

DECISION

30 June 2026 XXX/XXX/2026

“the name of higher education institution/project contact details”

REFERENCE

DECISION ON AN APPLICATION FOR A STATE GRANT

Project grant: TFK 2026, Team Finland Knowledge programme

BACKGROUND

The aim of the TFK programme is to establish and strengthen cooperation between Finnish higher education institutions and the selected target regions and countries within the TFK network, and to develop new models for such cooperation. In 2026, the TFK programme will fund cooperation with Southern Africa, Latin America, South-East Asia, China and India. In addition, as part of the TFK programme, a separate call for proposals was organised to fund cooperation with Ukrainian higher education institutions, with a focus on the needs of the Ukrainian higher education sector in terms of strengthening academic cooperation and capacity building.

The 2026 call for proposals under the TFK programme closed on 28 April 2026. A total of 152 applications were submitted by the deadline, of which 26 will receive funding. A total of €10,955,436 in grants was sought in the TFK call for proposals, and the total amount awarded in this round is €1,665,832.

The primary selection criterion for projects has been the quality of the application. In allocating the total funding, consideration has also been given to maintaining a balance between the target areas; applications from the target areas have been assessed as separate groups, with applications ranked in order of merit for each target area. Furthermore, in the allocation process it was taken into account that cooperation with a single target country or region may be funded for a maximum of two projects from the same higher education institution, and that projects which received funding in the 2024 and 2025 TFK programme application rounds are not eligible for funding in the 2026 application round. In cases where several projects were tied on points and only one could be selected for funding, the decisive factor was the points awarded by an expert who assessed the project's relevance to cooperation between Finland and the partner countries. The budgets of all projects to be funded have been reduced by 10–15 per cent. This measure was taken in an effort to ensure that as many projects as possible receive funding.

DECISION

The Finnish National Agency for Education has decided to award a state grant to the project

XXX/XXX/2026 “The name of the project”

The Finnish National Agency for Education awards a grant of EUR xx xxx to the project.

The applicant must update the project budget to comply with the terms of the call for applications, in line with the updated grant amount. Guidance on this update will be provided at a joint project meeting, about which we will send a message in early autumn.

Congratulations on your success in the application process!

The grant recipient must comply with the conditions, restrictions and general guidelines set out in this decision and its annexes.

The recipient of a government grant is obliged, on their own initiative and without delay, to return any government grant or part thereof that has been received in error or without justification. If the grant, or part thereof, cannot be used in the manner required by the state grant decision, it must be repaid immediately.

The grant recipient must ascertain their obligations to comply with public procurement legislation.

A separate ‘Funded by the Finnish National Agency for Education’ logo must be used in communications relating to projects funded by the Finnish National Agency for Education.

JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THE DECISIONS

Total points awarded to the project in the evaluation:

XX/36p

Feedback received by the project in the evaluation:

Evaluator: XX

Evaluator: XX

Evaluator: XX

APPLICABLE PROVISIONS

GRANT TYPE

Special grant

GRANT PAYMENT

The grant will be paid into the bank account specified by the applicant:

“The bank account of the HEI”

Payment instalments and dates: EUR XX XXX The grant will be paid in a single instalment (100 per cent) by 30 October 2026 at the latest into the bank account specified by the applicant. The payment reference field must include the project reference number and the first name and surname of the contact person specified by the grant recipient. Any unused portion of the grant will be reclaimed following the audit of the final report.

PURPOSE OF THE GRANT

The government grant may be used to cover expenses arising from the implementation of the project in accordance with the call for applications, the grant decision, and the project plan and budget set out in the grant decision.

Eligible costs are deemed to be those that are necessary for the purpose of the project and reasonable in amount, and which must be recorded in the accounts for the period during which the grant is in use, in accordance with the Accounting Act and Decree and generally accepted accounting principles.

The project grant awarded may be used for two categories of expenditure:

- 1) Travel costs, which must account for at least 50 per cent of the project grant
- 2) Organisational costs, which may account for a maximum of 50 per cent of the project grant

Travel costs may arise from journeys or mobility periods undertaken by students, postgraduate students and/or teaching or other staff from higher education institutions participating in the project between Finland and the destination country. Travel costs within the project may be shared amongst several target groups (students and staff), depending on the project's objectives. For staff, eligible travel costs include expenses arising from travel, such as travel fares, accommodation, travel agency fees, visas, insurance and any daily allowances. Travel/mobility must be justified, cost-effective

and take into account sustainable development objectives. For students, a daily or monthly grant based on the duration of the period abroad, as well as a travel grant, will be paid, regardless of the actual costs of the period abroad. The grant amounts for students, which projects must adhere to, are specified in the call for applications.

In addition to higher education institutions, projects may also involve other actors or organisations, such as companies or associations, but these are responsible for any travel-related costs they incur.

