

Graduate Admissions and Strategic Enrollment Management

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Since 1997 Dr. Ritva Dammert has worked in various science policy expert positions at the Academy of Finland (the main governmental research funding agency in Finland) and at Aalto University. She has diverse experience in science policy work and international activities.

Dr. Dammert's scientific background is in polymer chemistry. Dr. Dammert worked several years at the Academy of Finland before joining the staff of Aalto University in the beginning of 2010. She started her career at the Academy as scientific secretary at the Research Council for Natural Sciences and Engineering. In 2000 she was appointed Secretary General of the Research Council for Natural Sciences and Engineering for the years 2000 – 2002. Since 2002 she was in charge of the Finnish Programs for Centers of Excellence in Research and the research programs funded by the Academy, and during the years 2006 – 2010 she was a director of a Program Unit of the Academy.

Three years (2010-2013) Ritva Dammert worked at Aalto University as a director of a unit that supports the President and the Vice-Presidents in Academic Affairs in strategic planning regarding research and teaching at Aalto University. The unit prepares the strategic decisions on research and teaching to be made by the President of the university. The unit also plans and implements pedagogical training of the university teachers and professors, supports local educational development projects and ICT usage in teaching, studying and research, and plans and implements evaluations on research and teaching.

Ritva Dammert has been actively involved in several international activities, including implementation the bilateral agreements of the Academy with its Asian counterparts in Japan and China. Dr. Dammert was a National Contact Point for the NEST activities in the EU FP6 and continued as the Finnish delegate of the Program Committee for the FP7 Specific Program "Ideas". She has also very deep experience in the ERA-NET activities funded by the EU Commission.

At the moment Dr. Dammert is a director of the Research Affairs Sector at the University of Helsinki. The sector supports the leadership of the university in strategic matters regarding research, doctoral education and innovation. It offers services to researchers providing services related to obtaining and managing externally funded research projects.



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Erja Heikkinen (b. 1964) is a senior expert in the Science policy division of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture with an emphasis in the development of the Finnish research and innovation system in collaboration with stakeholders. Her responsibilities cover enhancing utilization of competences produced in higher education institutions, researcher training, careers in research, structural development of the higher education institution and research institute network as well as activities in advancing bioeconomy, health sector innovations, cleantech and digitalization. In her duties following research and higher education policies developments especially within the EU, Russia and the United States is an essential part of the toolbox.

Erja Heikkinen was conferred a PhD degree (population genetics) in 1992. After post-doctoral periods in the University of Tübingen and University of California at Davis she returned to Finland in 1995 when a graduate school system was established at the national level. She was the first coordinator in the Finnish graduate schools. In 1997 Erja Heikkinen started as a bioinformatics expert in the national supercomputing center CSC, where she provided high performance computing counseling and ran courses in biosciences. In 2001 Erja Heikkinen joined Tekes, the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation, where she started the since then strengthened trend of combining biomedical and ICT research projects. Her affiliation to the Ministry started in 2005.



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Vuokko Iinatti, Director of Studies at Oulu Business School since 2010, is responsible for the academic affairs at the business school. In addition, Vuokko has a role at The University of Oulu's admission services coordinating the admission guidelines and selection criteria, including both national and international admissions.

Vuokko has Master's Degree in Economics and Business Administration, with a special interest in marketing.



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Since 2012, Mari Ikonen has worked as the Director of Student and Academic Services at the University of Jyväskylä. Department of Student and Academic Services is in charge of the University's student administration and related guidance in cooperation with the faculties and other educational units. It also offers centralized services for students and applicants to the University. The Student and Academic Services division is further divided into services related to admission and studies, international cooperation and mobility, maintenance of student and degree information systems, student financial aid, and working life and career.

Prior to her position at the University of Jyväskylä, Mari Ikonen worked as Head of Administration Service Centre and Executive Head of Administration of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies of the University of Eastern Finland. During her working career she has also worked as Head of Administration at the University of Joensuu and Study Abroad Coordinator at the University of Joensuu and the Sibelius Academy as well as Program Coordinator at the Centre for International Mobility CIMO.

Mari Ikonen earned a Master of Arts degree from the University of Joensuu in 1994. She has also studied International Politics at the University of Tampere during 1994-1995.

Ikonen is married and has a 14-year-old boy and a 18-year-old girl. Ikonen loves books and sports.



