

Grant writing and funding opportunities

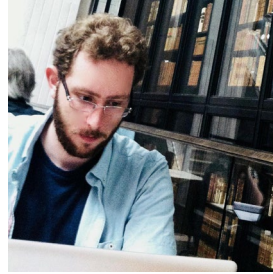
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Aalto-yliopisto
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Who we are



Gwyndaf Garbutt
Grant Writer



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Pre-Awards Team for the School of Arts, Design, and Architecture

- We help researchers find and apply for external research funding

Funding for many purposes

External funders, particularly **foundations** in Finland support a wide variety of work, including scientific and artistic research, artistic work, and cultural projects. Foundations are an important funding source for artists.

You can be a researcher

You can be an independent artist

You can be a part of an association, collective, organization or working group

Foundation funding: introduction

What are foundations?

- A foundation is established to manage property donated for a certain purpose.
- “Foundation” in Finland is equivalent to the British term “Charitable Trust” and the American terms “Non-profit foundations” and “Private foundation”.
- There can be operative foundations (e.g. nursing homes), foundations that award grants, and mixtures of those
- The number of registered foundations in Finland is about 2,700, of which about 800 award grants.
- Most common areas of action are culture, recreation, research and education.

Sources: <https://saatiotrahastot.fi/en/tietoa-saatioista-eng/>
<https://www.prh.fi/en/saatiorekisteri.html>

Funding from Finnish Foundations: 516 M€

Science – 269 M€, Art – 79 M€, Society – 168 M€ (2021, members of the Association of Finnish Foundations)

| | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Medicine & Health, 88 | Humanities, 41 | | Performance, 18 | Music, 17 |
| | Engineering, 22 | Natural Sc., 19 | | |
| Social & Economics, 59 | Forest & Agri, 7 | | Other, 18 | Visual, 15 |
| | Multidisc., 15 | | | |
| | | | Design, 2 | Other, 9 |
| | | Arch., 2 | Literature, 11 | |
| Museums & Heritage, 36 | Education, 27 | Social & Health work, 15 | Associations, 15 | Sport, 3 |
| | | Cultural work, 8 | Science educ., 4 | Other, 42 |
| | Children, 21 | | Peace, 2 | |
| | | | | |

Top 7 (M€ / year):

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Jane and Aatos Erkko F. | 55 |
| KONE Foundation | 50 |
| Finnish Cultural F. | 49 |
| Swedish Cultural F. | 42 |
| Sigrid Jusélius F. | 20 |
| Stiftelsen för Åbo Acad. | 18 |
| Jenny and Antti Wihuri F. | 14 |

Project grants vs. personal grants

| (Research) projects | | Personal grants / Research or working groups |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Applicant | University / organization | Researcher, artist, student |
| Funder | EU, Academy, Business Finland, Ministries, Foundations, | Foundations, Companies, Ministries, etc |
| Purpose | Research, Networks, Mobility, Infrastructure | Artistic / research work, studies; Stipends, Fellowships, Encouragement / top-up grants, Mobility, Awards |
| Funding size | Typically large budget (100 k€ ... 10 M€) – transferred to e.g. Aalto | Typically smaller grants for full or part-time work (500 € ... 30 000 €) and tax free to the amount of State's artist grant. Research / working group grants can be bigger. |
| Funding for work | Salaries | Personal working grants for artists and researchers; assisting personnel: salaries |
| Social security of the researcher / artist | Statutory side costs of the employer applied from the funder. The person will be an employee in an organization. | The grantee applies for MYEL insurance (more information in next slides) |
| Budgeting | Different cost models; e.g., salary with statutory side costs & overheads, other costs (travel, equipment etc.) | Depending on the guidance /grant type, often fixed sums; other costs can be budget based; check rules of the foundation, foundation contact persons also help |
| Handling | Organization | Individual applicant |

