

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE FINNISH
NATIONAL BOARD ON RESEARCH
INTEGRITY TENK
2025

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1. TENK's responsibilities

The FINNISH NATIONAL BOARD ON RESEARCH INTEGRITY TENK is an expert body appointed by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture that handles ethical issues concerning research. Its responsibilities are to advance and promote research integrity and prevent research misconduct (Decree on the National Board on Research Integrity 1347/1991). TENK also has the responsibility to 1) make proposals and issue statements to authorities on legislative matters and other questions concerning research integrity, 2) operate as an expert body when problems related to good research practice are investigated, 3) take initiatives in promoting research integrity and discussions on research integrity in Finland, 4) monitor international developments in the field and actively participate in international cooperation, and 5) communicate and disseminate research integrity related topics.

TENK carries out its tasks by ensuring the ethical nature and quality of research and, thus, preventing research misconduct in all fields of research. TENK prepares national guidelines, organises seminars and promotes education, coordinates ethical review in human sciences, builds networks and maintains a presence both nationally and internationally. TENK also monitors and compiles statistics on violations of research integrity in Finland, issues statements on the investigation of alleged violations of research integrity (the RI process) and provides advice when problems arise. The implementation of these tasks is discussed in chapters 2–6.

The Ministry of Education and Culture appoints the members of TENK's board for a three-year term based on a proposal from the research community. During the term of office from 1 February 2025 to 31 December 2027, Chancellor Kaarle Hämeri from the University of Helsinki acts as Chair and Senior Advisor Susanna Näreaho from Metropolia University of Applied Sciences acts as Vice Chair of TENK.

TENK's board includes eight other members:

- Research Funding Specialist **Anu Helkkula**, Hanken
- Manager **Veikko Ikonen**, VTT
- University Lecturer **Simo Kyllönen**, University of Helsinki
- University Lecturer **Matti Muukkonen**, University of Eastern Finland
- Professor **Heidi Partti**, University of the Arts Helsinki
- University Lecturer **Jutta Pulkki**, Tampere University
- Associate Professor **Aleksi Tornio**, University of Turku
- Senior Lecturer **Kaisa Vehkalahti**, University of Jyväskylä

TENK Secretary General, Docent **Sanna-Kaisa Spoof**, acts as secretary of the board. TENK and its Secretariat work at the office of the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV).



TENK members Simo Kyllönen, Aleksi Tornio, Jutta Pulkki, Kaarle Hämeri, Heidi Partti, Kaisa Vehkalahti, Matti Muukkonen and Veikko Ikonen. Photo: Jaakko Lukumaa

TENK held seven board meetings in 2025, mostly remotely. The June meeting took place in Tamminiemi, Helsinki, on 5 June 2025, and the December meeting took place at the House of Science and Letters on 11 December 2025. In January, representatives of TENK familiarised themselves with the Sámi Parliament and the Sámi Museum Siida in Inari. In December, TENK visited Aalto University.

In addition to their duties in the board, TENK members promote research ethics and research integrity for example through teaching and training, giving presentations, taking part in publishing activities, giving interviews and making other media appearances, and by actively working in international, national and local ethics committees and working groups.

2. TENK's strategy

Work towards the first strategy in TENK's history started in August. The aim is to envision the future of TENK and the ethical framework of research in Finland up to 2035. The strategy also serves as a basis for legislative work concerning TENK. The strategy is connected to the 2040 vision work of the Ministry of Education and Culture on higher education and research.

To support the development of the strategy, TENK invited representatives of key stakeholders as working group members. Among the starting points of the working group were that research ethics and integrity would become increasingly important, and TENK's tasks would

increase due to AI becoming an established part of research practice. The strategy will be delivered to the Ministry of Education and Culture in summer 2026.

Members of the working group (1 August 2025 to 31 December 2026):

Chairs of the working group

- **Kaarle Hämeri**, Chancellor, University of Helsinki; Chair (representing the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK)
- **Emilia Katajajuuri**, Executive Director, Operations Management Unit, Research Council of Finland; Vice Chair (Research Council of Finland)

Working group members

- **Niklas Bruun**, Doctor of Laws, Professor Emeritus (Council of Finnish Academies)
- **Nina Hahtela**, Executive Director, Union of Research Professionals (Union of Research Professionals)
- **Salla Huttunen**, Vice President, Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences (Arene)
- **Kari Komulainen**, Senior Director, Funding Services, Business Finland (Business Finland)
- **Outi Konttinen**, General Secretary, National Committee on Medical Research Ethics Tukija (Tukija)
- **Johanna Kujala**, Professor, Tampere University (Finnish Union of University Professors)
- **Matti Muukkonen**, University Lecturer, University of Eastern Finland (TENK)
- **Susanna Näreaho**, Senior Advisor, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (TENK)
- **Petro Poutanen**, CEO, Finnish Research Impact Foundation (Association of Finnish Foundations)
- **Lea Ryyänen-Karjalainen**, Executive Director, Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (Federation of Finnish Learned Societies)
- **Sirpa Thessler**, Vice President, Natural Resources, Natural Resources Institute Finland (Tulanet)
- **Susanne Uusitalo**, Senior Researcher, University of Oulu (Unifi)

