



TIETEENTEKIJÖIDEN LIITTO
FORSKARFÖRBUNDET
The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers



GRANT INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS

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GRANT INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS

Most researchers' careers will include grant-funded periods during which the certainties of an employment relationship may no longer apply. The status of researchers working under grant funding has changed substantially after 2009 because of revisions to social security and the university institution. The Grant Information for Researchers guide by the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers was published in 2013. Following that, the situation has changed to the extent that it has become necessary to update the guide.

Grant recipients, who are covered by the Finnish social security system and have been awarded a working grant by a Finnish grant maker, have, since the beginning of 2009 and under specific conditions, been covered by statutory pension, occupational accident and group life insurance security. Furthermore, they have been entitled to daily benefits as prescribed in insurance legislation.

More detailed instructions regarding the impact grants have on unemployment security were issued around the same time, and these instructions have since been specified. The amendment to the Un-employment Benefits Act applicable to self-employed persons, which took effect at the beginning of 2016, has no impact on those working under a grant, but if the grant recipient works temporary jobs at the same time, the amendment must be taken into account. The guide also includes information on the taxation of a grant, as well as on the social security of those working under a grant overseas and researchers arriving in Finland during the term of their grant.

Finland's new Universities Act entered into force at the beginning of 2010. Subsequent changes at universities have affected the status of grant-term researchers in the work community. A 2012 Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers questionnaire targeting researchers in the doctoral thesis stage provided information on difficulties related to work conditions. The responses to this survey (Early Career Researchers questionnaire 2012) were used as background material to this guide. A new questionnaire was conducted in 2017. Different universities have employed different solutions to problematic situations and the guide showcases some good practices.

The Council of Finnish Foundations has also aimed to improve the status of grant recipients within the university community, and some foundations and funds have offered a workspace or other benefits to the researchers they fund. The Finnish Cultural Foundation, for example, pays grant recipients a university compensation with which they can arrange to work in university premises or elsewhere.

The livelihood of researchers working under a small grant in particular as well as the practice of universities to pay some researchers working in a doctoral degree programme a salary and award a grant to others doing the same work remain problems to be solved. Universities are also insufficiently informed of the fact that grant-term researchers should always receive monetary compensation for any administrative and teaching work they are required to perform. In some universities, the government's funding cuts have been visible as a reduction in part-time teaching, partly taken care of by grant recipients.

The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers promotes the interests of researchers working under a grant. The final chapter of this guide contains information on the benefits of trade union membership and how the Union has promoted the status of researchers working under a grant. In the spring of 2016, the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers joined Akava's representative body for entrepreneurs and self-employed professionals to monitor the interests of researchers working under a grant there. We recommend that you contact your local branch or the Union office should problems arise. Contact details are listed on the **Union's website**.

In Helsinki, 28th of September 2017

Elina Katainen

1. THE BASICS IN A NUTSHELL

The term grant refers to monetary aid allocated towards research, artistic activity or studying. First and foremost, this guide examines working grants, which provide recipients with the opportunity to devote themselves full-time to independent scientific research. However, grants are also awarded to cover expenses, such as travel costs, incurred because of research work.

A grant is non-repayable money. In other words, the grant maker or the provider of a working space cannot demand quid pro quo payment from the recipient nor control his or her work or its results. As a rule, the grant maker will demand a retrospective account of how the money was spent, but this does not change the fundamental nature of the grant.

A grant may not be used to replace an employment relationship and grant recipients cannot be required to perform any other activities than those for which the grant was awarded. If the grant maker or the provider of a working space has specified the research subject in detail, if the right of possession and intellectual property rights to the findings are reserved or if the grant is associated with teaching or other work obligations, the case does not, in actual fact, involve a grant, but is instead an employment relationship for which a salary should be paid. Some times, remuneration for a specific item of work is called a grant in order to avoid payment of payroll taxes and other employer contributions.

A grant awarded by a public entity is always non-taxable, while a grant made by a private entity, such as a foundation or university, is non-taxable up to a certain amount.

The hallmarks of a grant awarded for independent scientific research are:

- The grant is open to public application and is awarded based on applications.

- No special conditions are attached to the awarding of the grant and research is not performed at the initiative or under the control of the grant maker.
- An employment relationship does not exist between the grant maker and recipient nor is the money payment for work performed.

The Grant information for researchers guide presents basic facts on the status of researchers during a grant term. It is easiest to safeguard your rights by getting to know the issues before it's too late and by contacting your trade union should problems arise. To sum up, it could be said that a grant recipient should take into account the following:

- A grant does not create an employment relationship and a researcher working under a grant is not an employee of the university or research institute.
- The grantee usually makes an agreement with the university that determines the services offered by the university and the responsibilities of the grantee during the grant term.
- The amount of grants received from foundations, universities and other private entities that exceeds the upper limit of a non-taxable artist grant is subject to tax. The amount of artistic grant is confirmed annually.
- The statutory pension and workplace accident insurance of grant recipients is handled by the Farmers' Social Insurance Institution Mela. The income that forms the basis of this insurance determines all of the benefits associ-

ated with the insurance and may also affect the benefits paid by Kela, the Finnish Social Insurance Institution.

- Grants are not taken into account when calculating the amount of an earnings-related unemployment benefit. A grant term will likewise not contribute toward the employment condition of the earnings-related daily allowance, but it does extend the time period over which the required amount of employment can be accumulated.
- It is possible to join a trade union during a grant term, but not an unemployment fund. A requirement of fund membership is that the applicant is in a paid employment relationship at the time of joining. An employment relationship may be very short indeed. It is not, however, necessary to terminate your fund membership when the grant term commences.
- A researcher may do some paid work during a grant period, normally for a maximum of 25 per cent of their working hours.
- A researcher completing post-graduate studies during his or her grant term may be entitled to student financial aid.
- A grant given towards studying and doctoral thesis work is not considered as income when a child's day care fees are determined, but other grants do, however, affect the size of these fees.
- A grant is considered income when assessing eligibility for the general housing allowance

and social income support.

- A researcher working overseas under a grant may, if certain conditions are met, be covered by the Finnish social security system and it is usually not worthwhile for him or her to terminate trade union or unemployment fund membership when leaving Finland.

2. WORKING UNDER A GRANT

2.1 FRAGMENTATION OF FUNDING

Research is conducted with the help of many types of funding at Finnish universities and research institutions. Employment relationships, grant terms, non-university work, temporary work, entrepreneurial activities and unemployment often overlap to some extent. "Grant-funded researchers" do not form a permanent caste, it is more proper to speak of one form of funding research work among many.

According to the report published by Juha Sainio and Eric Carver in 2016 – **Tavoitteidensa mukaisella työllä. Aarresaari-verkoston tohtoriuraseuranta 2015, vuosina 2012–2013 valmistuneet** – a fifth of respondents in 2012 and 2013 who had completed a doctoral degree reported gainful employment outside the university as the primary source of funding for their doctoral thesis work, while a fifth reported the primary source of it to be a position at a graduate school for doctoral degree and another fifth duties at the university. A personal grant was nearly as important a form of funding, being the most significant one for 17 per cent of the respondents. In addition to the aforementioned, one in every seven respondents considered funding derived through a project the most

important method of funding, and six per cent mentioned some other source.

Nevertheless, a great many of the respondents had relied on a grant at some point. According to a previous, equivalent report published in 2010 80% of respondents said that they had received funding from at least two sources while drafting their doctoral thesis. More than half of the respondents had at some stage worked under a grant, with 63% of women and 46% of men having done so. According to the 2016 membership survey of the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers, 72 per cent of respondents had worked under a grant at some point during their career. The reports on membership surveys can be found on the [union's website](#).

Men had financed their doctoral dissertation work by working in research or teaching functions at university more often than women (46% of men and 38% of women). There was no notable difference on the part of other forms of funding, such as graduate schools for doctoral studies and Academy of Finland projects.

In the 2016 survey, most doctors of engineering sciences and natural sciences reported a position at a graduate school as their primary source of funding. Gainful employment outside the university was most often the source of funding for doctors of health sciences, medicine and educational sciences. Personal grants were most common among doctors of human sciences and theology.

Often people also continue to work under a grant even after they complete their doctoral degree, a fact also indicated by the age distribution of grant recipients. In 2010–2015, more than half of academics' Mela insurances were granted to 30–39-year-olds, the mean age being 35 and the median age 33. More than a fourth of the insurances were granted to those aged less than 30, and a little less than a fourth to those past 40 years of age.

A grant seems to be a typical form of funding research for women, since in 2010–2015, a majority of all Mela insured academics were fe-

male and, at the end of 2016, the share of women was slightly more than 57 per cent. Of those who completed their doctoral degree in 2016, 50.4 per cent were women. Simultaneously, the earned income of academics working under a grant has increased by nearly 15 per cent and was EUR 23,193 for men and EUR 22,670 for women in 2015. The distribution does indicate that the income sufficiency and other problems associated with working under a grant to a certain extent accumulate more heavily on female researchers than they do on their male counterparts.

According to the report by Sainio and Carver, a number equal to those who reported a personal grant or a position at a graduate school as the primary source of funding for their doctoral degree had been unemployed since completing their doctoral degree. The situation has also been identical in previous career questionnaires. This data differs from the results of the study **"Employment situation of people with PhDs"** commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2016), in which the employment situation of doctors who had funded their research with a grant was weaker than the employment situation of those who had relied on other sources of funding.

2.2 The difference between grants and employment relationships

The Universities Act, which entered into force in 2010, does not regulate the position of researchers working under a grant; instead, each university itself decides on the practices it observes. All university-related liabilities and rights of a person conducting research under a grant are subject to a separate agreement.