Taxation of personal grants 1/2

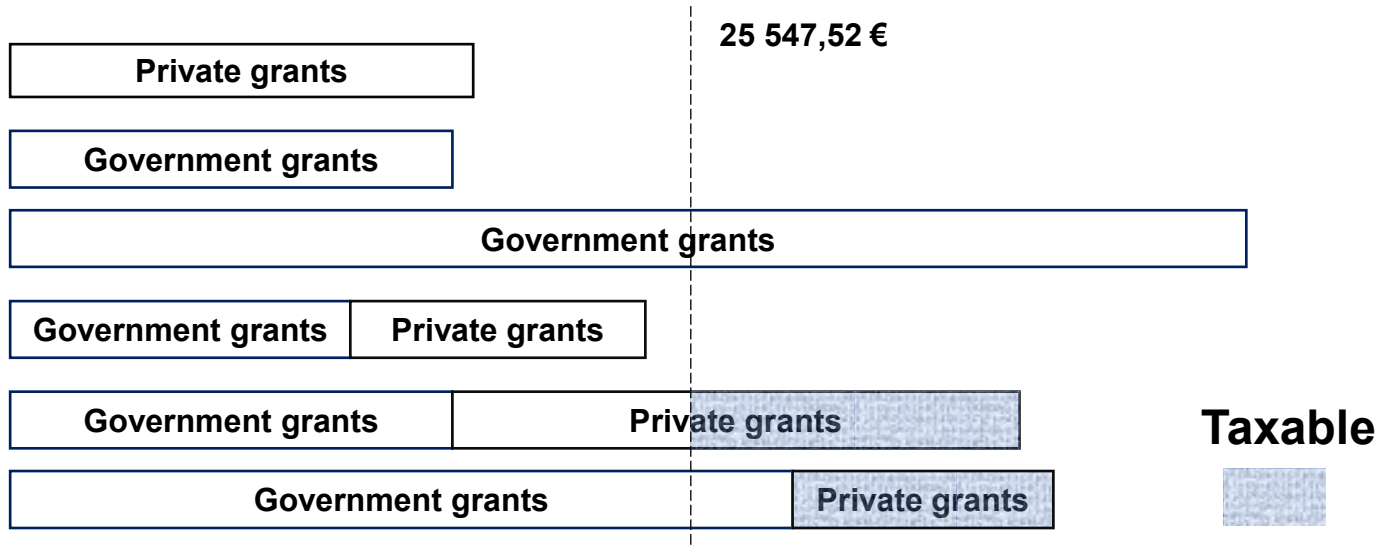
Exemption from tax only applies to grants or scholarships received for studies, academic research or artistic activity as well as to the so-called library grant paid to authors and translators. (see <https://www.vero.fi/en/individuals/tax-cards-and-tax-returns/income/earned-income/grants/>)

Government grants are tax-free:

- *Valtio / State*
- *Kunnat / municipalities*
- *Kuntayhtymät / joint municipal authorities*
- *Hyvinvointialueet / wellbeing services counties*
- *Evankelis-luterilainen kirkko ja ortodoksinen kirkkokunta / Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Finnish Orthodox Church*
- *Suomen Pankki / Bank of Finland*
- *Kansaneläkelaitos / Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela)*
- *Taiteen keskustoimikunta / Central Arts Council*
- *Alueelliset taidetoimikunnat / regional art councils*
- *Valtion tieteelliset toimikunnat, joista käytetään yhteisnimitystä Suomen Akatemia / State scientific committees, collectively referred to as the Academy of Finland*
- *Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriön valvonnassa toimiva työsuojelurahasto / Finnish Work Environment Fund, operating under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health*

Taxation of personal grants 2/2

- If the grant is paid by a private source, it is exempt from tax if the total amount of grant income you receive for the year (both private and government) does not exceed the amount of the State's artist grant (25 547,52 € starting 1.5.2023).
- The part of private grants that exceeds the State's artist grant, together with government grants, is taxable.



Social security + other links

- **Personal grants for working at least 4 months (and 4288 € converted to annual income, more info: see links below)**
 - **statutory social security and pension fee ca. 15%**
 - **<https://www.mela.fi/en/grant-and-scholarship-recipients/>**
 - **<https://saatiotrahastot.fi/apurahan-hakijalle/> (in Finnish)**
- **Tax administration on personal grants:**
 - **<https://www.vero.fi/en/individuals/tax-cards-and-tax-returns/income/earned-income/grants/>**

Group work preparation

There will be a short group work after our presentations.