3. Advancing and promoting research integrity

3.1. Research integrity

Since 1994, the RI guidelines that TENK draws up in collaboration with the research community have provided researchers and higher education students with a model on research integrity in Finland and on how alleged RI violations are handled (the RI process). [*The Finnish Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and Procedures for Handling Alleged Violations of Research Integrity in Finland*](#) (RI Guidelines) is founded on the ethical self-regulation of the research community. This general guideline is applied in all research activities and research fields in the organisations that are committed to it.

By the end of 2025, more than one hundred organisations of different sizes were committed to the 2023 RI Guidelines.

3.2. Research integrity advisers

TENK coordinates the national [research integrity adviser activities](#) launched in 2017.

Research integrity advisers promote research integrity and good research practices in their organisations and provide confidential advice to members of their organisations. In December 2025, 86 organisations in Finland had altogether 157 research integrity advisers, including coordinators.

As activities in 2025, TENK organised an introductory training event for research integrity advisers in Teams on 12 March 2025, a workshop-oriented spring meeting at the House of Science and Letters on 22 May 2025, and a session on the AI recommendation in Teams on 19 November 2025.

48 research integrity advisers responded to TENK's annual survey on 2025 activities in February 2026. Of the respondents, 79% had provided personal advice on research integrity at least once or twice in 2025. Some advisers working at universities and universities of applied sciences reported having had more than ten advisory meetings that year. The most common topics for advice concerned authorship and research misconduct. 54% had provided training or orientation to staff in their organisation on topics related to research integrity.

As in previous years, most respondents considered research integrity adviser activities to be helpful and felt that they had succeeded in their role. 83% of the respondents considered that TENK had been successful or very successful in developing research integrity adviser activities.

The research integrity adviser development group concluded its 2023–2025 term.

3.3. Research Integrity Barometer: Recommendations for organisations

Research Integrity Barometers gather data of the state of research integrity and research ethics and ethics-related problems in the research community in Finland. TENK published the second national Research Integrity Barometer report [Research Integrity in the Time of COVID-19: Finnish Research Integrity Barometer 2023](#) in May 2024.

A follow-up analysis and recommendations for action were published in November 2025, with a specific focus on universities, universities of applied sciences and research institutes. The resulting publication [Research Integrity in Finland: Insights for Universities, Universities of Applied Sciences and Research Institutes from the Research Integrity Barometer 2023](#) includes organisation-type results, results on the career stage of respondents, and recommendations for action for the leadership of organisations to prevent RI problems. English and Swedish translations were published in December 2025.

3.4. Communication

TENK has the responsibility to carry out communication concerning matters of research integrity and research ethics. Communication forms part of all activities and expert tasks carried out by TENK and its Secretariat. TENK provides information about its activities, its guidelines and recommendations and, more broadly, about national and international questions concerning research integrity in Finnish, Swedish and English. In 2025, TENK set up a [LinkedIn account](#). TENK communicates about its activities also on its [website](#) and the [TENK tiedottaa newsletter](#), which is sent to subscribers, the leadership of the organisations committed to TENK's guidelines, and to other key stakeholders. In 2025, newsletters were released in June (1/2025) and November (2/2025). By the end of 2025, the newsletter had a total of 636 subscribers.

Members of TENK and TENK's Secretariat also give seminar presentations, publish articles and give interviews.

3.5. Events

TENK's subcommittee for ethical review in human sciences organised an event for human sciences ethics committees at the House of Science and Letters on 30 October 2025. The event focused on issues concerning research which involves children, and approximately 60 people from 23 different committees attended.

On 9 December 2025, TENK's Secretariat organised a Research Integrity Afternoon, an English-language event in Teams. The event was open to all, and the programme consisted of presentations on the Finnish model of co-regulation, the research integrity adviser network and questions concerning authorship and research integrity. The event was aimed at researchers and research organisations.

4. Handling alleged violations of research integrity

4.1. Alleged and verified RI violations reported to TENK

In 2025, Finnish universities, universities of applied sciences and other research organisations that have committed to the RI Guidelines reported a total of 50 new alleged RI violations to TENK. None of the cases involved master's theses in universities of applied sciences.

Based on the notifications sent to TENK, 28 RI processes, some of which had begun during preceding years, were completed in universities or other organisations during 2025. The RI process is carried out in the organisation where the research in question takes or has taken place.