A researcher working under a grant is not an employee of the university. He or she does not enjoy many of the benefits associated with an employment relationship, but is also free of the obligations. Generally speaking, a researcher on a grant term gets to enjoy traditional academic freedom to a greater degree than his or

her formally employed colleague. Grant-funded researchers do not have to worry about the allocation of working time, travel management modules or administrative tasks. Completed studies must nevertheless be registered into the databases, which form the basis of university funding. Positive aspects were also pointed out in a Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers questionnaire targeting early stage researchers:

"The only required tie between myself and the department is associated with supervision, otherwise I'm as free as a bird." (Early stage researcher questionnaire 2012)

"Being a grant worker is not a bad option as such – there's less of all kinds of red tape than afflicts those in employment relationships." (Early stage researcher questionnaire 2012)

"Some subjects can only be researched with funding secured from an open-minded foundation. More and more funding comes from businesses and it is increasingly difficult to get backing for researching sensitive issues." (Early stage researcher questionnaire 2012)

A researcher working under a grant nevertheless also has problems specific to his or her situation. The university has no employer obligations towards the researcher, as he or she is not an employee of the university. Not all universities provide staff identity cards, along with all the benefits they entail, to such persons. Still, the University of Jyväskylä, among others, provides a staff identity card for the term of a grant, entitling its holder to a cheaper than normal lunch and exercise possibilities for university prices. The staff identity card doubles as a library card.

A grant recipient is not insured by the university, nor can he or she avail of occupational health care services. However, grant recipients have, since 2009 and under certain conditions,

been required to take out mandatory pension insurance, and this is handled by the Farmers' Social Insurance Institution Mela. The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers has taken out a leisure time accident insurance for its members. For those working under a grant, the insurance is valid full time. During the grant term, health care is handled by the recipient's home municipality.

One respondent of the questionnaire for early stage researchers described the unpredictability of working under a grant and pointed out that, although a grant-funded researcher is spared from some make-work that is part and parcel of an employment relationship, he or she will spend time on acquiring additional funding:

"-- grant recipients and people in an employment relationship are unequal in very many respects in the work community (amount of income, social security, occupational health care, opportunities to wield influence, getting paid for teaching, opportunity to focus on research), although they are, in principle, doing the same work. The disparity also affects the workplace atmosphere and wellbeing. Furthermore, it is often the case that a doctoral employee will receive a salary in the beginning, but will depend on a grant in the final years; this means that career advancement translates into a collapse in income, when you'd expect the opposite to happen in normal working life. Applying for grants (more than ten applications a year) is stressful and demotivating." (Early stage questionnaire 2012)

Researchers engaged in the same work at a university are thus not in an equal position. They have different benefits and obligations. Universities would therefore be wise to consider their practices and how they affect researchers who are doing the same work. Early stage can work in doctoral degree programmes, for example, under an employment relationship as well as under a grant issued by a university or a university-

linked foundation. In the opinion of the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers as well as the tax authorities, the latter case constitutes evasion of employer responsibilities, i.e. these activities take place within the sphere of the grey economy. A tax administration guideline states that: "if the grant is awarded by the recipient's employer, the payment is usually considered remuneration for work performed. This constitutes an emolument, even if it is paid using the term grant."

Universities should provide justification for paying some researchers a salary and some a grant for doing the same work. For example, the grant received from the academy's own funds by a researcher working in the doctoral programme of Åbo Akademi University in 2017 is EUR 1,700 a month and for those who have completed a licentiate degree EUR 1,800, whereas the pay starts from a little less than EUR 2,000 and increases to more than EUR 2,700 as the work progresses. Even after taxation and the tax-deductible Mela premiums, there are differences in the earnings and, once work progresses, this difference increases. At the University of Jyväskylä, the first year of doctoral training can be funded via a University-awarded grant or a fixed-term employment relationship of one year. If studies and research work progress according to expectations, a three-year employment relationship will then be agreed with the researcher.

A good preference is to have researchers, who are working full-time on a doctoral dissertation, be in an employment relationship with the university. Such a solution has been adopted by the University of Helsinki Research Foundation, for example, which started funding designated positions based on the employment relationships of doctoral students in 2014.

However, the same requirements cannot be applied to non-university foundations and funds, even though there has been some discussion on whether they should be able to provide funding for employment relationships. The primary intention of foundations and funds has been to remain in control of choosing the projects they fund.

2.3 Participation in the university community during a grant term

A substantial part of the university community has traditionally worked under a grant from time to time and been an equal member of their workplace community at the same time. The problems faced by grant-term researchers have, however, become more pointed in the wake of the university reform. They have been excluded from the university community and designated as expense items.

Researchers should be able to develop their teaching skills even while on a grant term. Part-time teaching and administrative work should thus be agreed to with an employment contract and remunerated separately, i.e. the employee should receive a salary, on which the university pays the required employer contributions. The cuts in funds allocated to part-time teaching have nevertheless made the situation weaker. Researchers working under a grant have therefore been offered a chance to teach for free: according to the instructions given by the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Turku in early 2016, for instance, such researchers "may teach according to an agreement based on the researcher's voluntariness made with the person responsible for the subject in question". In return for teaching, the researcher may receive credit units. Grant-term researchers are not always entitled to participate in personnel meetings, teaching planning and university pedagogic training – this eliminates their opportunity to influence teaching plans or showcase and strengthen their competence.

Situations where the university requires grant-term researchers to teach or take care of administrative tasks as payment for work spaces, equipment or services have been especially problematic. According to the survey of early stage researchers, 27.9% of respondents working under a grant performed administrative, teaching or research work for their department or subject without receiving monetary compensation and 16.4% had not received separate monetary compensation for teaching

work. More recent information on this will be received this year. Employment certificates are not usually issued for grant-term work, so you should always request a separate certificate for any teaching and administrative work and add the work in your CV.

The Council of Finnish Foundations has tried to improve the status of researchers working under a grant by promoting an agreement between the researcher and university that secures the conditions for research in exchange for a compensation paid to the university. Some of the foundations, most notably the Finnish Cultural Foundation, have made a framework agreement with all universities which improves the status of grant recipients. The arrangement guarantees the Finnish Cultural Foundation's grant recipients working on their doctoral thesis the same basic conditions in their workplace as are enjoyed by researchers in similar duties, but with an employment relationship. The framework agreement also applies to doctors, based on the unit's discretion. In terms of the "usual basic conditions", the agreement refers to, among other things, appropriate work and laboratory premises, data communication, mail, printing, as well as library and information services (when this is allowed by the material's user licences). The grant recipient enters into an agreement with the university and takes care of the compensation payable to the university. They may also use the compensation sum to organise the research conditions they require themselves.

The access researchers working under a grant have to different support services has also been made more difficult. A researcher drafting a doctoral thesis might have used the services available to postgraduate students, but these can be more difficult to access after the thesis phase ends. Right of participation in personnel training and university-provided exercise and cultural activities may also be limited on the part of researchers working under a grant. For example, a researcher working under a grant at the University of Helsinki is permitted to take part in

training events, and other training if a place happens to be free on the course. Services, which are provided to the entire university community, have also been made available to researchers working under a grant. These include counselling on issues related to equality and overseas work, for example.

An example of good practices is provided by the University of Tampere, where those working under a grant have not been charged a rent for premises, and agreements on the use of a workspace have been made with them. These agreements have also served as an indication of inclusion within the work community and a right to vote in the university's elections.

Likewise, according to the guidelines of the University of Jyväskylä, the equipment and services (computer, printing and copying facilities, user IDs, IT support, phone, office supplies, mailing, the possibility to use laboratory premises, etc.) at the disposal of a grant-term researcher have been agreed upon in the grant-term researcher's agreement. A workspace has been provided if the grant includes a general expenses allowance. Otherwise, the possibility for a workspace varies from unit to unit and according to the overall personnel situation.

In 2015, the University of Turku adopted what is referred to as a commitment document, which allows faculties or departments to make comprehensive agreements on research and the working conditions with researchers working under a grant. Among other things, the document agrees on the use of facilities and the equipment necessary to engage in research (computer, phone, office supplies, laboratory equipment, printing, copying, etc.), the use of the data network and the library's digital materials, confidential information, intellectual property rights, publications and insurances.

In early 2015, the rector of the University of Helsinki decided that faculties and departments should charge an annual compensation in the amount of EUR 1,600 from researchers working in the university's premises under a grant. In practice, however, the compensation

has only been paid at the City Centre Campus, and even there the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Social Sciences have announced that such fees will not be charged. The situation in other faculties may therefore change as well. The Faculty of Social Sciences will not charge the compensation in 2016–2020.

Grant-term researchers at the University of Helsinki can enter into one of two agreements. In the first option, they receive, in exchange for a compensation of EUR 1,600, “the discipline’s usual research conditions” such as “appropriate working and laboratory premises, data communication, mail, printing, as well as library and information services to the extent that they are generally available to researchers and doctoral students”. The normal research conditions do not necessarily “include the procurement of a computer or phone, nor occupational health care or other social benefits granted to those in an employment relationship”. The working spaces and desks offered may be in shared use.

The second option is to make an agreement solely on user IDs and access to the library and information materials, and to use any earmarked sum possibly included in the grant for the rent of a private or a shared office, for example. An agreement such as this is not subject to a compensation. Regardless of the agreement, researchers working on their doctoral thesis have a right to a university email address, user IDs and access to library and information materials. Given that most faculties no longer charge the compensation, it is nevertheless advisable to make an agreement on the researcher’s rights and obligations.

The grounds to the rector’s decision invoke the various costs generated by researchers working under a grant. There was no mention of the university benefiting manifold from this free workforce. Researchers working under a grant produce scientific data, come up with new ideas for projects, comment on texts and bring their own networks to the departments. They are building the academic community the same as any other researchers are – not to

mention teaching and providing guidance (for a separate compensation). The university is not paying them a salary for conducting research, but it does register the results of the work – i.e. publications – in its databases, from which the university receives a considerable amount of money. The return on grants is difficult to calculate in any precise figures, since a great many researchers alternate between working in an employment relationship and relying on grants, and it is not always possible to distinguish the share of work carried out under a grant from individual research. It would nevertheless be fair to present some kind of an estimate on the returns to counterbalance the expense reports.

The discussions focused on the compensation have brought up the possibility that researchers working under a grant could start pricing their publications registered in the databases of universities. This would reveal the benefit gained by the universities: researchers working under a grant are free, yet profitable, workforce for a university. Offering them free services and facilities would be the least that universities could do.