To prepare for the group work during the presentations,

- try to come up with a topic for a project / artistic work that you could apply funding for from the foundations (it can be anything, not necessarily something you would actually do);**
- when listening to the presentations, think how your project idea fits to be funded by the discussed foundations.**

You will get more detailed instructions for the group work after the presentations.

How to find suitable foundations

How to find the right foundations to fund your work

There are several hundred foundations that award grants in Finland.

Information about foundations:

Association of Finnish Foundations - Supporting Finnish art, research and societal development (saatiotrahastot.fi)

Current calls: <https://research.fi/en/>



How to choose the right one for your project / activity?

Find out

- what their general purpose, mission, goals are
- what kind of activities they want to fund (funding strategy)
- evaluation criteria
- if they have specific focuses / themes
- if they have specific restrictions

See what they have funded before

- List of grants often available on the foundation's website

Check the practical rules and instructions

- Application forms (in the submission system)
- Project plan template?
- Budget template and rules?

Finnish Cultural Foundation / Suomen Kulttuurirahasto

Link: <http://www.skr.fi/en>

Topics: arts, science and various fields of cultural life

Deadlines:

- **October round of applications: Central Fund grants (31.10.2023)**
- **January round of applications: regional funds (17 funds; grants for work in the field of culture within their region)**
- **March round of applications: Mobility grants for artists and critics, annually changing special purpose grants such as the Argumenta, the possibility borrow a musical instrument (29.3.2023)**
- **August round of applications: Artists's Residencies, Mobility, World on Stage Grant (31.08.2023)**

Grantees: individuals, working groups and organizations

For: research projects, art projects, PhD thesis (full- and half-time), postdoc, finalizing degree (e.g. field work or material expenses), travel grants

Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation

Link: <http://www.wihurinrahasto.fi/>

Topics: science, art, and societal activities

Deadline: Usually every year in May; next deadline 31.5.2023

Grantees: individuals and organizations

For: artistic work in the fields of music, literature, dance or theater, instrument purchases, organizing performances and events, initiatives & development projects in the fields of art and culture, research projects, PhD thesis (full year, half year), postdoc (full year, half year), homing-grants (after postdoc work abroad), research costs, youth work, voluntary national defense work, cultural activities, promotion of entrepreneurial skills

Alfred Kordelin Foundation

Link: <http://www.kordelin.fi/en/grants>

Topics: science, arts, literature, public education

August application round (next deadline 15.08.2023)

- **Grantees: individuals; private individuals and collectives for cultural grants**
- **For: professional artistic work, doctoral dissertation finalization, early phase postdoc researchers, related research visits**

January application round: Major cultural projects grants

- **Grantees: collectives and registered associations**
- **For projects in the field of science, art, societal activities or various combinations thereof**
- **For: work and expenses (two years, € 100,000 - 300,000)**

January application round: City funds and dedicated funds

- **City funds: Grants to private individuals, working groups and collectives support local culture**
- **Dedicated funds: Grants in the fields of chemistry, pediatric heart disease, and research into Estonian and other Finno-Ugric languages**

Kone Foundation

Link: <https://koneensaatio.fi/en/>

Topics: humanities, social sciences and environmental sciences, artistic research; artistic work in all fields of art, as well as multidisciplinary work combining art and research

Deadline: Usually every year in September; next deadline 15.9.2023

Grantees: individuals, a working groups, legal entities with a Finnish business ID

For: academic research, artistic work, multidisciplinary work and promotion of academic and/or artistic work in the above mentioned fields, e.g. research popularization, artistic outreach, events and publications in the above mentioned fields, other cultural work (rarely funded)

There can also be thematic calls: <https://koneensaatio.fi/en/grants/programmes/>

Saari Residence: artists can apply for residencies in a separate call, next application round in March 2024. <https://koneensaatio.fi/en/saari-residence/>

How to write a proposal for a foundation

What is a Grant Application?

