Tieteentekijöiden liitto - The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers (FUURT)

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Chair of UOA
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The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers is a professional organisation for teachers, researchers, library personnel and other academic experts especially at universities and research institutions.

The Union is Akava’s largest and most influential affiliate within the university sector and is the most qualified expert on issues concerning researchers employed in other sectors as well.

The Union’s main activities and promotion of interests in research sector include promotion of interests at the workplace and working life and lobbying regarding research and higher education policy-making in Finland.

The Union has 15 member associations with a combined membership of over 7,000 employees.
Although unions are probably familiar to most Finns, researchers especially from abroad might find the idea of being a member of a union unfamiliar.

Basic things:
- Yes, it is legal. (Yes, this has been asked...)
- No, the employer won’t and cannot discriminate you based on your membership (which is confidential anyway).
- Most people belong to a union. About 70-90% of Finnish workers are a member of some labour union. Employers also have their own unions.
- Unions are non-profit and independent from any political parties.
- Unions are often run democratically: the members vote/select (through representatives) the people for boards of local associations, the national union, the confederate of unions etc.
- There are nice perks and services!
The Union supports you nationally and locally through member associations.

The Union negotiates with the Employers’ Association of Universities in Finland on the wages and other employment terms and conditions of university personnel.

The Union is heard in the Finnish Parliament concerning any matters that are related to university or academic policies.

The Ministry of Education and Culture and the Academy of Finland request statements from the Union on key university and science policy issues.

The Union played a significant role in ensuring that those who work on grant or scholarship funding are included within the scope of statutory pension and accident insurance.

The Union actively lobbies on issues such as the position of fixed-term employees, the status of junior researchers, the employment of individuals with a doctoral degree, and the funding of universities and science in general.
The University of Oulu Academics

The University of Oulu Academics (UOA) is the local member association of FUURT. We are an independent association with our own budget, rules etc.

We advocate for good working conditions and practices for the researchers and teachers at the University of Oulu and organise seminars, free-time events and offer possibilities for everyone to make a better work environment.

We have representation of shop stewards and members in the University Board, Collegium etc.
Membership

Union
► Advocacy, guidance, advice, training and seminars both from the Union office and from local associations.
► Travel, leisure, and legal insurance included in the membership.
► Discounts for additional insurances, bank services, and all the discount from Akava’s joint Member+ service
► The joint university Acatiimi journal subscription
► Yearly calendar
► The unemployment fund for salaried members
► New membership benefit 2020: Oder residence in Germany
► Etc.

Local benefits
► The cottage in Syöte for free-time usage for minimal price
► Representation in local university organs and a better possibility to participate
► Offers an academic community for all researchers and teachers at the University of Oulu
► Etc.

Membership fee
The membership fee for UOA is 1.1 % of salary, or 8 €/month for grant researchers and other "non-salaried" members.

An academic community for all researchers
The Unemployment Fund

► If you are a member of an unemployment fund in Finland for at least 6 months while employed, you have better protection for a possible unemployment.

► You will receive increased unemployment allowance for 300-400 days that is proportional to your salary prior to unemployment. It is further increased in case you are active in job-searching.

► With a monthly salary of 2000 e, you would receive an allowance of about 1300 e, instead of the basic 696.60 e. At 3000 e salary the allowance would be about 1750 e.

► New rulings for international researchers outside EU allow a job-seeking visa for 1 year after your research contract or completion of studies.

► Unfortunately grant research does not count as employment, but it will extend the period from which income is calculated. So if you have had 6 month employment before your grant period, you are still protected.
More examples:

Example 1:
► You are hired as a doctoral or project researcher for a project lasting 6 months. Your salary is 2500 €/month.

► If you have been a member of the fund+union for the whole project period, you will eligible for earning based allowance from the Teacher’s unemployment fund.

► If you don’t manage to get funding (grant or contract) for your PhD after the 6 month contract period, you will get an unemployment allowance of about 1500 €/month, until you manage to find a job or grant.