Grant-term researchers are not always permitted to download programs, which are necessary for their scientific work, onto their personal computers and some have even been denied access to electronic library materials. Respondents to the early stage researchers survey spoke of many policies that hinder their work:

“Post-doc researchers working under a grant are in very different positions depending on their respective universities and departments. My department considers post-docs working under a grant to be a burden and affords them no status whatsoever. In practice, this means that you have no possibility of receiving a work space, a university e-mail address and, as a consequence, user rights to the IT system, which in turn makes it impossible to access the university library’s electronic materials, such as dictionaries, etc., from home (which is your actual work-

place). This makes research work considerably harder to do.” (Early stage researcher questionnaire 2012)

Researchers working under a grant can check the administrative or election rules of their university on whether they have the right to vote and are eligible to vote in the elections of the university’s administrative organs, such as its board, the university collegium, faculty councils and departmental councils.

Some foundations have also been active in the workspace issue. For example, the Maj and Tor Nessling Foundation has a free workspace in Helsinki for researchers working on solutions to environmental challenges. Researchers and artists funded by the Kone Foundation have the opportunity to apply for short-term residences from the Saari Residence owned by the foundation. In Helsinki, the grant recipients of the Kone Foundation can book a space for their use free of charge to organise a seminar, for instance, or a debate, a meeting concerning a project or a networking event.

In a survey conducted by Mela (the Farmers’ Social Insurance Institution) in the spring of 2017, grant recipients expressed a desire for, first and foremost, measures that support mental working capacity and facilitate stress management. The importance of peer support was also brought up. In this survey, too, grant recipients perceived themselves to be at a disadvantage. The lack of an office of their own and personnel benefits, and particularly occupational health care services, impaired the wellbeing at work of many.

The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers is of the opinion that researchers working under a grant are an asset, rather than an expense item, to a university. With their publications, they produce not only research results to universities, but valuable credits which have their own impact on the university’s funding. The union aims to persuade all universities and research institutes to adopt good practices that improve the status of those working under

a grant, including appreciation, equal treatment within the work community as well as an agreement made on the use of workspaces and equipment. Teaching and administrative duties should likewise be subject to an agreement and a salary.

2.4 Paid employment during the grant term

Foundations usually permit part-time work during the grant period. The Emil Aaltonen Foundation, for example, permits grant recipients to engage in a minor amount of “teaching or corresponding work in their own field that consumes no more than 20% of their working time”. The Finnish Cultural Foundation follows a principle according to which grant recipients “may hold a post or perform some other paid duty for a maximum of 25 per cent of their working hours during the term of a grant (excluding the scheme for Combined funding for doctoral students)”. This allows for incidental or regular hourly work, for example. Some foundations do not define an acceptable amount of side work, and it is always best to check with your own grant maker, i.e. the fund or foundation representative, to see how they view the earning of additional income.

3. SOCIAL SECURITY

Finland’s income security system is first and foremost based on insurance. The State funds part of the benefits, while some funds are collected from the insurees and employers as insurance fees. Social insurance ensures a means of support during the birth of a child, old age, disability, illness and unemployment as well as when a family’s breadwinner dies. It includes health insurance, unemployment insurance, accident insurance and pension insurance. Access to some benefits is based on residence in Finland, but many of the benefits that exceed the provision of minimum income support are earnings-related and access to them is based on

employment. The implementation of social insurance is handled by employment pension and accident insurance institutions, unemployment funds and Kela. Social insurance is complemented by services. Periods of grant-funded work used to erode the social security of researchers in many ways, but the situation has improved since 2009.

3.1 Mela security for grant recipients

A grant recipient's employment pension security and rehabilitation benefits are provided for under the **Farmers' Pension Act (MyEL)** and the act on its promulgation. MyEL insurance provides the grant recipient with access to the earningsrelated daily benefits confirmed for him or her according to approved earned income as provided for in the Health Insurance Act as well as to Kela's rehabilitation allowance. The insurance is carried by the Farmers' Social Insurance Institution Mela. Grant recipients are not considered entrepreneurs when legislation is applied, however, as they are instead designated as self-employed individuals.

The grant recipient's insurance guide, **Apurahansaajan vakuutusopas**, (available in Finnish) contains basic information on Mela security. Instructions can also be found on **Mela's website**, which also contains up-to-date publications (available in Finnish). The brochure on grant recipients' Mela security, Mela security for grant and scholarship recipients, is also available **in English**.

A grant recipient's statutory insurance security consists of three components:

- **MyEL pension insurance contributes towards your future pension for old age and disability.**
- **MATA occupational accident insurance is for workplace accidents and work-related occupational illnesses occurring during grant-funded work. Group life insurance**

provides security for the immediate family in the event of death.

- **MELA sickness allowance is a short-term sickness benefit, which covers the duration of the waiting period (nine days) for Kela's sickness allowance. The waiting period for MELA sickness allowance is four days.**

The package can be supplemented with an optional leisure-time accident insurance, which is applied for separately. (If the grant recipient is a member of the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers, non-occupational accident insurance is one of the membership benefits, cf. chapter 7.)

3.1.1 Who is required to take out insurance?

The Farmers' Pension Act stipulates that the obligation to take out insurance applies to all 18–67-year-old Finnish resident recipients of a working grant who do not draw an old-age pension, including both personal grant recipients and people performing grant work in a working group (project grants), and are covered by Finland's social security.

It is also possible to work under a grant and in an employment relationship simultaneously. This is allowed by, for example, the grants of the Finnish Cultural Foundation. In this case, a doctoral student would be employed by the university for 56 per cent of their working time, with a six-month working grant to complement their salary. You will accrue pension based on your salary in accordance with the the Employee Pensions Act (TyEL) and based on the grant in accordance with the Farmers' Pension Act (MyEL). You can also combine entrepreneurship and grant work: in this case, the applied legislation includes MyEL and the Self-Employed Person's Pensions Act (YEL).

The insurance requirement does not apply

to grants meant for basic degree studies or for travel and other grants meant to cover expenses alone. Doctoral thesis work does, however, fall within the sphere of the Act.

The Act's scope of application extends to all grants for continuous work periods exceeding four months awarded in Finland in or after 2009. The time limit has been considered the Act's greatest shortcoming because it excludes from the insurance requirement those recipients of a doctoral thesis finishing grant who work under several short grants over the year, for example. The amount of the grant over a four-month period must be at least EUR 1,274.21 (at the 2017 level). The insurance cover is usually determined grant-specifically. As of 1 June 2016, however, it has been possible to add 1–3 months of additional funding received for the same purpose from the same grant maker to already insured grant work. In such cases, the work must be concurrent with or continue uninterrupted throughout the already confirmed period of insurance.

Grant recipients are also required to take out insurance while working abroad if they are still covered by the Finnish social security system and if the grant was awarded in Finland. Further information about the social security of researchers working under a grant overseas is presented in chapter 6 of this guide.

A foreign national working under a Finnish grant will be insured if he or she is covered by the social security system of Finland during the grant term. If, for example, a German researcher moves to Finland to work under a Finnish grant for one year, he or she is required to take out MyEL insurance. On the basis of working under this grant, the researcher will receive an affirmative decision about being covered by Finnish social security legislation during one year. In addition, the researcher will have health insurance and be entitled to family benefits in Finland. Should the grant term be extended for another year after this, the researcher will be insured as a permanent resident of Finland and will be entitled to all the same benefits as other permanent

residents. The Unemployment Security Act will not apply, however.

An insurance based on grant work is always fixed-term. Once the grant work ends, the insurance lapses as well. Accumulated pension contributions will, however, remain in the system memory for later payments.

3.1.2 MyEL earned income as the basis of benefits and payments

Grant recipients must, within three months of starting their work, themselves contact Mela to take out insurance. The insuree's annual MyEL earned income is confirmed and used as a basis to register an annual earned income amount into an employment relationship register. This register forms the basis of social security benefits. Earned income determines the size of MyEL pensions, loss of income compensation under the MATA accident insurance and Mela's short-term sickness allowance as well as Kela's daily benefits like the maternity and parental allowance, the daily sickness insurance and the loss of income compensation of traffic insurance. Earned income also affects the amount of the YLE tax. Earned income is likewise used to calculate the amount of insurance payments.

A grant recipient's earned income is calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{(\text{total amount of grant} - \text{expenses}) \times 360}{\text{number of working days (all days)}}$$

Expenses are taken into account only if the grant maker has intended for a part of the grant to be spent on them. The expense share should be mentioned in the grant maker's declaration to Mela and in the decision to award the grant, which is sent to the recipient. In this case, the recipient must provide Mela with an account of the materials and other expenses caused by working. Before the annual earned income amount is confirmed, a portion estimated by the

insurance institution to match the share of expenses is deducted from the awarded grant. This has caused some headaches, as the grant recipient has had to estimate the expense amount in advance and the grant maker's declaration or decision to award a grant rarely mentions the specific grant shares intended for working and expenses. The maker may just declare that the working grant "includes statutory social security as well as usual travel, equipment and office expenses."

The grant maker's declaration to Mela has proven to be important in evaluating the expenses share. The share the grant maker's application instructions mentions to be reserved for expenses is also considered when calculating the amount of earned income. In disputed cases, the least weight has been given to the decision to award a grant, which was sent to the recipient (cf. court decisions at the end of this chapter), if it does not separately mention the share to be allocated for expenses.

The amount of the statutory premium is dependent on age and MyEL earnings. The amount can be calculated with **the grant recipient's calculator** available on Mela's website. It should also be noted that the yearly index-tied increase will boost earned income and thus the amount of payments and benefits, even though the grant does not grow.

Mela collects pension, accident and group life insurance payments during the insurance policy's term of validity, i.e. while the researcher works under a grant. Charges stipulated by the Health Insurance Act are collected by the tax authorities in arrears.

These payments and charges are to a large extent tax deductible. Mela supplies the tax authorities with data on insurance payments and they are noted on the pre-filled tax return form.

Insurance security can be interrupted for defined reasons, which include, inter alia, the acceptance of paid or other gainful employment, illness, rehabilitation, the birth of a child, care of a child less than three years old as well as military or civilian service. In addition, the so-called

four-month rule must be met: the interruption must be preceded by an insurance term of four months, the term of interruption must be at least four months long and at least four months of the insurance term must remain after the interruption. The insurance may also be terminated if the entire grant is not used.

3.1.3 Old age and disability pension

Finland's pension system is built on two components. The national pension ensures a minimum income safeguard after the transition to retirement and the employment pension safeguards the accustomed level of income. MyEL pension insurance covers old-age pension, part-time pension, vocational rehabilitation and disability pension. MyEL pension insurance contributes 1.5% of the earned income forming the basis of the insurance towards the pension of 18–52-year-olds, 1.9% of 53–62-year-olds and 4.5% from the ages of 63 to 68.