A full grant application will usually consist of:

- **Administrative Forms in the funder's online system**
 - **Open the online form as soon as possible!** The online system may have additional instructions on how to complete other parts of the application.
- **Project/Research Plan**
 - Often attached as a PDF. This must follow the funder's structure and formatting instructions
- **Additional Attachments**
 - Each funder will specify any additional documents they need. For example, a C.V., letters of recommendation, certificates, etc.

Read the instructions for applicants!

Foundations provide written guidelines for applicants on their website

- Electronic forms may contain further instructions
- Public website may contain relevant information
- FAQ section on the foundation website will clarify common issues
- Foundations sometimes organize info sessions preceding the call

It may be necessary to contact the foundation to clarify instructions

Read guidelines, available public information, and create a proposal as soon as call opens

Shape the idea to the funder's interests

- What are the expectations of the call?
- What are the funder's focuses or main goals?
- What are the funder's evaluation criteria?
- Read the call text carefully!
- Think about the ways your project connects to the focuses or helps achieve the main goal.
- Look for descriptions of evaluation criteria so you know what the reviewer is told to look for in the research plan

The Project or Research Plan

- This document is the main opportunity to **convince** the reviewers that they should fund the project.
- It needs to answer the questions:
 - What is the overall goal?
 - What problem does it solve or what key question does it answer?
 - What makes it possible to do this now or why has this not been addressed before?
 - What results (new knowledge, new methods, new art works, etc.) will you have at the end of the project?
 - What methods will you use to produce these results?
 - Who can use these results and what can they do with them?

