



Application process

Applying for grants

Eka, Encouragement and Research Grants for individual scholars; and Returning Researcher and Research Group Founder Grants for group leaders as well as Grants for Etiology from the Kauppila Fund **can be applied for annually between May 1 and May 31st.**

Applications are made via the Foundation's Grant Service at <https://laaketieteensaatio.rimbert.fi/>.

Only one type of grant may be applied for per application round.

Note! The application period for the Kauppila Fund Grant has changed. The grant will not be available in the 2026 general grant application round. We will announce the new application period later.

Application review

All the applications go through a scientific evaluation process. The Foundation's Scholarship Committee reviews Eka, Encouragement, and Research Grant applications. The Foundation's Major Grants Committee reviews applications for Returning Researcher, Research Group Founder, and the Kauppila Grants.

Eka Grants

Eka Grants are available to medical and dental students and licentiates beginning their research careers. As Eka Grants are aimed at early career researchers, the review process focuses on research plan and environment rather than the applicant's earlier achievements. There is no requirement for earlier publications for applicants.

Grants are paid to applicants in the calendar year following the grant being awarded, either in January, March, August, or October. The grant may be used to advance the research in a way the applicant sees fit. The grant is only awarded once and is not awarded to anyone who has defended a doctoral thesis before the application period ends.

The grant amount is €2,500 per applicant.

Encouragement Grants

Both the Finnish Medical Foundation and Duodecim award Encouragement Grants. Both are applied for using the same form and the applications are reviewed using the same process.

Encouragement Grants may be used to advance the research in a way the applicant sees fit. The Encouragement Grant is only awarded once and will not be awarded to anyone who has defended a doctoral thesis before the application period ends. Encouragement Grants are available to young people working on their doctoral thesis and applications are reviewed based on the research plan and earlier merits.

Medical Foundation Encouragement Grants are paid to applicants in the calendar year following the grant being awarded, either in January, March, August, or October. **Duodecim Encouragement Grants** are paid in November of the application year.

The grant amount is €5,000 per applicant.



Research Grants

Research Grants are awarded to support medical and dental students, licentiates and doctors in their research work. The grant is intended to fund full-time research work for a period of 6, 12 or 24 months. Professors and docents are considered senior researchers and are therefore not eligible to apply. A research grant may be awarded to the same applicant twice.

The research grants available for doctoral researchers are €13,500, €27,000, or €54,000, and for postdoctoral researchers €15,000, €30,000, or €60,000. The grants can be used to support research periods of varying lengths; for example, a grant of 27,000 euros provides funding for a doctoral researcher for a period of 12 months. The highest-rated applications are given priority when awarding the largest grants.

Grants are primarily paid in the calendar year following the grant being awarded. Payments are made in January, March, August, and October.

The grant may be paid either as a personal, tax-free scholarship or as a salary through the host institution. The applicants specify their research schedule in the application; the grant period does not need to be continuous but can be split in several periods. Eligibility for a tax-free scholarship requires full-time research work during the grant period.

If the grant is paid as a scholarship, the recipient must arrange pension insurance with [Mela](#) (Social Insurance Institution).

At the applicant's request, the grant may also be paid to their host institution for onward payment to the recipient as a salary. In this case, applicants must provide a commitment from their employer, such as a university or hospital. The employer will then handle tax withholding and pension contributions on behalf of the applicant. The salary level corresponds to the applicant's current base salary, and the research work may also be conducted part-time.

Research Grant recipients must write a report describing how the grant was used. This report must be completed by the end of the year after the research period has ended. The report will describe periods of time spent on full-time research, the research subject, the research's primary achievements and information about the research being published. Reporting forms can be found in our [Grant Service](#).

Returning Researcher Grant

The Foundation's Returning Researcher Grants are available to researchers returning to Finland from an overseas research visit. Grant eligibility requires a doctorate in medicine or dentistry and a successful period of postdoctoral work abroad. Normally the minimum requirement is 12 months spent abroad, and applicants must still be abroad when they apply. The maximum grant amount is €50,000, of which no more than €5,000 may be spent on general costs.

Note: The grant is administered through the researcher's host institution.

For the grant to be awarded and paid out, a university or equivalent institution must consent and commit to managing the applicant's project, using the funds according to principles or economic guidelines approved by the research institution. Awarded grants are paid in full to an account approved by the host institution in question. The grant may be used to pay for wages and other project costs in accordance to the cost estimate presented in the research plan.