MyEL insurance contributes towards pension security also in cases of disability. If a person's working ability decreases because of illness, disability or injury to the extent that he or she is unable to earn a reasonable living, he or she may be eligible for disability pension. It will be granted either on an open-ended basis or for a fixed term, and either in full or partially. Disability pensions can be granted even if the recipient does not fully stop working, as disability itself does not have to be 100% complete. An earned income amount, which corresponds with his or her remaining ability to perform the grant work, will be confirmed for grant recipients who are eligible for disability pension. The earned income of a grant recipient drawing a partial pension is half of his or her established earned income if the recipient continues to work under a grant while drawing a partial pension as provided for under this legislation. The monthly earnings of a disability pension recipient can rise to €737.45 in 2017 before they begin to affect the continuation of his or her pension. If earnings do not reach this amount, there is no obli-

gation to report them to Mela.

Rehabilitation benefit is a disability pension that is awarded for a fixed term. It is awarded when the pension applicant is expected to get better and back into working life through therapy or rehabilitation. Rehabilitation benefit can be awarded to match a full or partial pension.

A person drawing a disability or partial pension can be insured according to his or her remaining work input if work under a grant will continue and the conditions for getting insurance are met.

3.1.4 Workplace accidents, occupational illnesses and rehabilitation

The term accident refers to a sudden, unexpected and unintentional event caused by an external factor in which an individual is injured. MATA workplace accident insurance compensates for injuries caused by an accident occurring during grant-funded work, but not for an illness independent of the injury even if the symptoms of the illness are first detected in conjunction with an occupational accident.

MATA insurance covers the direct expenses caused by the treatment of an injury, pharmaceuticals and travel to and from treatment as well as physical therapy prescribed by a doctor to treat the injury. There is no upper limit to compensation. If the injury causes disability, a daily disability allowance will be paid for a maximum of one year. If disability persists for more than one year, a disability pension will be paid. The amount of the daily allowance and the pension are based on MyEL earned income.

An illness, which has probably and primarily been caused by grant work, will be compensated as an occupational illness. The illness must be caused by a physical, chemical or biological factor such as vibration, noise, organic dust, mould spores, bacteria or a virus. The most common occupational illnesses are asthma, colds, rashes and alveolitis.

Tenosynovitis and lateral epicondylitis, i.e. tennis elbow, will be subject to compensation

as occupational illnesses if they are caused by frequently recurring monotonous or odd working movements. Carpal tunnel syndrome can be compensated if, prior to the symptoms appearing, the work required, over the long term, movements that burden the wrist and force it into unusual postures. Musculoskeletal disorders like osteoarthritis, spinal disc herniation or mechanical-stress-derived illnesses are not subject to compensation, however.

If an accident occurs, you must see a physician at once, even if the injury feels minor. If the condition deteriorates, it will be easier to demonstrate that the accident was the original cause. A doctor must likewise be consulted if symptoms of an occupational illness begin to appear. In such cases, grant recipients may go to either their own municipality's health centre or a private doctor. The doctor will issue a sick leave certificate for the period in which you are unable to work. An insurance card will demonstrate that you are covered by a valid MATA occupational accident insurance policy, and showing your card will give you access to free-of-charge treatment. A pharmacy will also provide you with pharmaceuticals and supplies free of charge if the doctor has made the required note on the prescription.

If a compensatable accident or occupational illness erodes ability to work or function, Mela can pay for MATA rehabilitation to enable the recipients to continue working in either their former profession or a new one. Rehabilitation is either medical or vocational. Rehabilitation is always considered by Mela in conjunction with its handling of accident and occupational illness cases, and the initiative may also be made by customers themselves or the health care party that provided the customer with treatment.

A full daily accident allowance or pension will be paid for the duration of MATA rehabilitation, such as a training or rehabilitation course. Accident insurance does not, however, pay for preventative rehabilitation.

If the need for rehabilitation is due to an illness, which threatens to cause the grant re-

cipient to go on disability pension in the next few years, rehabilitation will be granted in the form of MyEL rehabilitation as provided for under the Farmers' Pension Act. A person drawing a disability pension or a rehabilitation allowance can receive rehabilitation that helps him or her return to work. One necessary condition for rehabilitation is an illness or injury that has been verified by a doctor through an examination. Rehabilitation cannot be provided for the purpose of preventing an illness. Physiotherapy or treatment spells at rehabilitation institutions are not compensated as MyEL rehabilitation; instead, an application must be made to Kela for compensation for them.

3.1.5 Group life insurance

Next of kin are entitled to compensation after the death of an individual who was, at the time of death, a holder of mandatory MyEL insurance or whose insurance terminated no more than three years ago. If the insurance security of the person bequeathing the benefit ended in a full disability pension or an individual early retirement, entitlement to compensation remains in force for five years.

3.1.6 Court rulings regarding Mela insurance

The following Employee Pensions Appeal Board (TELK) and Insurance Court (VO) decisions emphasise the significance of the declaration submitted by the grant maker to Mela when deciding on the amount of working time or the share of expenses. The law requires the grant maker to make a written declaration about the grant to Mela; the declaration must mention the recipient's name, personal ID, the amount and use purpose of the grant as well as whether or not the grant includes an expenses component. The grant maker's application instructions and announcement have also been considered to be of significance, while weight has not been accorded to the letter notifying the recipient of the decision to award the grant.

A was awarded a €21,000 second-year grant in 2010 for the purpose of overseas work on a doctoral thesis. The grant maker declared to Mela that the money was meant to cover one year's work and included expenses. The same was noted on the decision to award the grant. The grant maker's general instructions for grants open for application in 2010 mentioned that the component meant for working was at least €1,500 per month.

€3,000 was deducted from the grant to determine the earned income amount. Mela insured A for a period of 12 months and the amount of annual earned income was set at €18,321.69. A demanded that the direct expenses of studying abroad, i.e. the tuition fee of over €22,000, would be fully taken into account when determining the earned income amount. A appealed to the fact that the decision to award the grant contained no mention of a limitation on the expense component, which was only noted in a brochure titled "Instructions for grant recipients" that was appended to the insurance decision. TELK rejected A's appeal. TELK pointed out that the point of departure in the Farmers' Pension Act was that grant work will be insured in a manner that contributes towards earnings-related pension security like other work does. Another point of departure is that grants for working are insured according to the grant maker's declaration. A sought to overturn this TELK decision and demanded that A's original proposal to the pension institution regarding deductible expenses be approved. The Insurance Court rejected the appeal, ruling that Mela was entitled to take the grant maker's declaration into consideration when determining earned annual income to serve as the basis of A's pension insurance. The fact that the decision to award the grant did not mention the share of the total grant allocated to working was not considered to be of significance in assessing the appropriateness of the earned

income amount. (VO 23.5.2012)

A had been granted a six-month grant for doctoral thesis work. Mela insured A accordingly. A appealed against this decision because A had not, according to his own notification and a declaration issued by his employer, at any stage performed work on the doctoral thesis for a continuous time period of four months. A informed Mela that he was by primary occupation the head physician of a certain institution.

Both TELK and the VO rejected the appeal and held the view that the grant was insured on the basis of the grant maker's declaration and it was not possible to define working time differently under the law. (VO 15.6.2011)

Drawing the line between the Employee Pensions Act (TyEL) and the Farmers' Pension Act (MyEL) can also be problematic.

A university faculty had awarded A a grant for drafting a doctoral thesis in the period 1.2–30.6.2009. Mela insured A for the period declared by the grant maker. A appealed against the decision because she was a part-time teacher at the same faculty on 19.1–19.3.2009 and was being remunerated in accordance with hourly teaching pay.

TELK rejected the appeal because, under MyEL, a person who is awarded a grant to perform research not connected with his or her employment relationship or business activities while in an employment relationship or engaged in business activities will also be considered a grant recipient. In TELK's view, A's part-time teaching work was not related to the subject of her doctoral thesis and, because the grant had been awarded for research not connected to her employment relationship, the grant work had to be insured as stipulated by MyEL. (TELK 14.12.2009)

3.1.7 Appeals

Appeals concerning pension and disability decisions are lodged with the Employee Pensions Appeal Board and accident appeals with the Accident Appeal Board. With both instances, the appeal is first sent to Mela, which may revise its decision. If Mela does not alter its decision, the matter proceeds to the appropriate board, whose decisions can be appealed against at the Insurance Court. Get in contact with **Mela's customer service** in person or electronically when

tion regarding grant work

- you are going overseas to work under a grant
- you return from abroad to continue grant work in Finland
- you want to terminate grant work because of illness, rehabilitation, the birth of a child or the care of an under-three-year-old child, military service, civilian service or other corresponding reason
- you are going to continue terminated work
- you go on old age or disability pension
- you stop working under a grant before the end of the period of insurance.

3.2 GRANT TERMS AND KELA BENEFITS

MyEL insurance also provides grant recipients with access to earnings-related daily benefits as provided for in Health Insurance Act and to the Kela rehabilitation allowance. When the

housing benefit and income support are being determined, grants count towards permanent monthly income similarly as pay from work.

3.2.1 Parental benefits

A pregnant resident of Finland who meets the requirements associated with housing and health examinations is entitled to the statutory maternity allowance. Recipients can choose either the maternity package, which includes baby clothes and other supplies, or the tax-free monetary maternity assistance allowance (€140 in 2017). A parent of an adopted child is likewise entitled to a maternity allowance if the parent is a resident of Finland and an under-18-year-old child has been placed to live with her.

A person employed in Finland can take maternity, paternity or parental leave on the basis of pregnancy, child birth or the care of a child and receive the statutory maternal, paternal or parental allowance for this time. Apart from maternal allowance, the parental benefits are the same for adoptive parents who, in place of the maternal allowance, are paid the parental allowance for a longer period. People adopting a child from abroad can seek Kela support for the expenses caused by adoption. A spouse in a same-sex couple who lives in a partnership registered prior to the amendment to the Marriage Act or in a marriage entered into after 1 March 2017 receives a paternity allowance regardless of their sex if they adopt their spouse's child or adopted child.