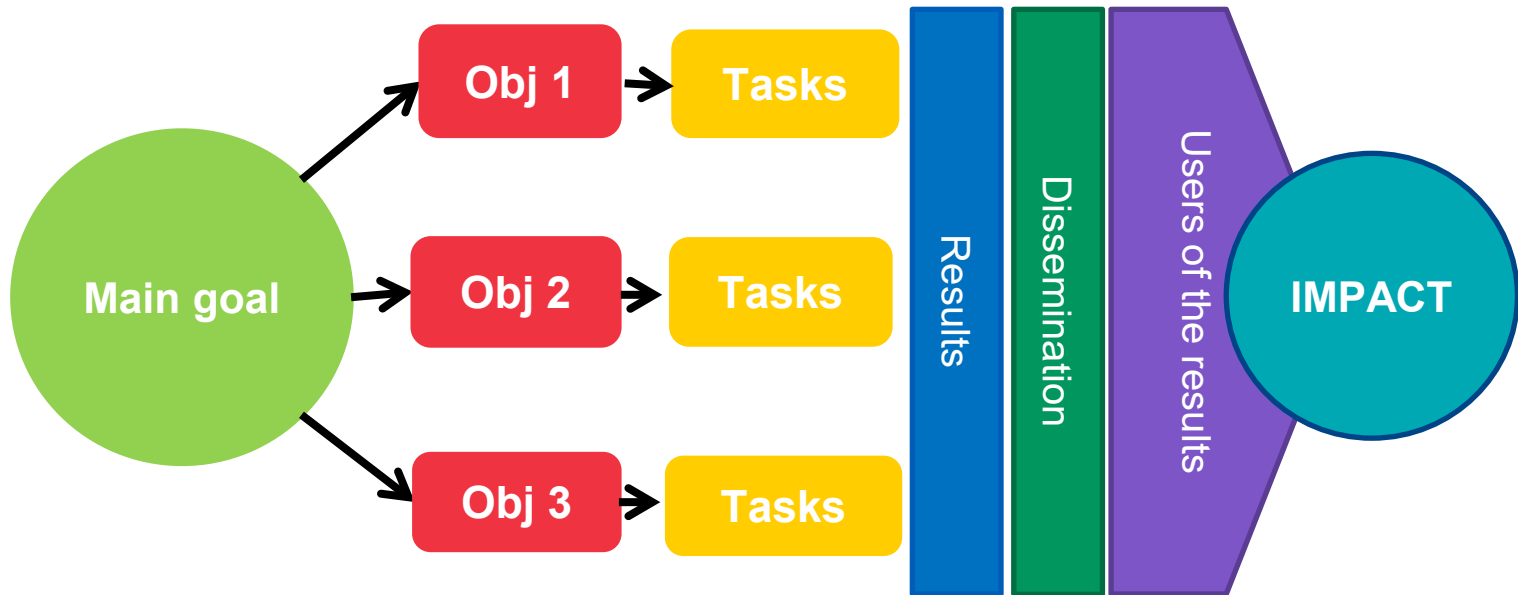
Standard parts of a Project Plan

- Topic of the research/project and the name and title of the applicant
- Abstract or summary
- introduction: explain shortly and in a focused manner what you are going to research, why the topic is important, what is the research gap and why you are competent to research the proposed topic
 - State-of-the-art and literature
 - However, be concise with the state of the art and concentrate on describing the project that you are applying for
- Objectives and research questions, possible hypotheses
- Expected results
- Methodology and research data: describe, how you will reach the objectives
- The schedule and funding, partners, possible risks and tackling them (if applicable)
- Dissemination and other utilization of results; Impact

Research plan

Connect all the pieces

Turn your idea into a workplan



Introduction

The introduction gives the key details of the project and situates it relative to the state of the art

It is an opportunity to educate the reviewer, identify the problem, and justify your study

- What is the research issue that you are addressing and why is it important?
- How is existing knowledge or practice inadequate?
- What is the problem or need?

The main project goal can be defined at the end of the introduction

- What is your new solution or approach?

Focus on giving enough information to understand the proposed research.

Consider using a figure to illustrate your concept

Goals and objectives

Goals: What you want to accomplish. Can be broad and abstract. More about the impact the project will make. Aligned with foundations agenda.

Objective: A step towards accomplishing that goal. Objectives can be narrow, precise, tangible, concrete, and can be measured.

SMART objectives — Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time bound

A reasonable structure could be 1 goal with 3-4 objectives

Research Questions: Key questions that need to be answered in order to achieve an objective

Expected results

- **The new knowledge, methods, theories, designs, processes, artworks, etc. you will produce by the end of the project**
 - E.g., the topics, results, ideas, that you will use to make publications
- **Expected results should:**
 - Connect to the research objectives
 - Deliver towards achieving the objectives you set
 - Be expressed specifically
- **Expected Results can be concrete or can be theoretic**

Note: Publications are tools that you use to communicate your results.

Methodology

- The title of this section varies from **methodology** to **materials and methods** to **workplan**
- It is a practical description of how objectives will be achieved
- Describe the method, tools and/or approach you will use

- Make it clear how objectives will be accomplished
 - How is the work organized? (Tasks)
 - What will be produced? (Deliverables)
 - What are the key points for evaluating progress? (Milestones)

- Data Management: <https://www.aalto.fi/en/open-science-and-research>
- Ethical considerations
- Risks: what are the key scientific and practical risks? What are your backup plans to deal with the risks?

Schedule

May be an independent section or part of the discussion of methodology. It is important that the reviewer can clearly see:

- **When will the work be done?**
 - When does each task start and end?
 - When do you expect key results to be ready?
- **Who does the work and where does it take place?**
 - If there are trips to other institutions or countries, when? What is done during the trip?
 - If there is a group involved, identify who leads each task

Gantt charts are often used to help illustrate the project schedule.

Dissemination

Dissemination is the process of getting your results to interested groups that can use them:

- What communities can use your results? E.g., other researchers, other artists, grassroots organizations, policymakers, etc.
- How do you reach those communities? E.g., scientific publications, workshops, conferences, community meetings, magazine articles, etc.

Once those groups start to use your results you begin to achieve **impact**.

Impact

Impact addresses a need or problem. What is the key problem your results will contribute to solving?

