



FINNISH NATIONAL BOARD ON
RESEARCH INTEGRITY TENK

Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK: **Strategy 2035**

Overview

TENK'S strategy extending to 2035 strengthens Finland's co-regulatory system for research ethics and integrity at a time when ethical questions in research are increasingly complex and difficult to anticipate and research is more international than ever.

TENK plays a central role in safeguarding the ethics and credibility of research and harmonising practices. TENK supports and monitors good research practices as an independent body.

To continue advancing and monitoring good research practices also in the future, TENK needs stronger operating conditions: a clear mandate as an independent specialised authority for research ethics and integrity as well as stable funding. Strengthening TENK's position is an investment in the reliability of Finland's research system and, consequently, in its international reputation.

The strategy builds on TENK's role and responsibilities as they stand in 2026. The most significant proposed reforms are the following.

TENK's independent and autonomous status will be safeguarded through legislation that governs its status, responsibilities and resources as a specialised authority for research ethics and integrity.

TENK will be given the following new responsibilities:

- supporting and coordinating research ethics and integrity training,
- developing, providing guidance on and monitoring the ethical review of research involving nature and the environment as well as coordinating the work of ethics committees in the field, and
- promoting research security.

Vision, mission and strategic priorities

TENK is Finland's leading expert body on research integrity. TENK defines the principles of research integrity in cooperation with the research community and monitors adherence to these principles.

TENK's responsibilities encompass research integrity across all research disciplines and research ethics in fields that, unlike for example medical research, are not subject to separate regulation. TENK carries out its responsibilities transparently, impartially and fairly.

Vision: Research in Finland is trustworthy and meets high ethical standards. Research ethics, research integrity and research security are fundamental to the quality of research.

Mission: TENK advances research ethics and research integrity by proactively strengthening the related competence of the research community. TENK plays a central role in safeguarding the high quality and reliability of research in Finland and is an internationally recognised pioneer in its field.



Foundations

TENK safeguards high standards of research ethics and integrity across the research community in Finland. TENK is an autonomous and independent national expert body that cooperates with research communities both nationally and internationally.

TENK's work is grounded in a co-regulatory framework jointly agreed upon by the research community and the research community's exceptionally broad commitment to TENK's guidelines. **Co-regulation** is a strength of Finland's research ethics and integrity system, and it should be preserved. The broad commitment of the research community makes this system both effective and cost-efficient.

TENK's responsibility is to promote **research ethics** and **research integrity** and to independently follow adherence to their principles in Finland. In Finland, research integrity means conducting all research activities in accordance with the good research practices set out in TENK's guidelines. Research organisations investigate alleged violations of research integrity (including **research misconduct**) in the RI process, which is set out in TENK's guidelines and overseen by TENK. TENK also coordinates the ethical review of research involving human participants, nature and the environment at the national level. The national ethical review system safeguards research participants, research subjects as well as researchers.

TENK's strategy strengthens TENK's position as a national and international guiding authority in research ethics and integrity. The strategy also ensures the resilience of Finland's research ethics and integrity system in a changing environment.

A changing environment

The landscape for research ethics and integrity is undergoing constant and profound change. The growing diversity of research topics and designs requires researchers and research organisations to address ethical questions that are increasingly complex as well as difficult to anticipate. It is thus becoming more and more important to consider the relationship between the freedom of research and the responsibilities of researchers. For example, issues related to artificial intelligence, digitalisation and research security are gaining prominence. Alongside these changes, TENK's responsibilities in providing guidance, issuing statements and exercising oversight have grown. The research community has a need not only for guidelines but for ongoing training in research ethics and integrity.

The research ethics and integrity framework is gaining more importance also internationally. Finland's research community has become more international and research is carried out in international teams. Research ethics and integrity guidelines and systems nevertheless vary from country to country, highlighting the need to align national and international ethical norms. TENK harmonises national and international practices and serves internationally as a guiding authority on research ethics and integrity.

The trustworthiness of research is a central societal question: research cannot have an impact if its trustworthiness is compromised. Fundamental prerequisites for trustworthy research are the integrity and ethical conduct of research. Research ethics and integrity issues, such as research misconduct, cause reputational damage as well as significant costs. Strengthening TENK's position is therefore an investment in the credibility of Finland's research system and, consequently, in its international reputation.

Strategic priorities and tasks

TENK promotes and monitors adherence to research integrity and ensures that ethical disputes across all disciplines are handled fairly and consistently.

TENK'S TASKS

- Defines and updates the principles of research integrity and the process for investigating alleged violations of research integrity (the RI process)
- Issues statements on RI processes and their conclusions
- Anticipates developments in, monitors and compiles statistics on the state of research ethics and integrity in Finland, using tools such as the Research Integrity Barometer

TENK prevents research misconduct, strengthens competence in research ethics and research integrity and promotes the adoption of related practices across all disciplines.

TENK'S TASKS

- Develops and updates national guidelines and recommendations on research ethics and integrity in collaboration with the research community
- Supports and coordinates training in research ethics and integrity
- Provides guidance for, develops and monitors the national research integrity adviser system

TENK safeguards research participants, research subjects and researchers by ensuring that ethical review is conducted fairly and consistently

TENK'S TASKS

- Provides guidance on, develops and monitors ethical review in human sciences and coordinates the work of ethics committees in the field
- Provides guidance on, develops and monitors ethical review of research involving nature and the environment and coordinates the work of ethics committees in the field
- Identifies emerging questions on research ethics and integrity and assesses the need for guidance

TENK serves as a guiding authority on research ethics and integrity both nationally and internationally and promotes responsible international cooperation in research

TENK'S TASKS

- Takes initiatives and provides expert statements on matters related to research ethics and integrity
- Contributes to the development of European research ethics and integrity norms and practices as a representative of the research community in Finland
- Actively participates in and initiates cooperation in international research ethics and integrity networks and initiatives
- Actively participates in and initiates cooperation on national research security

Organisation and resources

TENK is an independent and autonomous specialised authority for research ethics and integrity, with responsibilities and mandate set out in legislation. Its new name in English will be the Finnish National Council for Research Ethics and Research Integrity TENK, replacing the current name Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK.

TENK's decision-making body is a council composed of members of the research community. The council is appointed for a three-year term. A selection committee representing and elected by the research community proposes TENK's chairs and members, based on nominations submitted by the research community. The Government or the Ministry appoints TENK's members on the proposal of the selection committee.

TENK is led by a Chair. TENK may establish discipline-specific divisions and working groups. An expert Secretariat supports TENK's work and is responsible for the preparation, coordination and execution of TENK's tasks. The Secretariat is led by a Secretary General, who holds a doctoral degree. The central government provides TENK with administrative and support services. Sufficient and foreseeable financial resources are secured for TENK through funding from the central government budget. In addition, TENK may utilise particularly international supplementary funding for its development work.

The strategy was approved at TENK's board meeting in Helsinki on 28 May 2026.





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