

ACTION PLAN 2024

(To be proposed to the Autumn Assembly on November 30 2023)

1. Purpose of TATTE's operation

TATTE is a trade union and staff association that represents the interests of its members, supports their contributions and careers as researchers and university teachers, and acts as a link among its members. For this purpose, the association organizes meetings, presentations, and other similar events. It takes positions and takes action, as far as possible together with other organizations, aimed at improving the conditions of academic work and, where appropriate, builds bridges in the direction of the university's management.

2. Challenges and opportunities for the coming year

Many of the challenges that have faced the Tampere University community in recent years continue to reverberate. The re-organization of university support services has exacerbated rather than alleviated difficulties for all categories of staff, and the implementation of campus 'development' plans remains a major source of uncertainty going forward. That these issues have even gotten to this point reflects an unbalanced relationship between strategic management and democratic academic decision-making at the university. We can only hope that new leadership at the university may offer more collaborative opportunities to address these and other pressing challenges at the university. In any case, Tatte will have to continue to work to monitor and respond to these Tampere university-specific issues around working conditions and university decision-making throughout the coming year, even as we seek to make progress in addressing longstanding challenges in the sector around fixed-term contracts and the anxieties and obstacles of precarious academic careers, as well as addressing the specific problems of grant researchers, early career academics, and international staff.

The collective agreement in the university sector remains in force this year, which in other circumstances might lend some stability to Tatte's work, but at a national level, the current Finnish government program poses significant challenges to our members and threatens the foundations of Finland's labor market model. If implemented, the government's proposed changes to employment terms, unemployment protections, and immigration policies threaten the livelihoods of our members and the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in Finland. Its restrictions on the collective bargaining system and the right to strike would disempower ordinary people in the workplace and in the broader society. Tatte, in coordination with FUURT and the broader trade union movement, must be prepared to actively oppose these measures where possible and to support members who are affected by them. At the same time, new investments in research raise both potential opportunities and difficult challenges, especially in the area of Ph.D. education and supervision. Tatte will need to be ready to respond to these opportunities and challenges as they arise in Tampere and prepare for the possibility of needing to engage and support a significantly larger cohort of Ph.D. researchers (and potential Tatte members).

Previous years' action plans have also emphasized international crises, for example, the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and this year is no different. The pandemic has brought questions to the foreground around remote work practices, office space, intellectual property rights in education, and disability justice in ways that will remain vitally important. The ongoing war in Ukraine and policies that emerged in response continue to reverberate in the lives of our members and the university community more broadly. At the same time, the difference in reactions to the war in Ukraine and, for example, the war

in Gaza, also raise important questions about whose lives matter and which crises come to the attention of institutions, including in the university sector. These difficult questions affect our members who are directly touched by these crises, and they point to a need to carry forward our work on the impact of wars and crises on the Tampere University community, including the need to develop psycho-social support for affected community members, to address difficult questions about teaching and research in a time of a crisis, to examine our own complicities with ongoing wars and crises, and to be prepared to defend members speaking out in the face of harassment or repression .

Effectively rising to these challenges requires a growing and active membership, with opportunities for members to develop their capacities and knowledge and with solid relationships of solidarity within and beyond the association. Yet the contemporary conditions of academic work that we need to change also make our activities difficult—with the pressures and anxieties of maintaining an academic career leaving many with little time for this kind of work. The mobility often required just to maintain an academic position—between projects, institutions, and locations—also often makes maintaining local relationships and knowledge, as well as institutional memory difficult, and the uncertainty of fixed-term contracts and disruptions of periods of unemployment throw a wrench into long-term planning. There are not any easy answers to these problems, but we hope this year to continue developing effective and sustainable ways of addressing these obstacles.

3. Promotion of interest priorities in 2024

3.1 Fair and decent working opportunities for academics

Goal: The university employer treats all employees fairly and decently, regardless of career stage and form of employment. Academics are comfortable in their work, know their rights and are prepared to uphold them. TATTE is represented in the university bodies dealing with important working issues. The rights and contribution of grant researchers are recognized in the university community, and the needs and aspirations of unemployed and precariously employed members are centered in our advocacy. The specific challenges facing international staff and early career academics are recognized and addressed.

Fairness and decency are examined here in particular in relation to the organization of the conditions for doing work, including remuneration, the legality of the basis of fixed-term employment relationships, compliance with collective agreements, agreements on intellectual property rights, assessment of job requirement and personal performance levels, and opportunities for career advancement.