Alleged and verified RI violations reported to TENK, number	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Notifications from research organisations concerning new alleged RI violations	50	27	38	31	53
Concluded RI processes at research organisations with a verified RI violation: research misconduct	4	1	7	2	5
Concluded RI processes at research organisations with a verified RI violation: disregard for good research practices	3	4	3	0	3

Table 1: Number of alleged RI violations reported to TENK and verified violations each year.

4.2. TENK's statements: the numbers requested and issued

In 2025, TENK received a total of 15 new requests for a statement on the investigation processes of alleged RI violations. TENK issued a total of 11 statements in 2025.

Summaries of TENK's statements in 2025 are presented in section 4.3. TENK also received one request for a statement concerning an ethical review statement issued by a human sciences ethics committee. A summary of this statement is presented in section 5.2. All statement summaries are published on TENK's website.

TENK also issued a statement to the Research and Innovation Council on the strategic choices for national RDI policies and activities.

TENK statements (nr)	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
New statement requests on the RI process	15	23	13	8	37
Statements issued by TENK on the RI process (also including different requests for a statement other than those in the previous section)	11	22	7	19	22
Expert statements not concerning RI processes	2	5	2	2	1

Table 2: Number of statements issued by the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK each year

4.3. Summaries of RI statements issued by TENK

Statement 1 (TENK 2025:1): Not a case of deliberate delaying or hampering of doctoral research – the university acted appropriately by separating RI issues from other allegations

Doctoral Researcher A alleged that Dean B, Professor C and Assistant Professor D were guilty of disregard for good research practices in a number of ways, particularly with regard to the planning and preparation and implementation of research, exploitation of academic status, and guidance provided during the RI process. According to A, the respondents had, among other things, delayed and hampered A's research in various ways.

After a preliminary inquiry, the university's Rector E concluded that RI violations had not taken place. The Rector noted that the notification of suspected misconduct had also included several issues that do not fall within the scope of the RI process.

TENK concluded that RI violations had not taken place and that an investigation proper was not necessary in this case. In TENK's view, the actions of the respondents in the planning, preparation or implementation of the research, the RI process, or with regard to their academic status did not contain elements that could be considered indicative of disregard for good scientific practices. According to the preliminary inquiry carried out by the university, C had stepped down from the role of dissertation supervisor for a valid reason, as A's research had moved outside of C's area of expertise. The university was deemed to have acted appropriately by separating RI issues from allegations that are not addressed through the RI process. The respondents were found not to have deliberately hampered, delayed or obstructed Doctoral Researcher A's research.

TENK concluded that the various issues concerning HR management, supervision, the employment relationship, the terms of employment and the arrangement of doctoral studies included in the notification of suspected misconduct and the subsequent statement request to TENK are not within the scope of the RI process, and TENK will not address them.

Statement 3 (TENK 2025:3): Lack of clarity over whether the contribution warranted authorship led to the case being referred back for an investigation proper

Physician A from wellbeing services county X alleged that Physician B from University Y had committed an authorship violation. According to A, they had not been mentioned in a publication despite having contributed to the publication in the form of database work. A asserted that Physician B should have mentioned that A had worked in a local subcohort of the international project.

At the end of the preliminary inquiry, Subdirector C of wellbeing services county X concluded that no RI violation had taken place. In their request for a statement, A questioned whether the preliminary inquiry had been carried out in accordance with the RI Guidelines (2023).

On the basis of the material submitted to it, TENK concluded that the database work drawing from multiple sources which was carried out by A as part of and after their dissertation had played a noteworthy role in the background material used by the disputed article.

TENK concluded that wellbeing services county X should carry out an investigation proper in the case. As the process was not decided by the highest leadership, TENK also instructed the wellbeing services county to justify the delegation of decision-making on the RI process in the future, if the process is organised in a manner that deviates from the RI Guidelines (2023).

Statement 4 (TENK 2025:4): No conflict of interest was found in the doctoral dissertation's supervision or review process

According to University Lecturers A and B from University X, Professor C and Docent D from University Z, who were the preliminary examiners of an art dissertation written at University Y, had a conflict of interest because they had collaborated with the doctoral candidate in the early stages of the dissertation project. A and B also claimed that the dissertation supervisor, Professor E from University Y, must have been aware of this connection after reading the dissertation manuscript, yet E still proposed that C and D act as preliminary examiners of the dissertation. For these reasons, A and B considered that C, D and E were guilty of disregard for good research practices.

According to University Y, the doctoral dissertation process had been conducted in compliance with the regulation on disqualification under the Administrative Procedure Act. Likewise, no conflict of interest was identified for the respondents in the RI process that was carried out. A and B were dissatisfied with this decision.

In its statement, TENK saw no reason to reach a different conclusion. According to TENK, the 2012 RCR Guidelines do not define conflict of interest as a category of disregard for good research practices that meets the criteria for an RI violation.

