

Finland's success hinges on skills – The next government will hold the fate of the country in its hands

A high level of skills and their flexible development are the key strengths upon which Finland's future welfare is built. That is why investment in education, research and innovation must become strategic focus areas for the next government. The only guarantee of Finland's future success is ensuring the provision of sufficient funding for higher education institutions, research and skills.

Universities and universities of applied sciences have committed to carrying out their significant societal duties, flexibly developing their operations to meet the needs of society. The successful execution of their mission also in the future requires improved guarantees for the stability, predictability and sufficiency of their core funding.

We need a long-term strategy for a scientific policy and an innovation policy that serve both the research and higher education sphere as well as the business sector in a sustainable manner. Funding allocated to education and research must be considered an investment that will secure our continued success.

Innovations and research that will lay a foundation for our welfare and growth for decades – even centuries – are being conducted right now.

Finland cannot thrive without unrestricted top-level basic research, state-of-the-art applied research and interaction between academic communities and society. From the perspective of fostering employment and economic growth, other central factors include improving the level of education, as well as developing models and funding for life-long education.

A highly educated workforce, products with high added value and attractive competence clusters draw more international experts, investments and businesses to Finland. The work-related immigration of skilled experts must be further streamlined.

When the government pursues a higher education policy with a forward-looking perspective, it will

- *Offer Finland's education, scientific and innovation policy a long-term direction based on a consensus that extends across government terms and in a sustainable manner serves both the research and higher education sphere as well as the business sector.*
- *Commit to supporting the achievement of the goal of increasing research, development and innovation investment to 4% of the gross domestic product by 2030, which also means a significant growth in contributions to research and development activities, as well as increasing the funding for institutions of higher education in the coming government term. The government will improve the stability and predictability of the funding allocated to higher education institutions, for example, by permanently reinstating their funding indexes. Currently, the core funding of higher education institutions has decreased throughout the 2010s.*
- *Steer research, development and innovation policy on a shorter term through various funding instruments by removing redundancies and focusing on larger entities, also in competitive funding. Funding awarded by Business Finland and the Academy of Finland will be developed as broader and increasingly strategic entities.*

- *Choose education and research as the spearhead theme of its presidency of the Council of the European Union.*

Signatories:

Confederation of Finnish Industries
 Finnish Education Employers
 Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland Akava
 Finnish Psychological Association
 Finnish Association of Speech and Language Therapists
 Akava Special Branches
 Finnish Association of Academic Agronomists
 Association of Finnish Lawyers
 Union of Diaconal Workers in Finland
 Finnish Association of Occupational Health Nurses
 Talentia Union of Professional Social Workers
 Finnish Dental Association
 Finnish Association of Public Health Nurses
 Finnish Union of University Professors
 Social Science Professionals
 Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers
 Union of Professional Business Graduates in Finland
 Union of Professional Engineers in Finland
 Trade Union of Education in Finland
 Finnish Business School Graduates
 Academic Engineers and Architects in Finland TEK
 Finnish Pharmacists' Association
 Association for Managers and Professionals YTY
 Union of Professionals in Natural, Environmental and Forestry Sciences Loimu
 Union of Sales and Marketing Professionals

 Universities Finland UNIFI
 Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Science Arene
 National Union of University Students in Finland SYL
 University of Applied Sciences Students in Finland Samok

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