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Esko Koponen is International Education Adviser in the Rector's Office of the University of Helsinki. His main responsibility is the strategic management of international academic affairs, including the development of programs in English. He has 25 years of experience in international education, having previously worked in the Finnish Centre for International Mobility with European cooperation programs and in the University of Kuopio (now part of the University of Eastern Finland) in international student services. He has written a wiki guide on the design of programs in English and on joint program agreements for his University.

Esko is the university's liaison for the Mastermind Europe project which aims at developing tools for master's admissions (<http://mastermindeurope.eu>).

He is a former Study Abroad/Foreign Student Advisers (SAFSA) board member of the European Association for International Education, EAIE.

Esko has a degree in Translation Studies from the University of Joensuu (now part of the University of Eastern Finland). During his studies he spent a year at Denison University, Ohio as a Fulbright Undergraduate Grant holder.



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Currently Director of Recruitment, Admissions and International Services, Mr. Kuortti has been working for the University of Oulu in various positions since 1996. With his team he has been pioneering in Finnish international student recruitment and was one of the pilot universities involved in developing the University Admissions Finland service which now is a standard system in Finland.

Earlier, in his position as the Director of International Relations and a member of the specialist team he has created the in-house services for international master programs and international students as well as acclaimed exchange student services such as *Kummi* Family program (integration and outreach services) and “How to Live Like a Finn”, a cultural sensitivity and adaptation training.

Mr. Kuortti is a frequent speaker at workshops and training. Recently he has been focusing on strategic student enrolment and relationship marketing and presented on these subjects in international forums, such as DAAD.



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Maikki Naarala is Education Adviser in the Rector's Office of the University of Helsinki. Her areas of responsibility include the strategic development of university admissions. She also works with transfer admissions, specialization programs and student recruitment policy.

She has 15 years of professional experience in university administration with responsibilities both at the central and faculty level.

Maikki has a Master of Arts degree from the University of Jyväskylä. Majoring in Roman history, she has studied also in Rome, Italy.

She likes Nordic crime novels, Mediterranean food and drink and philosophizing with her 11-year-old dachshund.



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Rebekka Nylund is the Head of Admissions Services at the University of Helsinki. The purpose of Admissions Services is to use its expertise to increase the appeal of the University's educational offering through marketing, and to support the admissions process. Nylund's team coordinates national admissions cooperation according to the guidelines issued by the Rector's Office. Responsibility for admissions is carried by the University faculties. Admissions Services develops student recruitment and marketing together with other Education Services units, the faculties and departments, the units of the Rector's Office, and cooperates with upper secondary school guidance counsellors, the Finnish National Board of Education, the University of Helsinki Student Union and the City of Helsinki.

Nylund joined the University of Helsinki at the beginning of August 2002 as planning officer at the Academic Affairs. Since then Nylund has held several posts at the University of Helsinki. She has been head of Admissions Services since 2007 when the unit was founded.

Rebekka Nylund is an alumna of the University of Helsinki. She graduated 2002 as a Master of Social Sciences. Her major was Social Psychology. Rebekka's family concludes husband Markus and English springer spaniel Emma.



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Erkki Raulo is responsible for higher education management at the Institute of Biotechnology and the ILS doctoral program in the University of Helsinki. He is a member of the coordination group in the Doctoral School in Health Sciences and the executive director of FinBioNet – the national network of life science doctoral programs in Finland. He started his career in training management in 2000 as the coordinator of the Graduate School in Biotechnology and Molecular Biology (GSBM), which was the spearhead doctoral program in Finland revitalizing the doctoral training at the University of Helsinki leading to e.g. structured thesis committees, structured curricula based on regular basic courses and a variety of internal and external supporting training, and international cooperation at all levels.

Erkki Raulo is experienced in international relations and promoting higher education and research collaboration especially with Asian countries. He has been the primary contact in developing and running the collaborative activities between University of Helsinki and Wuhan University, China since 2005. The collaborative activities include annual summer schools, recruitment of PhD students, and joint scientific meetings networking several Finnish and Chinese Universities and research institutions.

The University of Helsinki has four doctoral schools offering a total of 32 doctoral programs. The schools and programs cooperate in research and doctoral education, and the structure of doctoral education encompasses all of the University's disciplines and doctoral students. The doctoral schools offer professional skills training and develop doctoral education in their fields in collaboration with the doctoral programs and faculties in charge of them. The doctoral programs provide doctoral students with systematic education and supervision in their fields.



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The University of Turku established in 1920, has 7 faculties and 11 independent units. There are over 20,000 students and 3,300 staff members.