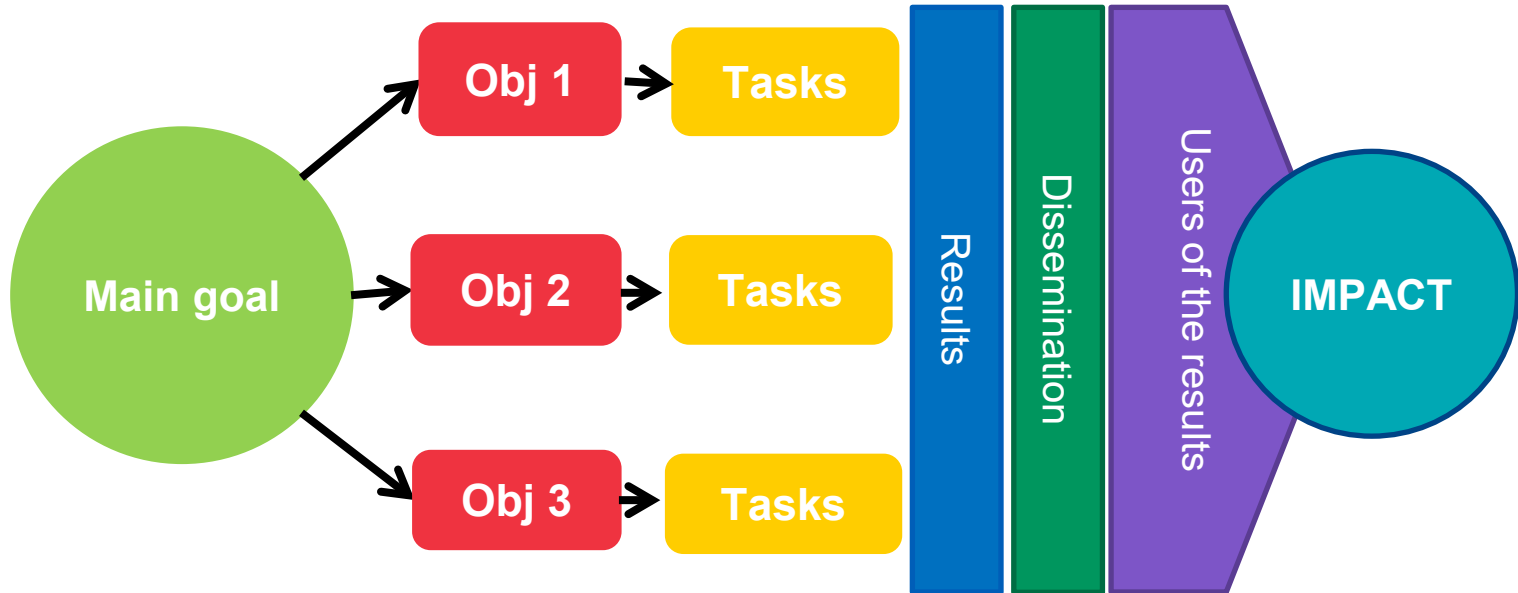
It can be:

- **Scientific:** new methods, data, etc. that will help address major questions in the field.
- **Societal:** new tools, data, etc. that will help people address a major societal issue.
- **Economic:** new technologies, patents, etc. that could create economic benefit.

Impact begins when you share your results with communities that can use them.

Research plan

Connect all the pieces



Budget

Most personal grants have a fixed sum and do not require planning or justification

If a project budget or expenses are required, then

- Make sure your budget is realistic
- If there is a template available, *use it*
- If there is an upper limit you can apply for, do not exceed it
- Carefully justify the expenses if asked to do so

This information is often collected as part of the administrative forms in the online system, or it may be requested as an additional attachment (or both).

Letters of recommendation

Check if recommendation letters are needed

- (1) Applicant provides recommendation letter
- (2) The foundation may request recommendation letter directly from referees

A person who can explain the importance of the research, project or activity and assess the applicant's ability to carry it the project

- Reference letter may be freeform (check instructions)
- Sometimes referees are asked to complete a form with specific questions
- Ask referee what they need from you
- Familiarize yourself and your referee with the foundation specific practices

Your CV

The CV is used to evaluate your ability to carry out the project

1. Concentrate on the essentials

- Even if no page limit: 4-5 pages max
- Use reverse chronological lists (newer to older)

2. Be clear, concise, and specific

- Keep jargon to a minimum
- Give specific and/or measurable information

3. Adapt your CV to suit the grant you are applying for

4. Pay attention to the presentation of your CV

- Easy-to-read fonts and type sizes
- Only use headings and bullet points (no prose or narrative CV)

5. Check your CV and get feedback from others

List of publications or portfolio

May be part of the CV or requested as a separate attachment.