The maternity leave starts no sooner than 50 weekdays (Mon-Sat) and no later than 30 week-days before the due date. The maximum duration of paternity leave is 54 weekdays after birth and it must be taken before the child turns two or, in the case of adoptions, before the child has been with the family for two years. After the maternity leave, mother or father can take parental leave and be paid a parental allowance. The parental leave can also be split. Kela will pay a parental allowance for 158 weekdays. The parental allowance is usually paid until the child is

about nine months old. Multiple-birth families are paid an extra 60 weekdays of parental allowance for each additional child starting from the second. After the parental leave, it is possible to go on nursing leave and receive a home care allowance. Returning to work part-time and receiving a partial care allowance is also an option.

The amounts of the maternity, paternity and parental allowances are determined on the basis of the most recent work income confirmed in taxation. The maternity allowance of a person taking maternity leave in 2017, for instance, is dependent on their earned income in 2015. If the applicant has received a grant and been MyEL insured, maternity, paternity and parental allowances are determined according to the work income that formed its basis. If, however, the work income earned in the six months preceding the allowance has increased from the income confirmed in taxation, the allowance will be paid according to this more recent income. If the applicant has had no work income, the minimum allowance will be paid. Other factors may also affect the amount of the allowance; further information about this issue can be found on **the Kela website**.

If a person receiving maternal, paternal or parental allowances conducts research, for which he or she has been awarded a grant, during the period in which these allowances are paid, the minimum allowance amount will be paid during work days. In 2017, the minimum daily parental leave allowance is EUR 23.73. The normal parental allowance amount will be paid for weekdays on which no research is done. Paternal allowances can be paid only if the recipient does not work or study full-time during the paternal leave. Work days must be declared to Kela. The declaration can be made on **Kela's filing service** and should be made in a timely fashion to avoid overpayments and subsequent collection of excess allowances.

Kela's child care benefit options are the home care allowance, private day care allowance, flexible care allowance and partial care allowance. The home care allowance and pri-

vate day care allowance provide an option to municipally-arranged day care, and they consist of a care allowance, a care supplement and a municipal supplement. The care supplement is paid for only one child entitled to the home care allowance, and its amount depends on the family's income. The payment and amount of the municipal supplement is based on municipal decisions and thus varies from locality to locality. If a grant awarded for a postgraduate degree provides livelihood during a time when the recipient is engaged in scientific research, it will be equated with pay and taken into account as income.

A researcher working under a grant and insured under MyEL is also eligible for the flexible care allowance. Its amount is EUR 241.19 per month when the maximum working hours are 22.5 per week or a maximum of 60 per cent of the normal full-time working hours, and EUR 160.80 per month when the working hours are more than 22.5 hours but less than 30 hours per week or more than 60 per cent but less than 80 per cent of the normal full-time working hours.

The partial care allowance is paid to a parent whose child is in the first or second grade of school. The partial care allowance requires the average weekly working hours not to exceed 30 hours due to caring for the child.

3.2.2 General housing allowance and Income support

A grant affects your housing allowance and income support. The general housing allowance can be paid to low-income households to reduce their housing costs. It is available for rental, right-of-occupancy and owner-occupied homes. General housing allowance applications are made to the local Kela office. The general housing allowance is at most equal to 80% of a housing expense considered reasonable. Availability is determined by the household's income and headcount as well as the home municipality. If the household's income exceeds the confirmed maximum limit, the general housing allowance will not be granted. Close family members as well as spouses and the parties to a

registered partnership are always considered to be part of the same household.

The gross monthly earnings as well as social benefits received by the household's members are taken into account as income. If the amount of income varies, the estimated annual income is considered. Grants are counted according to the MyEL earned income amount.

3.2.3 Sickness allowance

The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers survey of early stage researchers indicated that there is little awareness of the insurance security available to researchers working under a grant. Several respondents expressed concern about health care during a grant term:

"If we fall ill [because of indoor air problems], the sickness will not be classified as work-related and there'll be no compensation." (Early stage researcher questionnaire 2012)

"-- in cases of illness lasting several weeks but less than a month, for example, it is not practically or at least economically possible (or at least viable) to seek so-called sick leave (or, actually, sick leave from what, when no employment relationship exists?) i.e. halt payment of the grant. In fact, a grant recipient's options when sick are an issue of which I am myself also in no way informed--." (Early stage researcher questionnaire 2012)

However, MyEL insurance provides diverse security in times of illness. The MELA sickness allowance is a short-term sickness benefit, which is paid during the waiting period for Kela's sickness allowance (nine days). The waiting period for MELA sickness allowance is four days. In addition, after nine days of illness, Mela insurance provides access to the Kela-paid earnings-related daily benefits provided for in the Health Insurance Act. MyEL earned income is based

on either the work income of the previous confirmed tax year or the income level of the six months preceding the sick leave. Daily allowances for short sick leaves lasting less than nine working days are applied for directly through Mela. Applications related to longer illnesses are sent to Kela. Mela sickness allowance is also paid for Sundays and public holidays, while Kela's sickness allowance is only paid for weekdays. A medical certificate, which can be provided by your own municipality's health centre, must be appended to the application.

You can suspend your MyEL insurance due to illness in accordance with the four-month rule. This means that the suspension may only take place after an insurance period of four months. In addition, the suspension period must be at least four months, and the remaining insurance period after the suspension must be at least four months.

MATA occupational accident insurance provides security in cases of workplace accidents and work-related occupational illnesses that occur during grant work; more information on this issue is presented in section 3.1.4 in the foregoing.

Foundations and funds may provide grant recipients with an additional medical expense insurance. Your respective grant maker can provide more information on this.

3.2.4 Rehabilitation allowance

Kela offers people of working age rehabilitation in the form of discretionary and vocational rehabilitation as well as rehabilitative psychotherapy that is included in the employers' mandatory occupational health care provision requirements. Kela's rehabilitation complements the rehabilitation provided by other parties and its aim is to improve and support working ability as well as to promote the recipient's ability to remain in or return to working life.

Kela's rehabilitation allowance, maintenance allowance and discretionary rehabilitation assistance protect against income loss during participation in rehabilitation. Applicants

must have a valid rehabilitation decision issued by, for example, a doctor or Kela. A grant recipient's rehabilitation allowance will be determined on the basis of his or her MyEL work income. Kela must be notified if the recipient's MyEL insurance period terminates during the rehabilitation period.

3.2.5 Financial aid for postgraduate studies

Researchers engaged in postgraduate studies are entitled to student financial aid (study grants, housing supplements and State-guaranteed student loans), which can be applied for with application forms available at your educational institution. Financial aid can be granted starting from the month in which the application is received. The financial aid period for scientific, artistic and vocational postgraduate university degrees depends on when the university granted the right of participation and the date on which the person first signed up as a present student. Financial aid can be drawn for a maximum of nine months if the studies commenced on or after 1.8.2011. The maximum amount of student financial aid granted for all tertiary education is:

- 54 months, if the recipient has started new studies on 1 August 2017 or later
- 64 months, if the recipient has started new studies between 1 August 2014 and 31 July 2017
- 70 months, if the recipient has started new studies before 1 August 2014

The availability of financial aid is affected by taxable work and capital income, taxable social benefits, overseas income and grants awarded to provide livelihood security. A grant recipient's financial aid application must declare the grant maker and the period the grant is to cover. Usual expenses may be deducted from the grant. The amount of permitted pay and income from grants and other sources dur-

ing a calendar year depends on the number of months in which financial aid is drawn. The so-called exempt amount of income is calculated as follows

1. €660 for each month in which the doctoral researcher has received the study grant or housing supplement; as well as
2. €1,970 for each month in which the doctoral researcher has not received the study grant or housing supplement

Students renting an apartment in Finland have been eligible for general housing allowance as of 1 August 2017. Housing allowance is also available for those living in a right-of-occupancy, part-ownership or owner-occupied homes. **The Kela website** provides further information about restrictions to the housing supplement.

From the perspective of unemployment security, research work related to postgraduate studies (licentiate, doctoral thesis) is still considered studying if the source of livelihood is student financial aid and not, for example, a grant or pay from work. If a researcher declares an intention to continue postgraduate studies when he or she becomes unemployed, whether or not the studies can be considered part-time will be assessed. The part-time nature of studies can be demonstrated by showing a readiness to accept full-time work. A personal declaration and a verification of how no grants or student financial aid will be drawn after the sign-on date is sufficient demonstration of this.

3.2.6. Appeals

Kela decisions can be appealed by submitting a free-form statement of claim to the office, which made the decision. If Kela considers itself unable to revise its decision as demanded, it will convey the complaint to an appeals board. An appeals board decision can be appealed against

at the Insurance Court, which is the highest and final instance of appeal. More detailed instructions are posted on **the Kela website**.

3.3 GRANT TERMS AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES

3.3.1 Child day care

The parents of a child under school age are entitled to municipally-provided day care or family care. The parents can choose municipally-provided day care for their child, care for the child themselves with a child home care allowance until the child turns three or arrange for the care of an under-school-age child with the help of a private day care allowance.

The fees charged for municipally-provided day care are determined on a percentage basis according to the size and income of the family. The family is considered to consist of persons cohabiting a household, married or living in conditions that resemble marriage, as well as the underage children of both spouses that live in the same household. Taxable work and capital income as well as untaxed income are considered when assessing the fee. If monthly income varies, the average monthly income for the most recent year will be considered. Here, grants are considered equal to pay. However, the law stipulates that grants and other corresponding scholarships awarded for studies, basic and postgraduate studies alike, are not counted when day care fees are determined. It is nevertheless advisable to find out the policy of your own municipality.

Information about the home care allowance, which is municipally-funded but paid out by Kela, is presented under section 4.1.1.

3.3.2 Court ruling regarding day care fees

The legal issue was whether an early stage researcher's grant awarded for the purpose of completing a doctoral degree was to be taken

into account as income when assessing the family's ability to pay for child day care. Turku University Foundation had awarded an early stage researcher's grant to one of the child's parents for the purpose of completing a doctorate. The Provincial Administrative Court voted 2–1 that the case involved a grant made for the purpose of studying and, as such, should not be taken into account when assessing their ability to pay.