According to the "Supervision of Doctoral Dissertations and Their Review Process in Finland with a Special Emphasis on Research Integrity" guidelines by TENK and UNIFI, universities must ensure that no one involved in the dissertation process is subject to a conflict of interest. According to TENK's guidelines, researchers must disclose their possible commitments and conflicts of interest in assessment and decision-making situations.

Because the allegation was based on information in a publication intended to become a doctoral dissertation, TENK found that the allegation was not unfounded. TENK concluded that although from an external academic point of view E appears to have acted somewhat carelessly as a supervisor by nominating persons whose links to the doctoral candidate had not been checked, this was not a case of serious negligence and therefore did not meet the criteria for the type of disregard for good research practices that counts as an RI violation. The same RI process is also discussed in the statement (TENK 2025:5).

Statement 5 (TENK 2025:5): Notification of an alleged RI violation was not malicious. Ongoing RI processes must not be commented on in the media

University Lecturers A and B from University X alleged that the preliminary examiners of an art dissertation written at University Y, Professor C and Docent D from University Z, had a conflict of interest as preliminary examiners because they had collaborated with the doctoral candidate in the early stages of the dissertation project. However, the RI process conducted by University Y identified no conflict of interest for the respondents, and they were found to have committed no RI violations.

In their request for a statement, C expressed their dissatisfaction with the decision, as they considered the notification of alleged misconduct submitted about them to have been unfounded and malicious. According to C, the unreasonably long RI process should never have been initiated. C also felt that they had been subjected to “hounding by the media” because the complainants and representatives of University Y had made comments about the RI process in public, against TENK guidelines. According to C, the RI process in question had caused significant damage to their reputation and research career.

Because the allegation of a conflict of interest was based on information derived from what was intended to become a doctoral dissertation, TENK concluded that the allegation was not unfounded and therefore also not malicious. As the possibility of an RI violation could not be ruled out after the preliminary inquiry conducted by Y, the initiation of an investigation proper into the matter as a whole was in accordance with TENK’s guidelines and made it possible to also establish the views of experts outside University Y. TENK noted that the fact that the case attracted public interest was not a reason to speed up the RI process.

TENK agreed with C in that, in order to protect confidentiality, the concerned parties should not comment on an ongoing RI process. In this case, however, A had already made comments on the doctoral dissertation to the media before submitting a notification of alleged misconduct. In its statement, TENK stated that it does not comment on public appearances related to RI processes by members of the research community who are not involved in the process. In the same context, however, TENK pointed out that researchers are bound by the RI Guidelines also when they comment on science or research in their capacity as researchers in public or on social media.

The same RI process is also discussed in the statement (TENK 2025:4).

Statement 6 (TENK 2025:6): Intern’s contribution did not meet the authorship criteria, and consulting an expert from the same unit did not compromise the RI process

Doctoral Researcher A had interned with a research team led by Assistant Professor B. A alleged that B had violated research integrity by making use of methods and materials

developed by A without A's consent or appropriate acknowledgement and by omitting A's name from the list of authors and contributors of the article. According to A, their work had been utilised in the disputed article to create a recipe for x. The method was already mentioned in the project's research plan, but A claimed to be the first person to make the recipe during their internship. Based on this, A considered that their discovery should at least have been acknowledged in the acknowledgements section. A also believed that their contribution was scientifically significant enough to merit inclusion as a co-author of the article in question. A also considered that Professor C, who was heard as an expert in the preliminary inquiry, had a conflict of interest due to C working in the same unit as B.

Based on the preliminary inquiry conducted by University Y, A's contribution was not significant enough to entitle them to the co-authorship of the disputed article or to justify the redaction of the publication, as was proposed by A. According to the preliminary inquiry, B's research team had had established practices for agreeing on the authorship of publications in advance. With regard to the disputed article, the preliminary inquiry compared the list of authors to the criteria for the publication in question, based on which it was interpreted that A's contribution did not entitle them to be mentioned as one of the publication's co-authors. The conclusion of the preliminary inquiry was that it would have been polite to mention A in the acknowledgements of the article, but that the lack of acknowledgement had caused no detriment to A and the publication in question has not hindered the publishing of future studies by A. Following the preliminary inquiry, the university's Rector D concluded that no RI violation had taken place.

TENK agreed that it would have been polite to mention A in the acknowledgements of the article. However, TENK considers that the lack of acknowledgement cannot be interpreted as a serious violation of good research practices that would meet the criteria for an RI violation.

TENK found that although A's view of the scientific significance of their contribution differed from the conclusions of the preliminary inquiry and the experts heard during the process, it would be unlikely that an investigation proper would result in a different outcome. TENK found that the university had complied with the 2023 RI Guidelines in this respect, and it was not necessary to initiate an investigation proper.

Regarding the allegation of C having a conflict of interest in the case, TENK stated that the university had followed the 2023 RI Guidelines in the appointment of the person conducting the preliminary inquiry and in the hearings of experts.