Measures at the local level:

- TATTE keeps in touch with the JUKO shop stewards, as well as Tatte members participating in university bodies, and monitors and responds to current problems and challenges.
- There are shop stewards with Tatte background among the JUKO's shop stewards. They have the right to attend and speak at Tatte's board meetings. In cooperation with FUURT, Tatte will explore ways to better support existing shop stewards, as well as begin to develop plans to prepare the next generation of Tatte members to take on shop steward positions and other important roles related to the promotion of interests.
- TATTE regularly informs its members about the support of shop stewards.
- Tatte is active in local advocacy and cooperation with all staff associations, shop stewards, and occupational health and safety representatives. The regular contact that was started due to cooperation negotiations continues with weekly meetings. In these online meetings, leaders of staff associations, shop stewards, and occupational health and safety representatives discuss current

interest protection issues and decide on joint activities. In addition to Tatte shop stewards, a Tatte board member appointed to the position participates in these meetings.

- At the local level, TATTE brings out the union's recommendations regarding, for example, career models and the status of early career researchers at the university.
- TATTE organizes an event for grant researchers to facilitate sharing information and community building.
- TATTE communicates to its members and the broader community about issues related to fair and decent working conditions and organizes an "academic self-defense" course for members.
- TATTE maintains communication with the university's management and brings to the management's attention themes that need development. Special emphasis is placed on a) campus development, b) career development for academics, and c) the importance of orientation activities for early career and international academics that introduce incoming members of the university community to working life issues.

Measures at the national level:

- TATTE takes positions on promotion of interest issues in the board and working groups of the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers (FUURT).
- TATTE maintains readiness for possible actions defending the rights and interests of our members (as researchers, workers, union members, unemployed people, and immigrants) in relation to the current Finnish government's program.

3.2 Development of the Tampere University's decision-making practices and university democracy

Goal: The university's decision-making practices and management systems are developed in a direction that respects the values of the university community and university democracy. Transparency, consistency and equality are observed in the university's decision-making and management.

Measures at the local level:

- TATTE continues its work to highlight problem areas based on its awareness of the university's management and institutions, e.g. drawing on researched knowledge and the recommendations for the development of university democracy published by FUURT at the end of 2021.
- TATTE strives to get representatives to various university bodies and working groups to promote the interests of staff and facilitate the flow of information about the university's activities and plans.
- TATTE organizes opportunities for members to discuss and reflect on what university democracy could mean in Tampere University

3.3 International issues and the promotion of interests

Goal: The university treats international academics fairly and decently, and recognizes and takes into account the specific issues related to their status. TATTE's international members know their rights and are able to uphold them. University language policies and practices promote an inclusive environment. The university as an institution and community responds productively and compassionately to crises impacting members of the community.

Measures:



- TATTE will continue to advocate for international academics in and beyond Tampere University in accordance with its 2023 recommendations
- TATTE organizes events for international academics in English to promote the awareness of the rights of international members at the university.
- TATTE will monitor and comment on the development of language policies and practices at Tampere University, as well as within FUURT.
- TATTE carries forward its work on the impact of wars and crises on the Tampere University community, addressing themes around psycho-social support for affected community members, support for addressing the challenges of teaching and research related to contemporary wars and crises, and defending freedom of expression and the value of researched knowledge in the face of crisis or repression.

4. Other internal operations of TATTE

4.1 Rules, board work and decision-making

TATTE's board exercises its authority between annual meetings and meets approximately once a month. The board agrees on its working practices and division of labor at its organizational meeting in January. The work of the board is supported by working groups, which are established at the organizational meeting. The working groups promote themes related to the specific priorities of the operating period. Certain tasks and possibly their own budget are defined for the working groups, within the limits of which the working groups prepare things independently.

In 2024, TATTE's board will consider ways in which it could better respond to the wishes and needs of the membership. In this work, the means are:

- TATTE is preparing a rule reform that would take into account the need for changes related to the description of the association's membership.
- TATTE is developing and experimenting with different ways to involve our members in decision-making beyond only the assemblies or board membership, e.g. in working groups, in action planning, and as sources of expertise and researched knowledge.

4.2 Membership recruitment and members' well-being

TATTE's future rests on the membership and active member recruitment guarantees the association's ability to operate.. TATTE also wants to take good care of its existing members.