The Foundation pays the grant in one instalment and requires the grant recipient to provide a final report of research progress and how the funds were used. The grant must be used during the calendar year following the grant being awarded. The Foundation's Board may extend this period based on a separate application. Grants that have not been taken into use during the calendar year following the grant being awarded will be cancelled. There will be no separate notification of cancellations.



Research Group Founder's Grant

For doctors starting their independent researcher careers.

Research Group Founder's Grants are available to early career postdoc researchers who have completed their doctorate. The grants are awarded for projects with particular significance in their field of medicine or dentistry.

The grant may be awarded for a continuous period of three years, starting from the beginning of the year following the grant being awarded. In 2025 the grants were between €150,000 and €200,000. A maximum of 10% of the grant amount may be used on general costs.

Professors, docents and other senior researchers are not eligible for these grants.

Purpose

The grant is intended to make up for earnings of the PI lost as a result of the research period and to cover research-related costs. The grant may also be used to pay the wages of another researcher involved with the project. The founder of the research group must personally work on the same project for at least 50% of their working time during the research period, although their salary may be funded from other sources.

The applicant must present a plan of how the grant will be used, including a breakdown of wage costs and other research costs as well as the total costs and overall funding of the project.

If the grant recipient is on leave of absence during the research period, the grant may only be used to cover wages up to the amount the researcher would receive during their leave of absence. Academy of Finland Academy Research Fellow wages may be used as a reference for calculating personal wages.

Terms

The Research Group Founder's Grant is intended to fund full-time research work during the grant periods. The grant and annual payments are subject to the applicant working full-time on research enabled by the Foundation's grant, in clearly defined periods normally covering six months a year and a total of 18 months over three years. Part-time research work covering at least 50% of working hours is also possible, in which case the minimum research period will be extended accordingly. Paid part-time work may not exceed 25% of working hours during the research period.

Payment

Research Group Founder's Grants are paid to the host organization and never directly to the grant recipient. For the grant to be awarded, a university, a hospital or equivalent research institution must manage the funds. The funds must be used according to the accounting standards of the research institution. Grants are paid in full to the research institution's account.

The Foundation pays out the Research Group Founder's Grants annually and requires the grant recipient to provide **annual reports** of research progress, including details of how working hours and funds were used compared to the research plan and cost estimate presented in the application. Reporting forms can be found in our Rimbart Grant Service.

The grant must be used within the three calendar years following the grant being awarded. The Foundation's Board may extend this period based on a separate application. Grants that have not been taken into use during the calendar year following the grant being awarded will be cancelled. Any instalments that have not been taken into use within four full calendar years of the grant being awarded will also be cancelled. There will be no separate notice of cancellations.



Grants for Research in Etiology from the Kauppila Fund

The purpose of the Leena and Olavi Kauppila Fund is to primarily support research focused on the causes and etiology of diseases. The aim of the grants is to identify novel, investigator-initiated scientific ideas that can lay the groundwork for future treatments and challenge existing paradigms. Grants are not awarded for drug research.

The grants are intended for investigator-initiated work. Priority is given to physicians engaged in clinical practice. Applicants may apply only for funding for their own work. The grant may be used for the researcher's own salary, costs of supporting personnel (such as laboratory technicians and research nurses), materials and equipment, and other research expenses.

Grant size

Individual grants range from €20,000 to €50,000. In 2026, a total of €100,000 has been allocated for grants.

Eligibility

The call for applications is open to all physicians and dentists, without restrictions related to age, academic merit, specialty, or similar factors. However, research groups and professors are not eligible to apply. Applications are reviewed anonymously.

In awarding the grants, emphasis is placed on the novelty of the research idea, a scientifically sound and credible implementation plan, and a clearly justified funding plan.

Registration

Filling in the application form begins by registering as a user of the service. Applicants who have registered in previous application rounds may use the username created at that time. However, a new password must be created.

During registration, the applicant enters their basic information (name, address, etc.), creates a username and password, and selects the type of grant being applied for (e.g. Eka Grant, Encouragement Grant, Research Grant, Returning Researcher Grant, etc.). Only one type of grant may be applied for at a time.

Registration is done only once. On subsequent visits, users log in with the credentials created during registration.