Organisational costs must arise directly from the costs incurred in carrying out the core activities of the project, such as the online delivery of course and teaching content, materials related to course delivery, or the costs of organising events. Expenses eligible as organisational costs include, for example, the purchase of services and the hire of equipment. Salary costs may form part of the organisational costs, but they may not exceed 20 per cent of the total project grant awarded. Salaries must not include general administrative costs such as financial management, general administration and office costs, nor occupational health and safety costs, performance-related bonuses or benefits in kind. Salary costs must be based on the actual working hours spent on project implementation.

The grant may not be used for higher education institutions' administrative costs, entertainment expenses or business gifts.

If the applicant declares costs inclusive of VAT in the project plan's budget, they must also be reported inclusive of VAT.

The grant recipient must comply with the attached guidelines for applicants for and users of state grants (concerning special grants), with the exception of the eligible costs mentioned in section 2.2. as well as Sections 4.1 and 4.3 concerning the obligation to repay and the interest payable on the grant to be repaid. In TFK projects, only the above-mentioned cost categories are eligible. In TFK projects, the final grant amount is reviewed in connection with the final report, and any unused grant funds will be reclaimed on the basis of this review.

PERIOD OF USE OF THE GRANT

First date of use of the grant: 1 August 2026

Last date of use of the grant: 31 December 2028

REPORTING OBLIGATION

An interim report must be submitted by 30 November 2027 at the latest

A final report must be submitted by 31 January 2029 at the latest

Project contact persons are expected to participate in webinars and events organised to support the implementation of the projects. The grant recipient is responsible for ensuring that the contact details of the contact person recorded in the government grant system are always up to date. If the project's contact person changes, the grant recipient must update the contact person's details in the government grant system on their own initiative. A link to change the contact person can be found in the decision email. The change must also be notified to the National Agency for Education in writing at TFK-programme@oph.fi.

Any changes affecting the use of the government grant must always be submitted in writing without delay. A link to the project-specific application form can be found in the decision email. The application form, together with the reasons for the changes, must be submitted to the National Agency for Education in good time before the end of the grant period and before the changes are implemented.

Project reporting (interim and final reports) is carried out via the government grant system. Guidance on reporting will be updated on the programme's website at <https://www.oph.fi/fi/ohjelmat/tfk-ohjelma>.

The grant recipient must organise their accounts in accordance with the Accounting Act and the Accounting Decree. The accounts must be organised in such a way that the use of the grant can be reliably monitored within the accounts under its own cost centre. The project's accounts must show the total costs of the project, including the self-financing contribution, the grant awarded, expenditure recorded for the project, income received from the project and other funding received. The higher education institution must also, where necessary, be able to demonstrate that the grant has been paid to an exchange student or teacher selected for the TFK programme. It must also be possible to demonstrate, through accounting reports, the costs covered by partner higher education institutions.

AUDITING RIGHTS

The Finnish National Agency for Education has the right to carry out inspections of the grant recipient's operations as necessary for the supervision of the use of the grant. The recovery of state grants shall be governed by the provisions of the State Grants Act (688/2001).

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Upon completion of the project, the recipient of the state grant shall, free of charge, grant the Finnish National Agency for Education a parallel right of use to any material or other output (hereinafter 'the material') produced in connection with this state-funded project, as well as the rights to make changes to the content and layout of the material.

The Finnish National Agency for Education shall also have the right to distribute the material in all forms of distribution (known and unknown) and to produce copies thereof. The recipient of the state grant shall be responsible for ensuring that it has the right to transfer the aforementioned rights to the Finnish National Agency for Education.

Copyright issues relating to the use of the material within the project, as well as in scientific, public or commercial activities unrelated to the project, must be agreed between the recipient of the government grant and the producers of the material.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE DECISION

If the recipient of a positive decision does not wish to accept the grant, they must notify the authorities of this by 15 August 2026 at the latest. Notification of this must be sent via the link provided in the decision and by email to TFK-programme@oph.fi. The reference number of the decision must be included in the subject line of the message.

APPEAL

No appeal may be lodged against this decision (Section 34 of the State Subsidies Act). A party dissatisfied with the decision may request a review in accordance with the attached form for requesting a review.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Mari Pohjola, mari.pohjola@oph.fi

telephone 029 533 1000 (switchboard).

Enquiries and questions regarding the decision may also be sent by email to TFK-programme@oph.fi

ATTACHMENTS

Implementation plan

Notice of right to appeal

General guidelines on government grants

Taking sanctions into account in government grant activities

BUDGET ALLOCATION PLAN

Project expenditure	Applied	Approved
Travel/mobility costs	XX XXX €	
Organisational costs	XX XXX €	
Salaries	XX XXX €	
Total expenditure on the project	XX XXX €	XX XXX €
Total net expenditure	XX XXX €	XX XXX €
GRANT PROVIDED BY THE FINNISH NATIONAL AGENCY FOR EDUCATION	XX XXX €	XX XXX €