In 2024, key means of member recruitment and maintenance are:

- TATTE will present its activities to doctoral researchers at the graduate school's orientation day and strive to develop cooperation with the graduate school to organize free-form community events after graduate study courses.
- As part of membership recruitment, TATTE improves its visibility within the university community e.g. through increased use of university intranet, new flyers and promotional materials, and carefully planned social media work.
- TATTE actively informs about its advocacy work related to interest protection themes. In informing, the aim is to strengthen solidarity between scientists and hope for the future, for example by drawing attention to the solutions available.
- TATTE organizes recreational activities for the membership in connection with the spring and autumn meetings and After Work events a few times a year.



- TATTE organizes a traditional May Day event.
- TATTE distributes grants that support well-being at work to its members and their work communities.
- TATTE organizes work supervision sessions for members, with prioritized participation for unemployed members and grant researchers.

TATTE's most important assets are its active board members, deputy members, shop stewards, and Tatte members representing staff in university bodies and working groups. The goal is that active membership of TATTE is an uncomplicated and meaningful way to participate in the development of university working conditions for all persons working in teaching, research and other expert positions at Tampere University. TATTE recognizes the inevitable consequences of a pressurized work environment on the time resources for collective voluntary activities.

In 2024, the work of TATTE's active members will be supported and recognized in the following ways:

- Within the board, TATTE aims for a fair, predictable and transparent division of work and clear and controlled internal communication. The working practices of the board are agreed upon in the initial organizational meeting.
- TATTE's assistant takes care of practical matters, and the goal is that routine matters take as little time as possible from active members and that their input is better included in the implementation of the contents of the activity itself. To support this goal, Tatte will also review and develop its practices as an employer to ensure it is meeting its responsibilities to provide fair and supportive working conditions and to promote the well-being of its employee(s).
- TATTE supports training in association activities for board members and deputy members, depending on their interest and the needs. During the year, TATTE organizes 1-2 joint trainings for all active members on the skills needed in advocacy work.
- TATTE pays board members, deputy members, auditors, and those working in the board's working groups a small fee in accordance with the association's economic regulations. Departing board members and auditors are thanked with a small gift.

4.3 Financial resources

TATTE's financial resources are good, and its surpluses are put to use for the benefit of our members and for improvement of the conditions for academic work at the university. In principle, the funds collected each year are used annually to cover the association's basic operations and other expenses in a considered manner. TATTE's financial surplus will be minimized by directing resources in the ways decided at the association's annual meetings, while maintaining adequate reserves to support potential industrial actions, as well as for emergencies and other unforeseen future needs.

TATTE has had some of its financial resources invested for several years. In 2022, a survey of the state of investments from the point of view of economic, ecological and social sustainability was started. At least yearly, TATTE's savings and investments will be reviewed by the board and the plan and rationale for their use will be reviewed and updated as necessary at the association's annual meetings.

5. Communication

The basis of TATTE's communication strategy is effective internal communication with the membership and the university community, as well as nationally visible external communication. The association has its own website under the online services of FUURT and effectively utilizes social media information channels. Current information matters are also collected in an electronic member's letter sent a few times a year.



In 2024, the following areas of communication will be developed:

- TATTE's board will review and update its communications strategy, and the communications officer will prepare a communication plan, with special attention to the changing social media landscape
- Internal and external communications will be implemented in accordance with the overall strategy and plan, including specific attention to communicating, as much as possible, in both Finnish and English.
- Tatte's website will be developed, including compiling TATTE's statements and reports to make them more accessible to the membership and to external audiences.

6. Cooperation and networks

Nationally, TATTE is a member of FUURT, which is part of Akava, the central labor market organization for university graduates. Through its membership in the union, TATTE belongs to JUKO, the negotiation organization for public sector professionals, which negotiates collective agreements in the university sector with the employers' organization.

Locally, TATTE's most important partners are the university's other staff organizations: Tampereen tekniikan tieteentekijät (3T), Informaatioalan akateemiset ry (INA), Tampereen yliopiston opetusalan yhdistys (TaYLL), Professoriliiton Tampereen yliopiston osasto, Tampereen yliopiston henkilökuntayhdistys (TaYHY), Tekniikan akateemisten paikallisosasto (TEKTUNI), Luonnontieteiden akateemiset (LATTE) and Tampereen yliopistolaiset JHL ry 660. We foster collaboration and solidarity with students generally, as well as the Tampere University student union (TREY), specifically. We also collaborate with other affected and interested parties in and beyond the university when there are opportunities to develop resources for our members or otherwise improve the conditions of academic work.

In the coming year, TATTE aims to further strengthen cooperation with other local associations of FUURT through collaborative work around strengthening association practices, training and capacity building for members, and national promotion of interests issues.