

## HCAS Annual Call for Applications 2020

### Preselection

All applications are screened for eligibility at the Collegium before the academic evaluation process. At this stage, applications that do not meet the formal criteria specified in the instructions are discarded. The purpose of this preselection is to help the task of the evaluation panels by excluding applications that are clearly unsuitable for HCAS.

## HCAS Annual Call for Applications 2020

### Instructions for the Evaluation Panels

#### First stage of the evaluation

The director of the Collegium invites professors of the University of Helsinki representing relevant fields to evaluate the applications. Each application is evaluated by two reviewers, who will each read 10–20 applications. One of the evaluators represents the field specified in the application, while the other evaluator represents a closely related academic field. If the evaluator is disqualified due to a conflict of interest, he or she must inform the Collegium. A conflict of interest may result from a close personal relationship or academic collaboration with the applicant (such as joint publications, projects or supervision). The identities of the evaluators will not be disclosed to the applicants.

Applicants will be assessed in relation to their career stage. Recently graduated post-doctoral applicants should nevertheless be able to show definite career progress beyond their doctoral work. HCAS **does not** accept research plans that propose rewriting the applicant's PhD thesis as a book.

The task of the evaluators is to ensure that the proposal and merits of the selected candidates meet high academic standards. At the first stage of the evaluation, the candidates are evaluated based on the applicant's CV, list of publications, abstract and motivation letter in accordance with the following criteria:

- The scientific merits of the proposal, theoretical and methodological framework, especially the innovativeness and the significance of new knowledge produced
- The applicant's scholarly merits in relation to the career stage
- The multidisciplinary potential of the proposal
- The feasibility of the proposal
- Added value of the expected collaboration in the Collegium and at the University of Helsinki

Each application is evaluated by two panel members on a scale from 1 to 3 (1 = not recommended, 2 = possible, 3 = excellent).

Excellent applications should excel with respect to the required criteria; they should also present original or bold ideas that will benefit from the interdisciplinary research environment of the Collegium (3). If the application meets all of the basic standards, but does not promise excellence, it should be graded as possible (2). If the application is unsuitable for an institute of advanced study (for example, because the proposal is a mere rewriting of the applicant's dissertation), then the proposal should be disqualified (1).

In addition to the numerical evaluation, reviewers have the opportunity to provide a **short comment** in case the application is particularly strong, weak, or unclear with respect to any of the mentioned criteria.

Neither the numerical nor the verbal evaluations of the first stage of the evaluation are disclosed to the applicants.

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### Instructions for the Evaluators

#### Second stage of the evaluation

#### General evaluation principles and the evaluation process

In the **second stage** of the evaluation, each application selected in the first stage of evaluation is sent to two external evaluators.

In the second stage, evaluators are asked to evaluate the entire application (all attachments) according to the criteria listed on the application evaluation form. These criteria, explained further below, are

- (1) The academic merits, theoretical and methodological framework, and feasibility of the research proposal
- (2) The applicant's academic achievements relative to the career stage
- (3) The interdisciplinary potential of the research proposal

Applicants should be assessed in relation to their career stage. Recently graduated post-doctoral applicants should nevertheless be able to show definite career progress beyond their doctoral work. HCAS **does not** accept research plans that propose to rewrite the applicant's PhD thesis as a book.

Evaluators are asked to submit **a brief written review report** in the electronic system (see the report model at the end of this file). These reports are crucial to the HCAS director and HCAS board members for understanding the evaluation and assessing both the proposal as well as the evaluation. The reports also provide applicants with important feedback, as they have **the right to see the evaluations if they so request. Every year some applicants exercise this right.** Hence, please do not, for example, refer to other applications, or the applicant's age, nationality, or gender in your evaluations.

Evaluators are also asked to submit **an overall numerical evaluation report** on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being poor and 5 being outstanding, within the set of applications reviewed by the evaluator. Only whole numbers are allowed. The evaluator should use the full scale if possible. Evaluators are asked to focus on the general research design rather than the details of the proposal.