Evaluation of Applications

Grants are awarded solely on the scientific quality of the application, and every proposal is evaluated in an equal, fair, and impartial peer-review process.

The Foundation's Grant Committee evaluates Eka Grants, Encouragement Grants, and Research Grants. Each application is reviewed by three experts from the committee. The experts score the applications according to their own assessment. Due to the large number of applications, they use jointly defined evaluation criteria to support the scoring process. Applications receiving divergent evaluations are discussed in detail at the Grant Committee meeting.

The Foundation's Grant Committee evaluates Returning Researcher grants, Research Group Founder's Grants, and the Kauppila Grants for Etiology.

Guidelines for Eka, Encouragement, and Research Grant



applicants

The following exclusion criteria apply:

- For non-Eka Grants the applicant must have at least one peer-reviewed, PubMed indexed piece of original research published or in press. Applications failing to meet this will not be processed. Abstracts should not be included in the list of publications. Unclear cases will be checked against databases.
- Incomplete application
- Applicant is not a doctor of medicine or dentistry or medical or dental student
- Application is for postdoctoral work abroad – these will be funded through the Postdoc Pool

General assessment criteria

In general, the application receives an average grade when all formal criteria are met (every requested section has been filled out) and the applicant has at least one approved publication (does not apply to Eka Grant applications.) In recent years, reaching the average level has not been enough to receive funding.

+ Additional points are awarded for:

- Innovative research, important research subject or a research field lacking in information
- Project is heading toward completion (thesis within 1 to 2 years is a realistic goal)
- Application that has been excellently completed content-wise (see end)
- Most important findings have been clearly presented and offer significant new information
- Research field or method is particularly challenging, but has still been completed as planned
- Research field has clinical importance

- Points are docked for:

- An incomplete application (some are excluded immediately)
- Incoherent application
- Summary does not provide a clear picture of research project
- Research does not produce notable new information

Research plan

The research plan is critical for the review. A good research plan includes among other things the following:

- Summary
- Background
- Goals
- Research questions & setting
- Execution & methods
- Applicant's personal role in research (important!)
- Current stage of research
- Research schedule
- Cost estimate and plan
- Ethical matters



Typos and careless mistakes and poor Finnish or English create an impression of a plan that's hastily written and not necessarily well thought out. Early career researchers are encouraged to have their supervisor inspect the research plan before submitting it.

Frequently Asked Questions

WHO CAN APPLY for grants? WHICH GRANT should I apply for?

Question: I am a Master of Health Sciences graduate. Can Encouragement Grants be awarded to people with other medicine-related degrees, not just medical doctors and students?

- Finnish Medical Foundation Grants are **only available to medical doctors, dentists, and students of medicine or dentistry.**

Question: I have applied for an Eka Grant. Can I also apply for an Encouragement Grant or a four-month Research Grant?

- No. At each application round, only one grant may be applied for. The Kauppila Fund Grants are an exception and may be applied for in addition to other grants.

Question: Can I apply for one of the Foundation's grants if I have previously applied for and been awarded a grant from the Postdoc Pool? The Pool grant only covers part of the costs, and I would like to apply for a Foundation grant as well, if possible.

- The Foundation does not award further grants simultaneously with a Postdoc Pool grant.

Question: The Encouragement Grant is available to "young" researchers working on a doctoral thesis – what does "young" mean? Is there an age limit, or does it refer to being early in your research career?

- Young researcher means early career researcher and does not refer to age.

Question: Should grant applications completed online also be printed and sent out to the Finnish Medical Foundation?

- Grants are not sent via mail. All applications are sent in through the online service.

EKA GRANTS

Question: Should the application specify how the money is to be spent?

- Eka Grants and Encouragement Grants do not require a breakdown of grant usage.

Question: If you apply for an Eka Grant, can it be transferred into e.g. an Encouragement Grant if that is a "better fit"?

- No transfers will be made. Applicants must know which grant they are applying for. If you have no publications, apply for an Eka Grant; if you've been published, apply for an Encouragement Grant.

Question: Should Eka Grant applications include literary references?



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- Literary references are not necessary.

Question: Should the thesis subject be submitted before applying for an Eka Grant?

- Submitting is not mandatory.

Question: If the public defence of a thesis takes place during the application period, can and should Eka or Encouragement Grants be applied for?

- Applying is not possible, as the thesis will have been finished before May 31.