Statement 7 (TENK 2025:7): Allegation concerning the organisation's activities and guidelines in general did not require preliminary inquiry

A alleged that Organisation B, which operates under University Y, was guilty of disregard for good research practices and had violated A's authorship with regard to a data set produced by A. University Y's had concluded that no RI violation had taken place and there was no reason to initiate a preliminary inquiry in the case.

A's notification of suspected misconduct concerned the activities of Organisation B in general and particularly the organisation's guidelines on participatory reporting. A did not specify which specific set of guidelines they referred to in their notification. A's allegation was based on a case example in which A alleged that there were plans to use the data set produced by A without proper citation, which in A's view indicated a broader trend of Organisation B's activities being in violation of good research practices. A nevertheless stated that the actual material in question had been published in a manner that A found to be satisfactory.

TENK concluded that no incident or act that could be suspected of being a violation of good research practices had taken place. TENK's view was that University Y had acted in accordance with the 2023 RI Guidelines and no preliminary inquiry was required.

Statement 8 (TENK 2025:8): A series of publications violated good research practices in a broad sense, but deficiencies in the investigation committee's report and the Rector's decision led TENK to refer the case back to the university for reconsideration

Professors A and B alleged that Researcher C and Docent D had violated good research practices together with several unnamed co-authors in a number of publications by fabricating research, plagiarising applications, presentations and publications by A's research team and using materials without permission, among other things. The allegations concerned 19 publications authored by a total of 30 different researchers from different research organisations. According to A, C had gained access to the materials while working as a doctoral researcher under A's supervision, and C had then used the materials without permission in the disputed publications by fabricating research and mass-producing publications by plagiarising (through modification and paraphrasing) and self-plagiarising.

University Y conducted a preliminary inquiry and later an investigation proper into the matter, with Visiting Researcher E, Postgraduate Student F and Professor G from the university also named as respondents. According to the investigation committee's report, the respondents were found to have violated good research practices by mass-producing publications, self-plagiarising, plagiarising (modification and paraphrasing) and failing to follow proper citation practices. In the case of self-plagiarism, the behaviour was considered to be widespread. The investigation committee found that the respondents' behaviour showed a clear disregard for good research practices, or at least a lack of knowledge of research integrity to the point that the respondents were found to be guilty of disregard for good research practices. However, the investigation committee concluded that, overall, the acts were minor.

During the process, one of the concerned parties alleged that one of the complainants, Professor B, who had been heard as an expert in the investigation, had a conflict of interest in the case.

After the investigation proper, Rector H decided, contrary to the report by the investigation committee, that the respondents had not committed an RI violation. The Rector was of the view that because the violations of good research practices identified by the investigation committee in their report were not severe, they, by definition, did not meet the criteria for an

RI violation. The Rector considered the expert statement by Professor B to be equivalent to a hearing of a concerned party.

TENK concluded that it was evident from the RI process that the disputed publications had been found to be in violation of good research practices. However, on the basis of the material submitted to TENK, it was not possible to establish separately for each publication the role of the authors in the violations of good research practices, and thus it was not possible to issue a statement on which specific category of RI violation each of the authors was or was not guilty of for each publication.

Regarding the allegation that Professor B had a conflict of interest, TENK stated that Professor B had the right to be heard in the RI process only as a complainant. TENK considered that the investigation committee had violated the 2023 RI Guidelines by hearing Professor B as an expert during the investigation, which therefore constituted an error in the process.

TENK found that the RI process had otherwise been largely carried out in accordance with the 2023 RI Guidelines. However, the final report by the investigation committee did not fully comply with the 2023 RI Guidelines. The report was imprecise in terms of how the severity of an identified violation of good research practices should be assessed and how an RI violation is defined in the 2023 RI Guidelines. The report also included internal contradictions between the discussion section and the conclusions, and it lacked a decision of the form and severity of the alleged RI violations in line with the RI Guidelines, broken down by publication and author, and on who was or was not found guilty of RI violations in each publication. For these reasons, TENK referred the case back to the university for reconsideration.

Statement 9 (TENK 2025:9): Applying the RI process to a hiring decision

Professor A alleged that those involved in the recruitment of a university researcher in a natural sciences field had falsified the merits of the applicants. The university responded that the allegation concerned a hiring decision and therefore did not fall within the scope of the RI Guidelines. No RI process was initiated in the case.

A was dissatisfied with the university's decision. In their request for a statement, A referred to the section in the RI Guidelines according to which issues related to hiring decisions fall within the scope of the RI Guidelines when RI issues are also involved. TENK agreed with A's view. Because the university's reason for not initiating an RI process was not in accordance with the RI Guidelines, it could not alone justify the decision not to initiate a preliminary RI inquiry. TENK did not comment on whether or not the university should have done so, and TENK did not comment on possible RI violations as an RI process had not been carried out. TENK's overall assessment was that the university should reassess whether to initiate an RI process in the matter.