A list of your published publications

- Provide full references & digital object identifiers (DOI)
- Some funders forbid the inclusion of manuscript drafts
- If you are including unpublished articles indicate the status (in preparation, submitted, under review, under revisions, accepted, in press)
- **Other Key Outputs**
 - Check the funder's instructions concerning what can be included
 - May be able to include exhibitions, published artwork, published data sets, etc.
 - Give clear and complete identifying information

Portfolio

- For Art or Artistic research projects, a portfolio may be required.
- Showcases the applicant's level of artistic expression, quality of artistic thinking and any other particular proficiency that the applicant finds relevant to mention.

Stand out from the crowd

What makes your proposal unique?

What can only you do?

What is novel in your application?

Try new approaches

Follow the instructions for the research plan

Check if the funder has strict rules for the application format

1. Attachments (budgets, CV, list of publications, research plan, recommendations)
2. Required research plan sections (for example, objectives, methodology, or schedule)
3. Common limits on page number and font size
4. Limits placed on tables and figure number
5. File size and format

Use template if available

Use persuasive language

- Know your audience
- Be concise, cohesive and coherent
- Use active verb forms
- Alternate short and long sentences
- Make every paragraph, sentence and word count
- Make a strong ending
- Be specific and detailed
- Use future tense
- Use personal pronouns

See "*Grant writing in English*" lecture as part of the **2022 Grant Writing Seminar**

<https://aalto.cloud.panopto.eu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=ec0ba722-d18b-4dd7-ad0c-ae94007bb791>

It is OK to praise yourself

- Past performance is an indicator of future success
- Reviewers are likely to evaluate the research plan and your competency to carry it out
- Highlight your strengths, not weaknesses
- Do not unnecessarily caveat things
- Stay honest & credible

- Adhere to limitations placed on researcher metrics

Dos and do nots

DO

- Engage the reader from the very beginning and stand out
- Stay on focus and explain things (“show, don’t tell”)
- Make sure your project is feasible and arguments specific & convincing
- Follow the instructions
- Prepare to revise your application, over and over again!

DON'T

- Include anything unnecessary in your application nor exceed the given page limit
- Write your application as if it was a scientific article (persuasive not objective)
- Deviate from the instructions
- Oversell your idea
- Be too modest

Group work: analysing a call

Group work (30 minutes)

- **Come up with a project topic: e.g., an event; research project; artistic project; travel activity, etc.**
- **Decide which of the key funders we discussed might fund this idea**
 - Kone Foundation: <https://koneensaatio.fi/en/>
 - The Finnish Cultural Foundation: <https://skr.fi/en>
 - Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation: <https://wihurinrahasto.fi/?lang=en>
 - Alfred Kordelin Foundation: <https://kordelin.fi/en/grants>
- **What are the funder's focuses, how do you take those into account?**
- **How much would you apply for?**
- **What kind of costs (working grants, activity costs, equipment, travel) do you apply for?**

Wrap up

Questions and discussion from the group work.

Example of how to answer the questions for the KONE Foundation:

General Information: [Information for grant applicants - Kone Foundation \(koneensaatio.fi\)](https://www.koneensaatio.fi/)

Foundation focuses: [Kone Foundation's focuses in awarding grants - Kone Foundation \(koneensaatio.fi\)](https://www.koneensaatio.fi/)

Funding: [Guidelines for making a grant application - Kone Foundation \(koneensaatio.fi\)](https://www.koneensaatio.fi/)

Links to additional training videos

- [Pre-Awards Panopto Channel](#)
- [Seminar on Personal Grants](#)
- [Short Course on Grant Writing](#)
- [Grant Writing Seminar 2022](#)