The dissenting court member was of the opinion that “the grant was made to ensure the prerequisites of working during research activities and is therefore an income comparable to pay which should be taken into account when assessing the ability to pay for child day care”. (Provincial Administrative Court of Turku and Pori / 22.4.1997)

3.3.3 Appeals

The final decision issued by a municipality can usually be appealed at an administrative court. The administrative court will consider the appeal and decide whether the contested official decision is lawful. If the administrative court's ruling is not satisfactory, it is, in some cases, possible to challenge it before the Supreme Administrative Court.

4.UNEMPLOYMENT SECURITY

The benefits available to the unemployed are the unemployment benefit (earnings-related or basic daily allowance) and the labour market subsidy. General information on the basic daily allowance and labour market subsidy is available on **the Kela website**, while **the Federation of Unemployment Funds site** provides information on earnings-related benefits. Members of the Teachers' Unemployment Fund will find further details pertinent to their situation on **the Fund's pages**. You must be a member of

an unemployment fund and meet the so-called employment condition to draw an earnings-related daily allowance. Further information about these issues is presented later.

A researcher who has been on a grant term must, on the first day of unemployment, register as a jobseeker at an employment and economic development office (TE-toimisto). This can be done online through **the TE services portal**. The website and TE office will provide instructions on how to proceed. The unemployment benefit can be granted if the grant term is demonstrably over and the unemployed person is seeking fulltime employment –following the end of the three-month period of protection, also other than research work – and is available to the labour market. In other words, when signing up at a TE office, you should clearly state that your research work has ended and it or studying will not continue before fresh funding has been secured. A negative response from the office is often due to the researcher declaring his or her intention to continue performing research while unemployed. Part-time employment in your own field does not present an obstacle to receiving the benefit. Employment is considered part-time when it does not prevent the individual from accepting a full-time job. This issue is always decided by the TE office.

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment has previously issued guidelines for TE Offices on the labour market conditions for unemployment security defining, among other things, the rights and obligations of a researcher who becomes unemployed after working under a grant. As of the beginning of 2017, this section has been removed from the guidelines and will, from now on, be drawn up by the Uusimaa Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centre). These guidelines are available solely on the ELY Centre's intranet, rather than in the public domain, as the Ministry's guidelines were. In other words, any changes made to the guidelines cannot be monitored. According to the ELY Centre, however, the current guidelines are identical to the pre-

vious ones issued by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment.

According to the Unemployment Security Act, “a person who has been primarily employed in his or her own occupation will be considered to still be employed by it up to the point when, on the basis of an account presented by the jobseeker or otherwise, it becomes evident that the activities are no longer ongoing.” A reliable account presented personally by the researcher who formerly worked under a grant therefore provides the key basis for registering unemployment and for the resolution of the unemployment benefit issue. According to the to the instructions of the ELY Centre, research work will be considered demonstrably concluded if, for example, a grant term has ended, a doctoral thesis is submitted for preliminary inspection or a manuscript is handed in for publishing.

A researcher who becomes unemployed after a grant term can maintain his or her competence without this affecting entitlement to unemployment benefits. The employee will not be asked to provide an account of efforts to maintain competence. The guideline notes that, for example, “independent training and having personal skills assessed by experts in the field”, “familiarisation with new tools and methods”, applying for grants, publishing articles completed before registering as a jobseeker, giving occasional presentations, writing minor magazine or newspaper articles based on earlier scientific work, participating in conferences or boosting your chances of employment through other kinds of networking constitute efforts to maintain professional competence. Researchers do not have to give up tools or offices, which are necessary to maintain their professional competence, while unemployed.

If an unemployed jobseeker is awarded a grant, he or she will be considered to have returned to work on the date on which the grant is accessible. With grant terms that exceed four months, the start of the grant term is determined by the start of the requirement to take mandatory MyEL insurance. It is possible to postpone the

start of the term by demonstrating that there is an obstacle to the starting of grant work that is independent of the grant recipient. This can be demonstrated by, for example, presenting the grant maker’s notification of the grant term start date, a certificate on the postponement of the start date issued by the party in charge of the project or an inviter’s certificate regarding the timing of a visit. A predetermined period of field research, a specific overseas working period or the onset of disability can postpone the starting of work and correspondingly extend the period in which unemployment benefit is paid.

The grant maker’s declaration has primary significance when the length of a grant term is being determined. If the grant term is defined in The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers 19 months, its length is counted as full months from the date on which grant work starts. The applicant can also demonstrate the length of a grant term by presenting a Mela-issued certificate regarding the length of the insurance period. If a grant term is not determined with a financing or insurance decision, it will be evaluated by dividing the received grant with the monthly amount of the artist grant (in 2017, €1,692.45/ month). The Council of Finnish Foundations has pointed out that, especially when awarding grants whose amount exceeds the tax-free limit, the duration of the work should be noted on the decision, so that the grant recipient’s unemployment security can be calculated correctly.

4.1 DETERMINING THE DAILY UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCE

Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers members employed under employment contract can insure themselves against unemployment through the Teachers’ Unemployment Fund. The Fund accepts applications from teachers, psychologists and education experts as well as employees engaged in teaching, research or support functions at universities, institutes of higher learning, the Academy of Fin-

land or research institutions. The Teachers' Unemployment Fund membership fee is included in the membership fee of the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers.

An employee fund like the Teachers Unemployment Fund cannot be joined during a grant term; at the time of joining, an applicant must be a Finnish resident working under employment contract. Membership can be gained even with a paid employment relationship lasting just one hour, as long as this employment is subject to insurance – in other words, statutory insurance fees are deducted from pay and the employer contributes a further share to accumulate insurance security. However, in this case, meeting the employment condition will pose a problem.

Once a researcher has joined the Fund, his or her membership can continue during a grant term or some other corresponding payless period. Membership fees must be paid also for the payless period, however.

In addition to membership in an unemployment fund, access to earnings-related daily allowances requires that the employment condition is met. The right to an earnings-related daily unemployment allowance is born when the job seeker has been a member of an unemployment fund for at least 26 weeks and has, while a member, fulfilled the employment condition, i.e. been in employment for 26 weeks over the preceding 28-month period of evaluation with a minimum weekly working time of 18 hours and pay equal to at least the amount stipulated in the collective labour agreement. In the case of teaching work at an educational institution like a university or an institute of higher learning, the minimum weekly working time is 8 hours.

Only paid employment counts towards fulfilling the employment condition. Grant terms as well as full-time studying, time spent drawing sickness benefit and parental allowance, among other things, are acceptable reasons to be unavailable to the labour market, however. In other words, they extend the 28-month period of scrutiny, for a maximum of seven years. The maximum length of the period of scrutiny is thus

9 years and 4 months retrospectively from the start of unemployment.

If a researcher who had been working under a grant prior to the commencement of a period of unemployment applies for an earnings-related daily allowance from an unemployment fund, the application must include an appended account of the grant term. The drafting of this account is a condition for extending the period of scrutiny and makes it possible to take into consideration work done before the grant term.

Grants do not count as income when determining the amount of the daily allowance for researchers who have been on a grant term. Instead, the amount of the allowance is typically determined on the basis of established pay earned during the preceding period of work required to fulfil the employment condition. A daily allowance calculation tool and other useful information about earnings-related unemployment security can be found on **the pages of Federation of Unemployment Funds in Finland**.

Researchers who become unemployed after a grant term and fail to fulfil the employment condition can apply for benefits from Kela.

4.2 APPEALS

It is not possible to alter a TE office statement on meeting the labour market preconditions for receiving a daily allowance through appealing. This statement binds Kela as well as the unemployment fund, which issue their decisions regarding unemployment benefits on the basis of the statement. To get a decision, the applicant must lodge an application with Kela or an unemployment fund. Appeals against decisions can be brought before the Unemployment Security Appeal Board, whose decision can in turn be appealed at the Insurance Court.

5. TAXATION

5.1 TAX STATUS OF GRANTS

According to the Income Tax Act, stipends or other grants made for studies, scientific or artistic activities or awards granted in recognition of scientific, artistic or community service activities are not usually considered taxable income. Drawing the line between “scientific research” and other types of research may prove difficult in this conjunction. According to one definition, research with scientific goals and performed using the scientific methods of the discipline is considered tax-free. Some court cases, which are presented later in this text, have ruled on the matter.

Public entities include, among others, the State, regional arts councils, municipalities, communities of municipalities, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Orthodox Church of Finland, the Bank of Finland, Kela, Arts Promotion Centre Finland, the Academy of Finland as well as the Finnish Work Environment Fund, which operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

According to the new Universities Act (558/2009), two of Finland’s universities are independent foundations of private legal status and 12 are independent public institutions. The position of the Ministry of Finance has been that, in income taxation, neither group is considered public entities. Nor are private associations and foundations, the Finnish Cultural Foundation, foreign states, foreign public entities, State- or municipal-owned organisations like limited liability companies, registered associations and political parties considered public entities in this context.

Grants and awards given by foundations, universities and other non-public entities are taxable income to the extent that the total amount of all grants and awards – including those made

by public entities – received by the tax subject during the tax year after deducting professional expenses exceeds the annual amount of the State artist grant, which stands at €20,309.40 in 2017. The amount increases somewhat each year, so it is prudent to check it annually.

The tax status of a grant from a foreign grant maker is always examined on a case-by-case basis and depends on the country in which the grant is awarded. The country that levies taxes is usually chosen based on a tax treaty in place between Finland and the grant maker’s home state. If it is possible to tax the grant in Finland, its tax status is decided on the basis of the general principles applied to grants. Grants received from foreign parties are treated similarly to grants awarded by non-public entities, i.e. they are subject to tax if the total amount of grants made to a recipient on a specific year exceeds the annual amount of the State artist grant. Professional expenses are also deducted from grants received from foreign parties before the total amount is added up.

Grants intended for purposes other than studying, scientific research or artistic work are subject to tax irrespective of who awards them. Assessments of the possible tax-free status of grants must distinguish scientific pursuits from work performed in the service of another party. If the case involves the latter, the tax authorities will equate the grant with pay. One of the determining factors is whether the grant has been open to public application or is it compensation for specific work.

Taxable grants always count as income for the tax year in which they become available, not the year or years in which they are actually drawn. If you are awarded two grants during one year and only want to use one of them during the following year, you should agree on the payment schedule with the grant maker.