The numerical and verbal evaluations will be used to identify the group of top candidates, out of which 10–15 new HCAS fellows, representing different fields, nationalities and career stages, will be selected.

## Declaration

By accepting the role of an evaluator, you agree not to disclose the information you acquire in this capacity and not to use it for anyone's benefit or disadvantage. Moreover, if you are disqualified due to a conflict of interest, you promise to inform the Collegium as soon as possible. A conflict of interest may result from a close personal relationship or academic collaboration with the applicant (such as joint publications, projects or supervision).

## Evaluation criteria

The following criteria will be used for evaluating applications at the second evaluation stage:

### **1. Academic merits, theoretical and methodological framework, and feasibility of the research proposal**

How would you evaluate the academic merits of the research proposal? How would you evaluate the significance and expected impact of the proposed project from the perspective of the relevant disciplines and the international scientific community? How would you evaluate the originality of the proposed project? Do you believe that the proposed project is sufficiently outstanding and original to warrant acceptance to an institute for advanced study?

How would you evaluate the theoretical and/or methodological merits of the proposed research project? Does the proposal show promise of an innovative and novel approach with the potential to introduce new theoretical and/or methodological concepts to the relevant disciplines?

How feasible is the research plan? Is the duration of the appointment in accordance with the proposed research plan? How would you evaluate the applicant's publication plan? The applicants have been asked to specify how much time they would have to spend outside the Collegium in order to implement their research plan. The expectation is that the selected fellows spend approximately 80% of their work time at the Collegium. Is this feasible in light of the research proposal?

## **2. Evaluation of previous academic achievements relative to the stage of the applicant's career**

How would you evaluate the overall academic achievements of the applicant in terms of publications, career development, etc., relative to the applicant's career stage? Please pay special attention to the publishing record of the applicant and the quality of the five best works that the applicant has marked with an asterisk (\*). If an applicant has previously been at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, the applicant must justify the application for readmittance. Please evaluate the justification presented by the applicant.

Please note that applications fall into three different categories: early career, mid-career, and full professor. Early career researchers have completed a doctorate within the last five to seven years, excluding possible family leaves and other justifiable leaves of absence. Mid-career applicants typically have reached the position of university lecturer, associate professor, or an equivalent academic position (e.g., docent in the Finnish system). Full professor applicants should have a permanent full professorship or should previously have held such a position.

## **3. Interdisciplinary potential of the researcher and the research proposal**

The applicants have been asked to explain (i) the interdisciplinary potential of their research proposal, (ii) how they can contribute to the interdisciplinary collaboration facilitated by the Collegium, and (iii) whether they have plans to collaborate with other faculties, departments, or researchers at the University of Helsinki. Please evaluate these aspects of the research proposal.

## **4. Main strengths and weaknesses of the application**

Please do not leave this section empty.

## **5. Overall evaluation of the application:** (Scale 1–5, whole numbers, 1 = poor, 5 = outstanding)

Taking into account both the applicant and the proposed research project, what is your overall assessment of the application?

## HELSINKI COLLEGIUM FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

### Application review report

Name of reviewer:

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Name of applicant:

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Title of research proposal:

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**1. Academic merits, theoretical and methodological framework, and feasibility of the research proposal**

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**2. Interdisciplinary potential of the researcher and the research proposal**

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**3. Evaluation of previous academic achievements relative to the stage of the applicant's career<sup>1</sup>**

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**Main strengths of the application:**

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**Main weaknesses of the application:**

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**4. Overall evaluation of the application:** (Scale 1–5, whole numbers, 1 = poor, 5 = outstanding)

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**Suggestions and observations on the application as a whole**

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that there are three types of applications (early career, mid-career and full professor). Early career researchers are those who have completed a doctorate within the last five to seven years, excluding possible family leave and other justifiable leaves. Mid-career applicants typically have reached the position of university lecturer, associate professor or an equivalent academic position (e.g., docent in the Finnish system). Full professor applicants should have a permanent full professorship or should previously have held such a position.