Statement 10 (TENK 2025:10): The evidence and assessment could be disputed and no authorship violation was found

The RI process carried out at University Y concerned an allegation, brought under investigation by decision of Rector A, that Assistant Professor B had violated research integrity by excluding Doctoral Researcher C from the list of authors of an article in which B was the lead author. In addition to B, one researcher from University Y and three researchers from a foreign university were named as co-authors.

C had worked in B's research team at the time when B led the joint international project that produced the disputed publication. The parties agreed that C had been assigned the task of producing the first draft of the manuscript, including a literature review. However, in the preliminary inquiry no evidence was found that the published article was based on the manuscript version prepared by C, although there were similarities in terms of sources between the published version and the version prepared by C.

At the end of an investigation proper, the investigation committee concluded that C had participated both in the processing of the samples and in the drafting of the manuscript of the disputed article. With regard to the processing of the samples, the significance of C's role could not be established with certainty. The investigation committee took the view that C's draft and the disputed article did not directly correspond to each other, but they followed the same logic and order, and on this basis the investigation committee considered that C's work appeared to have been used in the disputed article. The investigation committee stated that C's resignation should not have led to their omission from the list of authors. The investigation committee found B to be guilty of disregard for good research practices in a way that meets the criteria for an RI violation because B had omitted C's name from the authors of the article. The investigation committee recommended that C should be added as a co-author to the list of authors of the article.

The respondent, on the other hand, continued to state that C's contribution to the article did not meet the criteria of authorship and that the overlap in the versions of the article was the expected consequence of using the same sources.

The Rector noted that the parties involved had notably contrasting views on the work involved in processing the samples and the writing process. The Rector concluded that the respondent was guilty of disregard for good research practices because they had omitted C's name as the writer of the first draft from the list of authors of the disputed publication. According to the Rector's decision, this disregard for good research practices met the criteria for an RI violation.

B considered that they should have been given the opportunity to comment on the material presented by C before the investigation committee's report was drawn up, and that B should have been heard in person during the process. In TENK's view, the university's RI process had been carried out in accordance with the 2023 RI Guidelines with regard to hearing those involved.

In general, TENK stated that particular attention should be paid in the RI process to the assessment criteria, evidence or argumentation that can be used in an investigation to

establish whether a violation of good research practices that is severe in its nature and consequences meets the criteria for an RI violation. As the consequences of an identified RI violation are serious, the evidence and the assessment must be irrefutable.

TENK found that the submitted material did not present irrefutable evidence that C had made a significant contribution to the disputed article. On the basis of the material presented, the nature, scope and significance of C's work remained unclear and C's contribution to the article was questionable and at most so minor as not to justify their inclusion in the list of authors. Based on the material presented, the nature, extent and significance of C's contribution remained unclear and any contribution made by C appeared too minor to justify inclusion in the article's list of authors.

TENK considered that it would have been polite to mention C in the acknowledgements of the article. Based on the investigation committee's report, an attempt had been made to do so, but no response or approval had been received from C, which the publisher required in order to include C in the article's acknowledgements.

TENK found that neither B nor the co-authors had committed an RI violation by omitting C's name from the list of authors of the article.

Statement 11 (TENK 2025:11): Adding the name of the researcher to the abstract of a presentation was not considered an RI violation

Former Researcher A of University Y alleged that Professor B of University Y had committed an authorship violation. According to A, B had committed an RI violation by submitting an abstract for a conference presentation under A's name against A's will. A also alleged that an employee of University Y had granted data access to B on false grounds.

On the basis of a preliminary inquiry, the Rector of University X decided that this did not meet the criteria for an RI violation. In their request for a statement, A questioned whether the RI process had been carried out in accordance with the RI Guidelines (2023).

TENK found that the inclusion of A's name in the list of authors of the presentation was not an RI violation, as A had not requested that their name be removed from the list of authors. TENK agreed with the Rector and concluded that University Y had carried out the RI process in accordance with the 2023 RI Guidelines and B was not guilty of an RI violation.

5. Ethical review

5.1. Coordination of ethical review in human sciences

TENK coordinates ethical review in human sciences and promotes cooperation between regional and organisation-specific human sciences ethics committees.

At the request of researchers, human sciences ethics committees issue ethical review statements on the ethical questions of research plans and other risks involved. The

statements are based on [The ethical principles of research with human participants and ethical review in the human sciences in Finland \(2019\)](#) (TENK's ERHS Guidelines; in Finnish, IEEA) to which organisations are committed and which were drawn up in collaboration with the research community.

The TENK Secretariat follows the system of ethical review by collecting annual data on cases processed by human sciences ethics committees and maintaining a list of the committees' contact information. At the end of 2025, [a total of 83 organisations](#) had committed to the ERHS Guidelines.