Grant makers must declare grants larger than €1,000 to the tax administration. The declaration must mention the name, personal ID and address of the grant or stipend recipient as well as the use purpose and amount of the

made payment. The recipient will submit his or her personal ID to the grant maker at the latest when the parties agree on a method of payment.

However, grant recipients are also required to declare the amount of grants they have received to the tax authorities on the tax return form in the section Other earned income. An account of grant makers, use purposes and the amounts of received grants are provided in the section Further information. Grant recipients should ensure that they are issued a written decision to award the grant that indicates the grant maker and recipient, use purpose and special conditions as well as the schedule of payments. The payment of possible taxes is handled personally in arrears.

If a grant recipient uses the grant to hire assistants, the recipient is required to pay the normal employer obligations and ensure that the tax authorities are provided with an account of how the grant was spent in this respect. If a research group receives a grant and hires assistants, the reimbursement the hired help receives is considered pay, even though a grant awarded to the research group is used to fund this.

5.2. DEDUCTING EXPENSES RELATED TO GRANTS

Professional expenses can be deducted from the part of a grant that exceeds the tax-free amount. They may be caused by, for example, study materials related to the research, assisting staff, travel or typing, and an account of such expenses must be submitted to the tax authorities. If a grant is awarded to a research group, the group's expenses are deducted first. The remainder is divided between the group members, who can also deduct their personal expenses.

If research work causes expenses, they are declared in the tax return under the header Professional expenses. Expenses are often incurred only in the years subsequent to the awarding of the grant, the time period in which the grant is actually spent. These can be taken into consideration by the tax administration as a so-called

cost increase reserve on the basis of the submitted account.

Grants can be awarded as working grants to cover living costs, as targeted grants for covering the expenses of scientific or artistic activities, or as a combination of both. The recipient must provide the tax authorities with an account that explains the purpose for which the grant was made. A grant or a share of a grant meant solely for working is not intended to cover the expenses caused by scientific work. In other words, they may not be allocated to operational expenses, which must instead be deducted from the share meant to cover expenses or from the grant recipient's other income. If there is no other income, a loss is confirmed on the expenses.

A targeted grant is awarded for a specific purpose, such as research expenses, travel or conferences. Expenses covered by a targeted grant may not be deducted from other income as professional expenses.

A calculation to produce the share of a grant that is subject to tax will first deduct the expenses allocated to grants. Lacking another account, the expenses allocated to grants will be divided in proportion to the grants. It is wise to ask a tax office to confirm whether your personal interpretation of the amount of money subject to tax is correct. You can find information about the taxation of grants and example of such tax calculations on the **Tax Administration's website** (available in Finnish).

In 2016, the Tax Administration changed the practice according to which earned income could be deducted from municipal taxation.

The Income Tax Act does not stipulate how a grant recipient's other income, such as pensions, affect the tax-free status of grants.

5.3 COURT RULINGS

The precedents below draw a line between scientific research and other writing work.

A university lecturer was awarded a grant by the Foundation for Economic Education

to write an up-to-date textbook on financial mathematics for use in business schools and institutes as well as senior upper secondary school classes. The ruling was that the grant had not been made for the purpose of scientific research work and could not therefore be considered tax-free. (Supreme Administrative Court 1952 II 489)

A Foundation, which according to its bylaws existed to promote scientific research work, granted a bibliography working group operating at the library of the School of Economics a grant that it had applied for to draft a bibliography of Finnish economics literature. The members of the working group drafted the bibliography outside their working hours and divided the grant amongst themselves based on the hours spent on the job. The members were librarians by training. The grant was not deemed to be a stipend awarded for scientific research work, and was thus not tax-free income. (SPA 7.6.1978/2774)

The Finnish Cultural Foundation's Central Finland Regional Fund and the art committee of province X awarded librarian A a 15,000-markka grant and a 10,000-markka grant to draft a bibliography for X. A was granted unpaid leave of absence from his actual job to complete the project. A was not in an employment relationship with the advisory board established for the project, and A received no other compensation for the work performed as part of the project. The ruling was that the grants were tax-free grants made for the purposes of scientific work. (SPA 9.4.1991/1168)

The next case considered whether or not a grant was remuneration for work performed, in other words if the money in question was, in practice, a grant or pay. The issues considered were, inter alia, if research was being conducted under the control and supervision of some-

one else as well as who would receive the rights to the research findings:

A non-profit foundation active in the field of social welfare had awarded A a grant for the period 1975–1977 in order to enable A to examine the current state and future objectives of Finnish social welfare. The research agreement drafted between the foundation and the researcher contained a stipulation that the research was to be conducted in accordance with a research plan approved by the foundation. It was likewise agreed that the foundation would have, with certain provisions, unlimited right of possession to the research findings and the materials produced during research work. The foundation supervised and steered the progress of research via a specific advisory board it established for this purpose. As the research agreement could be terminated by either party during a prescribed period reserved for the research, it was deemed that the grant was in fact pay and not a tax-free grant. (SPA 29.10.1976 no 4136)

The next ruling emphasises that research expenses cannot be deducted from a working grant, which is meant to provide a livelihood, as they must instead be deducted from other income:

A's pension income in 2002 and 2003 was about €45,000. In addition to this, A had a minor amount of other earned income. The foundation K awarded A a researcher grant of €13,000 for doctoral research as well as €2,000 for research expenses. €10,000 of the grant was paid in two instalments in 2002 and the third instalment of €5,000 in 2003 when the doctoral thesis received permission to go to print. A demanded that the share of research expenses that was not covered by the €2,000 expense grant, i.e. €6,945 (and €5,000 for 2003), be deducted from his earned income in 2002. These

amounts had not been deducted in taxation primarily because they were deemed covered by the grants.

The Supreme Administrative Court held that, in spite of the pension income, the grant made by the foundation was, on the part of the €13,000, intended as a so-called working grant, and it was not appropriate to consider A's research expenses to have been covered by the received grant in this respect. A was thus entitled to deduct from his income the deductible expenses caused by his scientific work. As it was possible to view the work leading to a doctoral dissertation as scientific work as meant in Section 31.1.4. of the Income Tax Act, the fact that A's earned income had consisted almost exclusively of pension income in the pertinent tax years did not present an obstacle to deducting the expenses. (SPA 25.1.2010/4)

As taxation-associated regulations often get revised and interpretations differ, we recommend that grant recipients contact **the tax authorities** directly for instructions if their cases are in any way un-clear. The tax supplements of **Acatiimi magazine** provide further information and examples about the taxation of researchers and university teachers in particular.

5.4 APPEALS

Tax decisions can be appealed by submitting a claim with the tax administration's Board of Adjustment. Its decisions can be appealed at an administrative court, whose decisions can in turn be brought before the Supreme Administrative Court for review.

Should conflicts arise in the work community, members of the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers working under a grant will find support first and foremost from the board members of their local branch, but union stewards may also provide counsel.

6. LEAVING FINLAND – COMING TO FINLAND

Many foundations and the post-doc pool of the foundations, the Academy of Finland, the Ministry of Education and Culture's international mobility-promoting agency **CIMO** and other parties award grants to support overseas work. In addition to grants awarded in Finland, such work can be funded by grants awarded by the target country, the host organisation or some international body. For example, students participating in the European Commission-funded Erasmus Mundus programme can get a grant to complete a Master's or doctoral degree in Europe. This involves the student applying directly for a grant from the educational institution while he or she applies for a study place.

6.1 SOCIAL SECURITY

The social security arrangements of people working overseas under a grant and under an employment relationship differ, although the rule of thumb is that both are covered by the social security system of the country in which they work. If a researcher receives pay in addition to the grant, he or she will be covered by the social security system of the country of employment (assuming the employment fulfils the minimum requirements of the country in question).

In practice, a researcher departing overseas with the help of a grant awarded in Finland should, however, take out MyEL insurance and request a decision allowing them to remain covered by the Finnish social security system. MyEL insurance cannot be granted if the insuree is not covered by the Finnish social security system. A researcher working overseas under a grant awarded in Finland and with permanent ties to Finland and who was covered by the Finnish social security system immediately before depart-

ture will, on application, remain covered by the Finnish system. According to the Finnish Centre for Pensions, “immediately before” means that the researcher must either work in Finland for a month at the beginning of the grant term before moving abroad, or work in Finland for a fourth of the time during the term of the grant. The issue should nevertheless be checked from the Finnish Centre for Pensions or from the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (Kela).

The application should be done before moving abroad. The permission is applied for from the Finnish Centre for Pensions (A1 certificate, online form ETK 2159) when the working country is an EU Member State, EEA country (Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway), Switzerland or party to a social security agreement. In 2017, these countries include Australia, Canada/Quebec, Chile, China, India, Israel, South Korea and the United States. If the destination country is Australia, the permission is applied for from Kela. With this certificate, a grant recipient can, in his or her country of employment, verify that social insurance payments are being made in Finland. The same applies to people working in more than one of the mentioned countries. The Finnish Centre for Pensions will inform Kela of the certificates it issues.

According to the agreement made with the United States, a grant recipient from Finland who moves to the United States for no more than a year can be covered by Finland’s social security system for the time they work in the United States. The condition for being covered by Finnish social security is that the grant recipient has been covered by Finland’s social security system immediately before moving abroad and that they have MyEL insurance for the duration of their time working abroad. The grant recipient must apply for a certificate establishing that they are covered by Finland’s social security system from the Finnish Centre for Pensions. A grant recipient leaving Finland for more than a year can apply for an exemption on being covered by Finnish social security. The exemption application is also addressed to the Finnish Cen-

tre for Pensions, but the decision is made by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Exemptions according to which a grant recipient can be covered by Finland’s social security system have also been agreed on with other contracting countries. You can get further information on these exemptions from the Finnish Centre for Pensions.

When departing to other countries, such as Russia, the exemption is applied for from Kela. Any family members joining you overseas must also apply for cover within Finland’s social security system from Kela.

If the grant maker is a foreign or international party, the student or researcher can nevertheless remain covered by the Finnish social security system. The right to do so is sought via an application to Kela, which decides on these matters on a case-by-case basis. People covered by Finnish social security are entitled to, among other things, the child benefit, the maternity allowance, the parental allowance and, with certain conditions, the sickness allowance. Entitlement to Finnish social security may also be a prerequisite to getting a travel insurance from Finland.

