

## Joint declaration: Scientific community and science funding agencies call for cooperation to accelerate the sustainability transformation

Science creates new knowledge and enables innovation that solves global sustainability challenges. However, scientific actors must begin to better consider their activities' impact on ecological sustainability than before. The joint declaration, compiled by the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, with signatures from universities, foundations and other scientific actors, extend an invitation for all organisations to work together. Our objective is to create a community of scientists and their supporters, to act as a pioneer of the sustainability transformation.

In the Finnish scientific community, awareness of the necessity of ecological sustainability and social justice is high. Many actors have placed sustainability at the core of their strategies and begun to develop their operations accordingly. Research and education create significant positive effects for Finnish society and students and scientists play a key role in enabling a more sustainable future.

However, the sustainability transformation requires new initiatives from all sectors of society. Universities, foundations and other scientific actors must reinforce and bolster both their mutual cooperation and concrete action to retain a sustainable foundation for their operations, now and in the future.

There are still challenges to enable the sustainability transformation that require the discovery of **common solutions**. These include concrete emissions reduction targets as well as common assessment criteria that can measure the ecological impacts of research and education and the achievement of social justice.

Key targets for development in **operational activities** are to reduce the emissions caused by travel and to promote more sustainable methods thereof, optimisation of the building energy efficiency and facility usage, as well as systematic analysis of the environmental impact of purchases and more joint purchases. Furthermore, it is important to create well-functioning solutions to compensate for emissions and damage to nature as well as to ensure responsible and sustainable investment activities.

Our objective is to create a community that operates at the front lines of the sustainability transformation and produces solutions to global sustainability challenges, such as climate change, loss of biodiversity and sustainable management of natural resources. It is only by setting an example that we can communicate the necessity and urgency of this change.

## **Our objectives are:**

### **On the organisational level**

1. To take the sustainability perspective into account in daily operations and decision making.
2. To develop organisational policies and guidelines in a way that they reinforce sustainable procedures, such as regarding purchases and travel.
3. To ensure that up-to-date sustainability training is available in our organisations and to comprehensively include sustainability themes in all of the education that we provide.
4. To develop management practices that reinforce sustainability skills and make sure that the knowledge possessed by sustainability experts is made use of in the planning of our organisation's strategy.
5. To create incentive systems that guide people to take sustainable action.

### **On the cooperation level**

6. To focus on the societal impact of research so that the messages of science pass on to other sectors of society.
7. To strengthen mutual cooperation with various universities, foundations and other scientific actors to share up-to-date information and best practices. To encourage discourse on how the different starting points of the operators are considered in the allocation of resources to sustainability measures.
8. To develop common methods to analyse and monitor organisational progress towards sustainability targets.
9. To develop, as scientific funding agencies, methods to monitor the allocation of research funding towards critical themes of the sustainability transformation.
10. To create a cultural change and focus on the necessity of the sustainability transformation and its benefits.

Through this cooperation and joint declaration, we also want to reinforce the implementation of existing commitments. We hereby invite all scientific organisations and science funding agencies to work with us.

The undersigning organisations:

*The Finnish Academy of Science and Letters  
University of Vaasa  
Aalto University  
University of Tampere  
Young Academy Finland  
Kone Foundation  
Puistokatu 4  
LUT University*

*University of Turku  
The Council of Finnish Academies  
University of Helsinki  
Federation of Finnish Learned Societies  
Sustainability Transformations -doctoral education pilot  
TAH Foundation  
University of Lapland  
University of Eastern Finland  
Nessling Foundation  
National Defence University  
The Council of Rectors of Finnish Universities  
University of Oulu  
University of Jyväskylä  
Svenska tekniska vetenskapsakademien i Finland  
The Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters  
UniPID, Finnish University Partnership for International Development  
Hanken School of Economics*

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**Regarding the joint declaration**

This joint declaration was prepared by the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters. The declaration is based on a stakeholder event for the stakeholders of the Academy of Science and Letters in 2024 and a member survey conducted of its members.

**Further information:**

Pekka Aula  
Secretary General, Finnish Academy of Science and Letters  
tel. +358 40 703 0952  
[pekka.aula@acadsci.fi](mailto:pekka.aula@acadsci.fi)

**Contact for joining the declaration:**

Linda Lammensalo  
Expert, Science & Policy  
tel. +358 50 308 7726  
[linda.lammensalo@acadsci.fi](mailto:linda.lammensalo@acadsci.fi)