The number of requests for ethical review statements broke yet another record. There is great variation in the number of statement requests that committees process: in the largest organisations, the committees process over a hundred requests every year, whereas some committees only process a few individual requests. The most common reasons for requests for a statement continue to be research settings that require an ethical review and the requirements of publishers or research funders.

An increasing number of statement requests are made due to the requirements of publishers or research funders, and just over one in three committees handle these requests on an accelerated timetable. Some committees try to select for consideration only those research settings that require an ethical review as described in TENK's ERHS Guidelines. In addition to new statement requests, the committees also handle notifications and amendment requests concerning previously issued statements. The committees may also provide overviews of the Finnish ethical review system.

Ethical questions require committees to engage in constant dialogue and develop their competencies. There is a call for TENK to organise more discussion and training sessions. There is also a constant need for training and communication on ethical review for the personnel of organisations.

Number of cases handled by human sciences ethics committees	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Requests for ethical review statements	933	816	802	690	589
Statements issued by ethics committees	910	723	819	611	582
Negative statement	0	6	4	4	3
No statement issued ¹	32	33	20	57	36

¹ An ethical review was not considered to be necessary, the request for a statement was forwarded to another committee or the process was interrupted.

Number of organisations that replied to TENK's follow-up survey	33	30	27	25	34
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Table 3: Number of cases handled by human sciences ethics committees each year

If necessary, TENK can be requested for a statement on the decisions issued by human sciences ethics committees. In 2025, TENK's **Ethical Review in Human Sciences Subcommittee** (ERHS subcommittee) processed one request for a statement and subsequently issued one statement related to an ethical review in human sciences. Another task of the subcommittee is to develop ethical review in human sciences and the work of the committees in the field in Finland and to monitor the international development of field-specific, non-medical research integrity and research ethics.

From February 2025 onwards, TENK members Susanna Näreaho and Veikko Ikonen acted as Chair and Vice Chair of the subcommittee, respectively. The subcommittee's other members were TENK members Kaisa Vehkalahti and Jutta Pulkki. Lead Adviser **Petra Falin** acted as secretary of the subcommittee. The subcommittee had five meetings in 2025.

5.2. Ethical review statements requested from and issued by TENK

TENK's guidelines [The ethical principles of research with human participants and ethical review in the human sciences in Finland](#) state that if a person who has requested an ethical review statement does not accept the proposed changes in the statement or the decision of the human sciences ethics committee, they may request a statement on the matter from TENK.

In 2025, TENK handled one request for a statement concerning ethical review in human sciences and issued a statement on the case. A summary of this statement is presented below.

TENK's Secretariat also received many queries about ethical reviews in Finland, especially from international researchers.

Ethical review statement in human sciences 2 (TENK 2025:2): Using municipal youth work data for research

A committee that issues ethical review statements in human sciences asked TENK for a statement on a case in which researchers had asked the committee for guidance on the research use of data that had been accumulated in the context of municipal youth work.

The committee had considered that there were uncertainties regarding the use of the data for research purposes. The committee was unable to provide the researchers with clear and unambiguous guidance on how to proceed on the basis of current research ethics guidelines and policies. In practice, the data comprises records kept by municipal youth workers that

were not originally collected for the purpose of research but for the development of youth work. The data contains both qualitative and quantitative data, it is stored by municipalities in different systems, and there are no consistent guidelines for this data collection. The quantitative data is anonymous, but it is possible to directly identify youth workers and possibly indirectly identify individual young people from the qualitative data. The municipalities implementing youth work are not committed to TENK's ERHS Guidelines, and they do not necessarily adhere to ethical practices in their data collection. No ethical review had yet been requested for the planned research.

TENK concluded that the data described in the consultation request and the research use of this data did not require new guidelines or direction from TENK per se. In so far as the researchers have access to the quantitative data produced by youth services in an anonymised form, TENK found no obstacle to the use of such data for research purposes based on the description. Based on the description of the qualitative data, TENK considered that, in this case, participation in the research deviated from the principle of informed consent. If the researchers wish to make use of such data for research purposes, they must request an ethical review.

In principle, TENK found that using the data for research purposes was challenging with regard to ethical requirements of research, as the data had been collected in a rather inconsistent way and outside the control of the researchers, and it was unclear from the material whether the young people had been informed about the data collection at all. TENK urged the researchers to consider whether the data collection could be planned and implemented under the researchers' supervision, so that both the young people and youth workers would be aware of the type of data collected and its purposes of use.

5.3. Ethical Guidelines and Ethical Review for Research on Nature and the Environment (LYTE project, 2023–2026)

In 2023, TENK launched a project for drawing up national ethical principles and a system for ethical review for research on nature and the environment in Finland. The recommendation was published in June 2026 at the InRENEI2026 symposium in Inari.