A grant recipient must inform Mela if they are working abroad in part or in full when filling in the insurance application; the same applies if the country of work changes. It would be advisable to notify Mela of even short trips abroad, in case of an occupational accident that occurs during such a trip.

Kela will supply a European Health Insurance Card without separate application to grant recipients working in an EU Member State, EEA country or Switzerland. The card entitles the holder to receive the care provided by the statutory health care system of the country of residence as well as to compensation for care.

Researchers working under a grant and departing to Quebec, Canada, are entitled to health insurance and medical care. If the right to receive medical care has not been determined in international legislation or treaties, the regulations are based on the national legislation of the

destination country.

Information about the coordination of social security in the EU Member States, EEA countries and Switzerland can be found on **the European Commission pages** as well as **the Eurocadres Mobil-net web booklet**. Country-specific information on the social security and health care systems of non-European countries is also available, in Finnish and Swedish, on **CIMO's maatieto.net service**.

Useful information for those departing overseas has been compiled on the websites of **the Finnish Centre for Pensions** and **Kela**.

6.2. UNEMPLOYMENT FUND MEMBERSHIP

People working with a grant as their sole source of income should not terminate their Union and unemployment fund membership when departing overseas, as it is wiser to keep paying the Union's membership fee for researchers working under a grant. If the researcher is unemployed upon return to Finland, his or her daily unemployment allowance will be calculated on the basis of income earned prior to the grant term. If membership is terminated for the duration of an overseas stay, the unemployment fund can only be rejoined once the researcher is once again in a paid employment relationship. Access to the earnings-related daily unemployment allowance also requires the applicant to once again fulfil the employment condition, which is 26 weeks in 2017.

You can find further information on the unemployment security of a researcher working abroad on **the website of the Federation of Unemployment Funds in Finland (TYJ)**.

6.3. TAXATION

A grant awarded in Finland and used to support overseas work will usually be taxed in Finland and with the same grounds as other grants awarded in Finland. Grants are always considered income for the tax year in which they first

become accessible in these cases as well.

The country, which taxes a grant from an overseas grant maker, is decided on the basis of the tax treaty in place between Finland and the grant maker's home country. These treaties do not usually contain provisions regarding the taxation of grants, and the issue is resolved on the basis of the article concerning unspecified income ("other income"). Usually, only the grant recipient's country of residence will levy taxes, but some tax treaties enable the source country to tax "other income" as well. Possible double taxation is usually reimbursed to the grant recipient.

If a grant awarded outside Finland is taxed by the country of employment, the recipient must independently consult the national authorities about taxation-associated issues (amount of tax, basis of assessment, method of payment, tax returns, etc.) Taxes and charges levied by the country of employment must be taken care of as instructed and a tax return must be submitted in the country of employment as well.

General instructions for researchers moving abroad are available on **the website of the Tax Administration**.

6.4 RESEARCHERS COMING TO FINLAND

A researcher from an EU Member State, an EEA country or Switzerland who arrives in Finland during the term of their grant can be MyEL insured if they are subject to Finland's social security legislation. Living in Finland, however, is not required. If the researcher has been insured in an EU or EEA country before moving to Finland, but is not a citizen of these countries, they are subject to the EU's Social Security Coordination.

Researchers from a social security agreement country arriving in Finland during the term of their grant must usually insure themselves in Finland, in addition to which they are subject to the social security legislation pursuant to the respective social security agreement. Living in Finland is not required in these cases either. The social security agreements do not cover all ben-

efits, and the agreement made with Australia is not applicable to grant recipients.

A researcher coming from a country without an agreement can be insured under MyEL if they can be deemed to have moved to Finland permanently and have a valid residence permit. In such cases, the term of the grant must be at least a year. Factually, the criteria for living in Finland is met only when the researcher is given a second-year grant. In this case, the residence-based social security is applicable from the beginning of the second term of the grant.

7. THE FINNISH UNION OF UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS AND TEACHERS PROVIDES SECURITY FOR GRANT WORKERS

The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers has been drawing public attention to the status of grant-funded researchers for a long time now. The Union has actively engaged in long-term efforts to improve the social and unemployment security of grant workers. In 2001, the Union proposed that the Ministry of Education appoint a working group to consider the matter (the petition was published in Acatiimi 4/2001). This working group was appointed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in 2003. At that stage, the project unravelled because of disagreements on how to organise and pay for social security.

In autumn 2006, some researchers established the TATUSOTU working group to promote the social security of artists and researchers. The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers cooperated closely with the group, as our joint objective was to bring the problems faced by grant workers to the attention of decision-makers and the general public. The effort yielded results in the spring 2007 government coalition negotiations, when a promise to im-

prove the social and unemployment security of researchers and artists was included in the Programme for Government.

The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers' own social security working group participated in every stage of the drafting of the legislation on grants, among other things in the capacity of an official negotiator in Ministry working groups. This had an effect on the end result: we managed to ensure that the provision of social security would not reduce the in-pocket income of grant recipients, for example. The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers and the TATUSOTU group were also of central significance to the Ministry of Employment's spring 2007 decision to establish a network of employment counsellors familiar with the special issues of concern to artists and researchers. The Union's experts participated in the training of these counsellors. Our goals were also registered in the guidelines issued to TE Offices, which were told that researchers were permitted to maintain their professional competence and spend time applying for new grants during periods of unemployment.

The union has also addressed issues that have surfaced after the university reform, such as the workspace question of researchers during the term of their grant. In 2011, the Union called for clear guidelines on the matter. Our recommendation was that the faculty or department should draft an agreement with researchers not working under an employment relationship to define the researcher's rights and obligations in detail. We also proposed talks between the foundations, employee organisations and Universities Finland UNIFI, an organisation which represents the rectors of Finnish universities, to make the practices of universities and foundations more uniform.

7.1 UNION AND UNEMPLOYMENT FUND MEMBERSHIP

The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers is a professional organisation for

teachers, researchers, library personnel and other academic experts at universities and research institutions. Our membership consists of both working researchers, either under grant or an employment relationship, and unemployed scholars. The membership fee is only eight euro per month during grant terms and periods of unemployment. Union members are insured against unemployment by **the Teachers' Unemployment Fund**.

A researcher who is currently unemployed or working under a grant cannot join the unemployment fund; one must be in paid employment when applying for membership. The length of the employment relationship is not regulated, so even a very brief employment contract entitles you to membership in the unemployment fund. However, it would nevertheless be advisable to think about whether you are able to accrue the 26 weeks required for the employment condition during the two-year period. It is not necessary to resign from the fund when a grant term commences if membership was approved on the basis of an earlier employment relationship.

7.2. LOCAL BRANCHES AND RESEARCHERS WORKING UNDER A GRANT

Should conflicts arise in the work community, members of the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers working under a grant will find support first and foremost from the board members of their local branch. You can also contact your shop steward for advice, even though their primary duty is to represent university personnel.

7.3 INSURANCE SECURITY

Members of the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers are insured through OP Insurance and insurance benefits are included in the membership fee. Non-occupational travel insurance covers Union members under the age of 68 and who reside permanently in Finland for

more than six months each year and are holders of a valid Kela card. Any children and grandchildren under the age of 15 travelling with a member are also covered by the insurance; only one insurance policy from the insurer Eurooppalainen is valid at any given time, however. Travel insurance is valid for leisure travel anywhere in the world. Treatment expenses are covered with no upper limit. The insurance does not cover baggage and its maximum duration is three months of uninterrupted leisure time travel. If your journey will last longer than this, it may be possible to extend the period of coverage through OP Insurance, but not beyond one year.

Non-occupational accident insurance covers Union members who are less than 68 years old and are domiciled in Finland as indicated by the population register as prescribed in the Municipality of Residence Act. It provides the insured with security against treatment expenses and permanent disablement as well as security for next of kin in the event of death. The insurance is valid against accidents that happen outside of working time or business trips anywhere in the world. As researchers working under a grant are not in an employment relationship, the Eurooppalainen non-occupational accident insurance is valid constantly for them.

A Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers membership card serves as verification of insurance when abroad. The back side of the card lists contact information, which the treating physician or hospital can contact in the event of serious illness or accidents. In most cases, presenting the membership card provides access to free-of-charge treatment.

An organisation insurance policy from OP Insurance provides members with security when participating in Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers organisation duties and functions everywhere in the world. Organisation activities covered by this insurance include, for example, Union organ and local branch meetings, training events, seminars, etc. The travel insurance consists of traveller insurance, baggage as well as travel liability and legal ex-

penses insurance.

In addition, a cooperation agreement with OP Insurance provides members with discounts on some optional insurance policies. Further information about this can be found on **the OP Insurance web-site**. Additional information about insurance is also available through the service number 0303 0303.

7.4 OTHER BENEFITS

The Union office provides Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers members with advice regarding the status of grant workers. Legal services, such as telephone counsel from a law firm, are also on offer; more information on this is posted on **the Union website**.

Like the other unions making up the Akava confederation, the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers has joined **the Member + service**.

Membership benefits also include the Akava calendar and a subscription to Acatiimi, the membership magazine for the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers, the Finnish Union of University Professors and YLL – The Union for University Teachers and Researchers in Finland. Eight issues of Acatiimi are published each year and the magazine regularly writes about matters relevant to grant work. It is published in print and **online**.

USEFUL LINKS

The Aurora database can be searched for funding opportunities for science, art and culture. The database lists Finnish providers of funding who are open to applications from Finns and Finnish residents.

The Council of Finnish Foundations maintains **the Säätiöpalvelu site** which contains information about grants and foundations. Grant applicants and recipients can search the site for suitable funding opportunities and get other advice.

Information about social security issues associated with overseas grant work is available from **the Finnish Centre for Pensions** (EU Member States and Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway and Switzerland as well as social security treaty countries Chile, South Korea, Israel, Canada, China, Quebec and the USA) and **Kela** (other countries).

Further information about the statutory insuring of grant recipients is available from **the Farmers' Social Insurance Institution (Mela)**.

The tax administration can provide further information about questions related to the taxation of grant work.

The Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers website.

The Teachers' Unemployment Fund website.

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TIETEENTEKIJÖIDEN LIITTO
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