► You are not allowed to work or publish during your unemployment, but nothing prohibits you from increasing your expertise by, e.g., reading scientific articles etc. You can complete some studies (max 20 ECTS per year)

Example 2:
► You are an international researcher and you finish your research project or doctoral degree in Finland. Your average salary before finishing your project was about 2750 €/month.

► As a researcher, you are eligible for an extended residence permit for up to one year to look for work or to start a business.

► Your unemployment allowance during job searching will be about 1650 €/month. This allowance can be counted for the income requirement of the residence permit.

► Reminder: the baseline unemployment allowance without a fund membership is ~700 €/month.
The Syöte Cottage

► UOA has a cottage in Syöte national park (~130 km from Oulu) for use by members.
► The daily price is 10-70 e depending on the time of year and week.
► It fits up to 12 people for staying. There are skiing and hiking paths, a lake for swimming, a sauna, all cutlery, stove etc. Just bring your own towels and sheets.

► Reservations and calendar:
  Oya.fi -> Notes -> Syöte Cottage
Early Stage Researchers’ Work Group & Eurodoc

► The Union’s Early Stage Researchers’ Work Group oversees the interests of doctoral candidates and recently graduated post-doctoral researchers, both within the Union and in society at large.

► The work group has drawn attention to the position of junior researchers within the academic community, including such aspects as the terms and conditions of research work, the fragmentation of funding, a lack of respect and the rights of those working with the support of grant or scholarship funds.

► The work group provides FUURT with current information about the everyday life of young researchers in the universities, thus ensuring that their needs are addressed in any collective bargaining negotiations in which a Union representative is present. The Union expresses the opinions of young researchers to influence labour market policies, also through the trade union confederation Akava.

► The Union is also a member of Eurodoc, the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers, which address these issues at the European level.
The Board of UOA

► The local association has a board that is selected yearly. We have a wide representation from many faculties and fields of study.

► We have quasi-monthly meetings, where we discuss current issues and news at the university, organise events and make decisions concerning our operations.

► The board is selected by the yearly fall association meeting, which is open to all members of UOA.
Shop stewards at the University

► Shop stewards are representatives selected by the employees.
► The University of Oulu has a total of 23 shop stewards, of which 4 are "chief" shop stewards.
► Shop stewards from FUURT are on the right. Other unions also have representation (professors, administrative staff etc., see Notio search: "Shop Stewards")
► Shop stewards make sure that the agreements made in collective bargaining are followed and negotiate with the university in of co-operation negotiations (that might lead to layoffs etc.).
► They also help employees with confidential issues and questions regarding your work contract, working conditions, legal issues etc.

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<th>Pääluottamusmies / Chief shop steward</th>
<th>Varapääluottamusmies / Deputy chief shop steward</th>
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<tr>
<td>Annamari Markkola</td>
<td>Pirkko Viitala</td>
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<td>Biologian Its</td>
<td>Farmakologian ja toksikologian Its</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<th>Luottamusmies / Shop steward</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jari Heikkinen</td>
<td>Mervi Heikkinen</td>
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<td>Koulutuspalvelut</td>
<td>Kasvatustieteellinen tk</td>
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<td>Seija Jalagin</td>
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Research and guides by the Union

WORKING AT THE UNIVERSITY
A GUIDE FOR THE UNIVERSITY'S TEACHING AND RESEARCH STAFF
7 pages

GRANT INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS
ELINA KATAINEN
36 pages

SURVEY FOR EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS IN FINLAND 2017
An English Summary
By the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers
32 pages (English Summary 12 pages)

Find all at https://tieteentekijoidenliitto.fi/en/material
Contact information

► Tietentekijat.fi
► Oya.fi (current site in Facebook, new site is being constructed)
► and references therein
New look!

► Look out for the brand new logo and visuals on your feeds!
KIITOS!
Questions?

TIE TEEN TEKIJÄT*
*UNIVERSUMIN ASIALLA