[*The Ethical Guidelines and Ethical Review for Research on Nature and the Environment project*](#) was funded by a special grant from the Ministry of Education and Culture for the period 1 October 2023 – 30 June 2026. The project aims to harmonise and develop research-ethical practices in research on natural sciences, life sciences, the environment and technology and, at the same time, increase ethical discussion on the impacts of research on nature and the environment.

The project's steering group was chaired by Professor Emerita Riitta Keiski from the University of Oulu. The working group, which represents a wide range of disciplines and organisations, was chaired by Vice President Sirpa Thessler from Natural Resources Institute Finland.

5.4. Research Ethics and Artificial Intelligence (2024–2026)

TENK carried out a project on AI and research ethics during 2024–2026. The aim was to produce a recommendation (a living document) on good research-ethical practices concerning the use of artificial intelligence. The recommendation complements TENK's RI Guidelines and ERHS Guidelines. Its purpose is to provide a tool especially for human sciences ethics committees for assessing the need for ethical review in research that uses AI.

In 2025, a working group chaired by TENK member and University Lecturer Simo Kyllönen (University of Helsinki) was formed for the drafting of the recommendation. The project was also supported by a steering group chaired by Professor Riitta Salmelin (Aalto University).

The project was funded by a special grant from the Ministry of Education and Culture for the period 1 December 2023 – 30 June 2026. The project's key activities took place in 2025–2026. TENK's recommendation *Artificial Intelligence in Research: Research Integrity and Ethical Principles* is to be published in June 2026.

6. International activities

TENK was a partner in the three-year Horizon Europe project PREPARED, which ended in September 2025. The PREPARED project produced two sets of global research integrity guidelines: one for research carried out during pandemics and one for research in vulnerable settings. The project also produced ethical review guidelines for scientific publications, guidelines for ethics committees to support accelerated ethical reviews, and support material for researchers facing harassment.

TENK is a partner in the Horizon Europe project TRUSTparency, which started in February 2025. The project aims to develop tools and operating models to promote the reproducibility of research results and methods. At the core of the project are interventions (i.e. practices, training material, policy documents, monitoring mechanisms) that will be developed through co-creation, testing and validation to improve the reproducibility of research methods and results. The aimed end result is the broad usability of the reproducibility standards in various contexts and organisations. TENK is responsible for coordinating the piloting activities in the project. In November 2025, TENK organised a Mutual Learning Exercise for representatives of national Reproducibility Networks.

TENK also serves as a partner in the three-and-a-half-year EU project BEYOND BAD APPLES (January 2023 – June 2026), which is focused on research ethics and research integrity. The BEYOND project uses methods of behavioural science to determine what institutional factors and factors related to a researcher's career path make them susceptible to research misconduct and to create models to dismantle such factors. TENK's main role in this international project is to handle project communications. TENK also provides consultation on the usefulness of existing education and training models intended to reduce research misconduct, and the impact of research misconduct investigations and statement processes on the researchers involved in them. The project is coordinated by the University of Oslo, and the project's other Finnish partner is the University of Helsinki.

TENK worked closely with the European Network of Research Integrity Offices (ENRIO) by actively participating in ENRIO's Board (2025–2027) and the activities of the ENRIO Strategy Group and the Ethics in Humanities and Social Sciences working group. Additionally, TENK became an associate member of the European Network of Research Ethics Committees (EUREC). TENK's secretariat organised a workshop on authorship and a session on LYTE at the ENRIO Congress on Research Integrity Practice, held in Ljubljana from 22 to 24 September 2025.

7. Personnel and finances

In 2025, the TENK Secretariat consisted of the Secretary General and Docent **Sanna-Kaisa Spoof** (PhD), Lead Adviser **Petra Falin** (DA), Adviser **Eero Kaila** (DSocSci), Senior Coordinator, Docent **Anni Sairio** (PhD), and Experts **Kalle Videnoja** (MSSc) and **Veera Launis** (MA) (on leave until 30 November 2025). The Secretariat also had the following fixed-term members: **Oona Myllyntaus** (PhD), Expert in the LYTE project until 30 August 2025, and **Iina Kohonen** (DA), Coordinator of the AI project until 1 August 2025. Assistant **Eveliina Halkomäki** (MA) started as a part-time employee of the Secretariat on 18 February 2025. HR Planner **Kaisu Reiss** from the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV) was responsible for archiving TENK's documents for the 2022–2024 term of office.

The TENK Secretariat worked at the TSV office at Kirkkokatu 6, Helsinki. In addition to office space, TSV provides TENK with financial and HR administration and IT services. The activities of TENK were funded by the annual general grant awarded by the Ministry of Education and Culture to TSV. TENK also received a special grant from the Ministry of Education and Culture and funding from the European Union for its projects.