

# Research Council of Finland

## Grants for EUI doctoral programmes

Nov 2024



# EUI doctoral programme

- The European University Institute (EUI) in Florence, Italy, is run jointly by EU Member States. The EUI arranges postgraduate training and awards research grants to postdoctoral researchers.
- The EUI has four departments:
  - [History](#)
  - [Economics](#)
  - [Law](#)
  - [Political and Social Sciences](#)
- The language of instruction in the four-year EUI doctoral programme is normally English, in some programmes French.
- Successful applicants are expected to work on their doctoral dissertations during the programme. The EUI particularly supports international and comparative studies, but the research need not focus on European history or society alone. The EUI offers students a unique study opportunity in an international, multidisciplinary setting.
- Around 130 doctoral candidates start their studies at the EUI each year.

# A yearly quota for candidates from Finland

- Candidates apply to the EUI, choose Finland as their Grant Authority
- Aim is to select 2–3 new postgraduate students from Finland each year
- Eligibility criteria:
  - Candidates who are Finnish nationals are eligible.
  - Candidates who hold dual nationality (of which one is Finnish) may apply once they have completed, or are in the process of completing, a Master's degree at a Finnish university. The deadline for gaining the degree is in May (check for updates).
  - Non-Finnish candidates may apply once they have completed, or are in the process of completing, a Master's degree at a Finnish university. The degree deadline is in May (check for updates).
- Please check the criteria in force for the application round
  - [EUI page of Research Council of Finland](#)
  - [Finland page of the EUI](#)

# RCF grants for doctoral research at the EUI

- The Research Council of Finland provides grants to Finnish doctoral candidates selected to study at the EUI
- Grant amounts:
  - €2,200 per month
  - With dependents, the grant is €2,600 per month
  - The grant may also cover some travel expenses and necessary research costs
- Granted yearly, for up to 3–5 years

# After successful admission to the EUI

- The Research Council of Finland
  - Opens applications for the EUI grant, usually in April each year (grantees will be contacted personally with instructions on how to apply)
  - Funding for the research grant plus possibly travel expenses and other research costs
  - Decisions made by end of June
- The EUI
  - Sends candidates a welcome package and advises on all issues related to the start of the doctoral studies, housing, etc.
  - RCF will not be able to assist in practical issues related to relocation.
- Grantees send a request for payment to the RCF
  - The grant is paid monthly to the candidate's personal bank account.
  - The research costs (travels, other costs) are paid out twice a year.

# Grant holders and other Finnish authorities

- Please note: the RCF can be your contact point if you need assistance with Finnish authorities, but the RCF is not your employer, so you will need to take care of your personal affairs (e.g. taxation, insurance, social security) related to the move abroad.
- Grant holders need to take out [MELA insurance](#)
  - earnings-related pension and occupational accident insurance
  - handled by MELA (Farmers' Social Insurance Institution)
  - NB: Insurance costs will be covered (reduced) from the grant
- Grant holders have the possibility to apply for a decision from the [Finnish Pension Office](#) that they remain covered by the Finnish social security system while temporarily working abroad.
- See also Kela's instructions: [Are you going outside Finland?](#)
- Also check the Tax Administration's instructions [Taxation of income earned abroad.](#)
  - RCF grant will not be taxed, but fourth-year PhD students get part of their grant from the EUI and might be liable to Finnish taxation
- It is also advisable to familiarise yourself with your rights and duties as a grant holder, e.g.:
  - [Association of Finnish Foundations: Supporting Finnish art, research and societal development](#)
  - [FUURT: Checklist for grant recipient](#)



# Advice and experiences

- The following pages contain data gathered by interviewing a Finnish EUI professor and several EUI PhD candidates during the academic year 2023-2024.
- The views presented are personal and do not represent the position of the Research Council of Finland or the EUI.

## Interviewees:

- Professor Juho Härkönen, EUI Department of Political and Social Sciences
- PhD Candidates: Mikko Koskela, Laura Kuitunen, Annika Lehmus-Sun, Lotta Lintunen and Matilda Merenmies



# Professor Juho Härkönen (EUI SPS): Why should you apply?

- The EUI offers a doctoral training programme, not just a programme to write your PhD
  - Well-structured doctoral programme, compared to Finnish ones
  - Courses and training during first years to build competence to carry out the dissertation research
  - Long-term benefits: support and training for academic/alt-academic career
- The most international doctoral programme in Europe
- EUI graduates have good career prospects
  - The majority will continue on an academic career path
  - The EUI also has other programmes: [Max Weber postdoctoral programme](#)



# Professor Juho Härkönen (EUI SPS): Tips for applying to EUI doctoral programmes

- A good research idea is central
  - Contribution to the field as well as scientific significance and research excellence
  - Clear research question and a research plan to address it
  - Needs to show you know the research field
  - Europe-centricity is not a key selection criterion
  - Innovativeness is important, but should not be superimposed
- Find a balance between feasibility and ambition
  - The research plan must be implemented in four years
- The research idea does not need to be ready, often it in fact changes during the research work
- Grades and reference letters matter as well
  - A good reference letter gives examples of what the applicant has done and why they would be an excellent PhD candidate
  - Praise and superlatives are not requested
  - Reference giver should be an experienced academic

# Alumni experiences: Why choose the EUI?

- International and full-time programme
  - If the dissertation research makes good progress each year, the grant is secured for four years, although it needs to be applied for each year.
  - Small grant amount compared to Florence prices
  - Good international reputation of the EUI
  - Helps launch an academic career
- Suitable for younger researchers in particular
  - Family-work life balance can be hard to find
- Florence:
  - Culture and international atmosphere
  - The EUI helps with Italian bureaucracy
  - Contacts with the locals can be scarce

# Alumni experiences: Studying at the EUI

- The EUI community is the best part of working at the EUI.
  - International environment unique in Europe
  - Lots of events and activities
  - Many high-quality research visitors → easy to establish a good international network
  - Environment encourages collaboration and exchange of ideas, also interdisciplinarily
- A structured degree
  - No teaching requirement, you get to concentrate on your own research
  - Supervision available, but not always enough
  - Changing your supervisor might be difficult
  - Focus during first years is on training and courses, not on your PhD
  - Prepare to work very intensively
- Special arrangements may cause extra challenges
  - E.g. moving with your family might make it more difficult to find housing

# Alumni experiences: How to prepare for the interview?

- It is not a regular job interview.
- The focus will be on your research plan.
  - Know your research plan inside out! Many questions are related to your research topic.
  - Be prepared to justify why the EUI would be a good place to write the dissertation.
  - Know the potential, challenges and core of your own research.
  - Be prepared to provide a plan on how you will start to implement your research plan.
  - Be prepared for challenging questions.
  - The atmosphere in the interview is usually quite relaxed.
- Practise by presenting your research idea as an elevator pitch.

# Contact information

## EUI

Application guidance: [www.eui.eu](http://www.eui.eu)

Find out more and apply:  
[www.eui.eu/PhD](http://www.eui.eu/PhD)

[Finland/Suomi \(eui.eu\)](http://www.eui.eu/Finland/Suomi)

Contact: [Information Request Form  
\(PhD, LLM, MREs Programmes\) | EUI  
Admissions Office](#)

## Research Council of Finland

Grant process guidance

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