

# General Principles of Research Centres, Research Platforms and the Research Collegium

Approved by the Academic Board on 12 May 2020

## Research Centres

### *WHAT?*

Research centres (RCs) are entities based on self-organizing initiatives of research groups and researchers, uniting critical mass of research competence on specific thematic areas.

- The establishment and closure of RCs are decided by the dean, on the proposal of the faculty council.
- RCs are faculty driven research concentrations on specific thematic areas.
- RCs are primarily based on bottom-up, self-organizing initiatives of re-searchers
- RCs usually consist of several research groups, focused on common research areas.
- RCs are typically multi- and cross-disciplinary by their nature.
- RCs have close ties to the education and researcher training activities of the faculties.

### *WHY?*

Research centres increase high scientific quality and societal impact of research and support success in competition on external funding.

- RCs aim at scientific and societal impact.
- RCs add value through collecting critical mass of research competence around specific thematic areas.
- RCs create visibility and brand value, facilitating successful competition on external funding.

### *HOW?*

Research centres are integral parts of faculties, their activities and resources being planned as part of faculty planning procedures.

- RCs have explicit strategies and a defined set of goals, attainment of which can be evaluated.
- RCs perform their operation as part of the faculties involved and they plan their activities as part of annual planning procedures of faculties.
- The researchers affiliated with RCs are primarily attached to their faculties and units.
- Every RC has a director and a steering group, and it may also have a scientific advisory board.
- RCs are subject to an external evaluation, organized by faculties, typically every five years.

# Research Platforms

## *WHAT?*

Research platforms (RPs) are strategic, substantially resourced time-limited research programmes.

- The establishment and closure of RPs are decided by the academic board.
- RPs are new kinds of cross-disciplinary, cross-faculty and cross-organisational site for multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary research.
- RPs are strategically selected, substantially resourced fixed-term research programmes.
- RPs lucrative research collaboration arenas supporting innovative initiatives, including ones with considerable risks involved.
- RPs are highly visible actors in society and participants in national and international expert discussions of their field.
- RPs bring together university researchers and multiple private, public and third sector collaborators.

## *WHY?*

Research platforms increase high scientific quality and societal impact of research through transdisciplinary and interorganisational collaboration.

- The overarching goal of RPs is to ensure societal impact and to facilitate solving of major challenges, based on high quality research.
- RPs intensify collaboration across disciplines and with external stakeholders.
- RPs facilitate acquisition of external research funding.

## *HOW?*

Research platforms use new working methods which include seed funding and other tailor-made resource allocation tools.

- RPs enable and enhance high-quality, inter- and transdisciplinary research and they support a continuum from fundamental research through innovation to implementation.
- RPs enable and implement intense interaction, co-creation and other forms of strategic partnership with external stakeholders.
- RPs apply new tailor-made resource allocation tools, including seed funding.
- RPs are guided and monitored by the academic board.
- Each RP has typically a full-time director, who is a senior researcher, a networking facilitator and a management group. They may also have an advisory board, mainly consisting of external partners.
- RPs deliver annually reports consisting of condensed descriptions of the activities and impacts, including a set of performance indicators.
- Depending on the interim evaluation on outcomes, impacts and further potential, a RP can be funded for two four-year periods in maximum.

# Research Collegium (Tampere Institute for Advanced Studies, TAUIAS)

## *WHAT?*

Research Collegium (TAUIAS) is a substantially resourced networked institute supporting scientific work across all disciplines.

- TAUIAS is a university-level entity that gives top-level researchers of all disciplines opportunities to conduct research of highest scientific quality.
- The research conducted in TAUIAS is researcher-oriented. Thematic or other guiding priorities are not set at the university level.

## *WHY?*

TAUIAS adds value by supporting pursuance of scientific excellence.

- TAUIAS gives the most competitive researchers an opportunity to take their research to the next level.
- TAUIAS also challenges the entire Tampere University to pursue scientifically ever more ambitious research.

## *HOW?*

TAUIAS awards paid research periods of at least one year to researchers at different career stages in three categories (Post Doc; Fellow; Professor) with no thematic or other pre-set priorities, so that they can fully concentrate on their own research.

- The TAUIAS researcher's positions are open to all fields and disciplines, and the researchers are members of the faculties and faculty units. There are three types of researcher position (Post doc fellow, Collegium fellow, Research collegium professor).
- Applications for researcher positions are evaluated only on the basis of scientific quality and ambition of the research plans. The evaluation practices take into account the variation between disciplines in assessing quality.
- In order to ensure equitable funding allocation, applications are divided into three baskets (technology - health - society) and the number of applications for each basket will be taken into account when filling researcher positions.
- TAUIAS invites leading international researchers for short-term visits, collaborates with its European counterparts and organises high quality scientific events to the whole TAU community.
- TAUIAS seeks actively external funding for use in all position categories and in research quality enhancing activities.
- TAUIAS is led by a director (strategic development and fundraising), assisted by a coordinator (communication, support for researchers and the organization of events).
- TAUIAS has a board consisting of leading researchers, mainly from outside Tampere University. The board's main tasks are advising on the quality of research and deciding on the appointment of researchers (based on external evaluations).
- TAUIAS has common facilities where it can organise scientific events and where researchers can work without interruption.
- The activities and performance of the research collegium are periodically evaluated by external evaluation, in accordance with the principles of responsible evaluation adopted by the University.