 1. The form will be accessible as the application period begins on 28 August 2024 and closes at 4 pm (local time in Finland) on 13 September 2024. [Link to the University of Turku Graduate School web page, where the application form can be found.](#)

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



In My Studyinfo service, you can only apply for right to study a doctoral degree. If you also want to apply for a fixed-term doctoral researcher position under an employment contract, you must apply for that position separately (for details, please, see section “How to apply the fixed-term doctoral researcher position under an employment contract”).

## **How to apply the fixed-term doctoral researcher position under an employment contract**

The fixed-term doctoral researcher position under an employment contract is applied for by filling in an electronic form in the University of Turku recruitment system (TalentAdore) and attaching the required additional documents specified in Appendix 2. The form will be accessible as the application period begins on 28 August 2024 and closes at 4 pm (local time in Finland) on 13 September 2024.

The positions are announced at the beginning of the application period in the Open Vacancies at the University of Turku website and on the website of the Graduate School. [Link to the University of Turku Graduate School web page, where the application form can be found.](#) 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.

A person selected for the position is 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 by filling in an electronic form in My Studyinfo service (for details, please, see section “How to apply the right to study for a doctoral degree”).

## **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§) 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 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. If the



applicant does not submit a signed supervision plan that meets the faculty supervisor requirements as an attachment of the application, the application will be rejected.

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

Fixed-term doctoral researcher positions are targeted to the first four years of doctoral studies. 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 feasibility to produce a doctoral thesis within four years;
- 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. 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 to the duration of their doctoral studies. The duration of doctoral studies is counted from the date the doctoral study right has started, excluding the legal reasons absence and periods of non-attendance.

Any other funding received by the applicant for doctoral studies may be 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

### Study right 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. All applicants will be personally informed about the decisions by 1 November 2024.

An admitted applicant has to notify the University of Turku of their acceptance of the study place by 13 December 2024 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 7 March 2025 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.](#)

## **Doctoral researcher positions under employment contract decisions**

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 by 30 November 2024. 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)). A selected applicant has to notify their acceptance of the position according to the instructions given in the offer notification.

## **Additional information**

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

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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.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Application documents for study right application

Appendix 2: Application documents for doctoral researcher position under an employment contract



## Appendix 1. Application documents for study right application

Please fill the electronic application form on My StudyInfo and attach the required application documents into it, if not otherwise stated. Please make sure that all attachments are of good quality, are easy to read, full-colour scans or photographs of the complete required document. The application documents should be in pdf-format. Attachments that do not meet these requirements may be rejected.

### 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.

The research plan should follow the guidelines for the responsible conduct of research (Link to the guidelines: [Responsible Conduct of Research \(RCR\) | Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK](#)). The research plan 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 wider role than checking grammar or generating short expressions should be clearly indicated in the research plan.

## **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 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.

## **E. 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.

## **F. 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.

## **G. 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. You must carefully study the instructions on



language requirements of the University of Turku. [Link to language requirements in the web page of the university's graduate school](#). 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.

## **H. 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.

## **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.](#)



## **Appendix 2. Application documents for doctoral researcher position under an employment contract**

Please fill the electronic application form on TalentAdore and attach the required application documents into it, if not otherwise stated. Please make sure that all attachments are of good quality, are easy to read, full-colour scans or photographs of the complete required document. The application documents should be in pdf-format. Attachments that do not meet these requirements may be rejected.

### **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.**



The research plan should follow the guidelines for the responsible conduct of research (Link to the guidelines: [Responsible Conduct of Research \(RCR\) | Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK](#)). The research plan 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 wider role than checking grammar or generating short expressions should be clearly indicated in the research plan.

## **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 assessment**

UTU supervisor will fill an assessment form in the University of Turku recruitment system (TalentAdore) including 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). The applicant is asked to fill in the UTU supervisor's contact information as a response to email sent by TalentAdore for this purpose.

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.

## **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) and 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. 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.