

TFK programme, funded projects 2025

Project title: Frontiers of Knowledge: Strengthening Finland-Taiwan Collaboration in Border Studies	
Coordinator Itä-Suomen yliopisto Jussi Laine, jussi.laine@uef.fi	The BorderLink project emerges at a critical juncture of increasing global uncertainty and shifting geopolitical realities. In today's unpredictable landscape, borders have become sites of heightened tension and strategic importance, creating an urgent need for specialized expertise in understanding these dynamic boundaries. The training of future border studies experts capable of navigating this uncertainty is crucial for national security and international relations. It is against this backdrop that the University of Eastern Finland (UEF) and National Taiwan University (NTU), with National Quemoy University (NQU) as an associate partner, seek to establish a sustainable academic partnership in Border Studies. The collaboration builds upon the UEF's Karelian Institute's doctoral researcher training programme, aligning with the university's BOMOCULT Research Community. As transnational mobility patterns evolve and geopolitical tensions intensify, particularly in regions facing challenges from powerful neighbours, there is a need to develop sophisticated approaches to border management. Taiwan represents an ideal strategic partnership for Finland due to its academic expertise and the similarities in geopolitical challenges both countries face with neighbouring powers (Russia and China respectively), creating a unique opportunity for comparative analysis in preparing the next generation of border experts.
Partners National Taiwan University	Central to BorderLink is the bi-directional relationship between teaching and research, where cutting-edge research directly informs pedagogical approaches while classroom insights generate new research questions, creating a dynamic teaching-research nexus that ensures both academic rigor and practical relevance. Taiwan particularly confronts issues of maritime borders and island geopolitics with China regarding the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea, while NTU scholars bring expertise that complements the Karelian Institute's focus on social, economic, and political processes shaping border regions. The project will implement several key activities: developing a joint virtual course on border studies, conducting workshops in Finland and Taiwan, facilitating mobility exchanges for doctoral students and faculty, developing joint curriculum alignment, and creating a digital teaching platform for cross-border knowledge exchange. The project establishes a sustainable partnership extending beyond the project period. It aims to enhance doctoral training programs through curriculum cooperation, improve digital collaboration capabilities, strengthen research networks, and increase the international profile of both institutions. The project seeks to elevate Finland's and UEF's international standing in Border Studies and global security research. The

	partnership has the potential for future expansion to include other institutions, laying the foundation for continued exchanges and creating a broader network to prepare future experts to manage uncertainty.
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OPETUSHALLITUS
UTBILDNINGSSTYRELSEN

Finnish National Agency for Education EDUFI
Hakaniemenranta 6, P.B. 380, FI-00531 Helsinki
Puh. /Tel. +358 (0) 29 533 1000, Faksi /Fax +358 (0) 29 533 1035
www.oph.fi