ENCOURAGEMENT GRANTS

Question: I am applying for an Encouragement Grant for working on a doctoral thesis. Should the application include information about a specific research project or the research plan for the entire thesis?

- Include a research plan for the project you hope to be funded. If you want funding for the thesis, include the thesis research plan; if you seek funding for a smaller project, include the research plan for that project.

RESEARCH GRANTS

Question: Can the research plan be in English?

- The research plan may be submitted in English, while the rest of the application should be in Finnish. It is advisable to include a brief summary of the research plan in Finnish.

Question: I have been awarded an eight-month Research Grant, which I am currently using on a 50% basis, spending half the week on clinical work and half on research. Can I apply for the grant term to be cancelled if I'm unable to spend the awarded grant in its entirety? Should I suspend the research, I would naturally return the unused portion of the grant.

- There are no rules for cancelling a grant term before it ends, due to the general principle that grants are awarded based on applications and that receiving the grant is subject to completing the research described in the application.

Question: Can Research Grants be used on drug or laboratory costs?

- Yes, as long as the length of the research period corresponds to the awarded grant.

Question: I have understood that 25% of working hours may be spent on other paid work during the research period. Does this apply to the whole four-month period or each month separately?

- Research Grant guidelines state that a maximum of 25% of working hours may be spent on other paid work during the research period. The purpose is to ensure that applicants can concentrate full-time on research work. The Foundation wishes that any additional work should be divided evenly across the research period.
- Since 2021, the Research Grant may, at the applicant's request, also be paid to a research institution for onward payment to the recipient as a salary. The Foundation aims to make conducting research with the support of funding as flexible as possible. A requirement for receiving funding paid as a



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salary is full-time research work during the grant period defined by the applicant. Applicants are required to provide a letter of support from the hospital.

RETURNING RESEARCHER GRANTS

Question: Can I apply for Returning Researcher Grants afterwards?

- No – the applicant must still be abroad when the application process is started.

RESEARCH GROUP FOUNDER'S GRANT

Question: In the Research Group Founder's Grant application form, the basic information section has a space for the total costs of the project. I am only applying to cover the wages during an 18-month project, with no other costs. Should I insert the annual wage for each year without additional costs, or should this section already include a total of all costs stated by the university, including incidental costs, etc.?

- Please include all costs, making a note of the incidental costs.

Question: Research Group Founder's Grants are available to early career researchers. By separate request from the applicant, the grant may also be used to cover the wages of another researcher working on the project. The project leader already has an established research career and works primarily on research, not on clinical work. Does this matter if the grant is intended to pay for the wages of additional research staff?

- A requirement for receiving the Research Group Founder's Grant is that the applicant must conduct at least 50% of their working time in full-time research during the year (a total of 18 months over three years). The grant may be used for the applicant's own salary, the costs of the research group, and the salaries of personnel working in the group. The PI must personally work at least 50% of their time in the project, but their salary may be funded from other sources.

Question: The guidelines state that the research plan may be a maximum of 10 pages. Should the publication list, CV, cost estimate, and funding plan be included within these 10 pages?

- The research plan including appendices may be a maximum of 10 pages. In addition, the application must include a CV and publication list, which together may be a maximum of 5 pages. If the research plan is written in English, it is advisable to include a short summary in Finnish.

PAYMENT

Question: When exactly are the funds paid out?

- Payment date is when the Foundation makes a payment to the account provided by the grant recipient.
- The first possible payment date for grants awarded by the Medical Foundation is January of the year following the application year. Some of the Encouragement Grants are awarded by Duodecim, and these grants are paid already in the application year, in November.

ABANDONED RESEARCH

Question: What if the research is abandoned?

- If the research is abandoned, we will evaluate the situation on a case-by-case basis. In such cases we will request a report of how the grant was used and what it accomplished.



MULTIPLE GRANTS IN A SINGLE APPLICATION?

Question: Can I apply for multiple grants in a single application?

- In a single application round, you may apply for only one type of grant.
- An exception to this is the grants from the Leena and Olavi Kauppila Fund, which may be applied for in addition to another grant. If you apply for two different grants, a separate application must be submitted for each.
- If you have already started filling in an application and wish to change it to apply for a different type of grant, you must first delete the application you have already started.
- **Tip:** Some questions include a capital “i” icon. By clicking it, you can find help or tips for answering the question.