Nea Särkikoski, at University of Turku, started in her position 2010. She is in charge of all staff, finance and organizational matters and she is a specialist in domestic and international admission processes at the university level.

Student and Admission Services is in charge of the University's student administration and related guidance in cooperation with the faculties and other educational units. It also offers centralized services for students and applicants to the University, for example university registration, student register services, study grants, student financial aid and university sports.

Prior to this position since 2003 Nea has worked as Head of Student and Academic affairs in the Faculty of Humanities at University of Turku.

Nea Särkikoski has earned a Master of Arts degree from the University of Turku in 2000. Her major subject was Comparative Literature. Recently she has focused on University leadership training, including role and duties of a supervisor at the University, communication, Interaction and team building.



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Birgitta Vuorinen (b. 1966) is a senior expert in the Higher Education Policy Division of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. Vuorinen has been working for the Ministry since 1995.

Currently, her responsibilities cover development of higher education degree structure and studies, student selection policies and joint admission systems. One of her main tasks is to support internationalization of Finnish higher education institutions. Vuorinen works in close collaboration with organizations supporting international co-operation and mobility, for example, the Centre for International Mobility CIMO and the Fulbright Centre. Vuorinen has been a member and a treasurer of the Fulbright Center Board of Directors since 2010.

Vuorinen has a long experience in international co-operation at European and at Nordic level as well as in bilateral co-operation, especially with Russia and China. In her current position, Vuorinen represents Finland in the Bologna process. Bologna process is an intergovernmental process implemented in 47 European states, aiming at ensuring more comparable, compatible and coherent systems of higher education in Europe.

Vuorinen is an alumna of the University of Jyväskylä. She holds a Master of Arts in Education with a focus in administration, planning and research in the field of education. Prior to her position at the Ministry, she worked as a class teacher (1990-1995). Vuorinen has wanted to keep herself posted with the development of the teaching profession and is currently specializing in vocational teacher education, including vocational higher education.



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Karoliina Kokko, presently Senior Program Manager at the Fulbright Center, has more than 10 years experience working in the field of international student, scholar, and employee mobility. Karoliina Kokko has worked at the Finnish Fulbright Commission since 2008 and is managing the grant programs targeted for Finnish and U.S. students. She advises clients in graduate study in the U.S. and in Finland and cooperates closely with universities. Karoliina is also the Alumni Coordinator of the office working particularly with the Finnish alumni of the program. The Fulbright Center (the binational Fulbright Commission in Helsinki, Finland) currently awards over USD 1 million in scholarships to Finnish and American students, researchers and professionals, and provides training and consultation services to over 3,700 clients each year. Over 80% of the Center's funding originates from Finland. Over 5,000 Finns and Americans have received a grant from the Finnish-American program since its inception in 1949 and the Fulbright Center runs a growing alumni network in both countries.

Prior to her position at Fulbright Center, Karoliina Kokko worked as a Human Resources Specialist in the International Researcher Mobility team at VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland. She started her career as a European Employment Services (EURES) Adviser and Special Employment Counselor helping employers from different European Union countries in their international recruitment efforts, advised internationally mobile employees and cooperated with Finnish authorities to facilitate smooth transition of foreign employees to Finland.

Karoliina Kokko has graduated from the University of Turku with a Master's degree in Geography. During her studies, she also spent a semester at the Humboldt State University, California.



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Terhi Mölsä, Executive Director since 2002, is responsible for the strategic development of the Fulbright Center and is in charge of all staff, finance and organizational matters, alumni and public affairs, development and fundraising. The Fulbright Center (binational Fulbright Commission in Helsinki, Finland) currently awards over USD 1 million in scholarships to Finnish and American students, researchers and professionals, and provides training and consultation services to over 3,700 clients each year. Over 80% of the Center's funding originates from Finland.

A former journalist, Terhi Mölsä has nearly 30 years of professional experience in higher education internationalization, initially at the institutional level at the Office of Academic and International Affairs of the University of Tampere, where she helped launch their European mobility programs, and later at the national level serving Finnish Ministry of Education agencies, and Fulbright in various capacities.

A consultant, trainer, and curriculum developer in international education leadership both in Europe and the United States, she has organized and chaired international education conferences in several European countries. She is the Past Chair of European Fulbright Directors, and currently holds a number of national and international leadership positions including the Advisory Board of the transatlantic Fulbright-Schuman Program between the European Union and the United States, and the Leadership Development Committee of the world's largest international education organization NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

Having studied and conducted research in Estonia, Russia, and the United States, she earned her Bachelor's degree in Russian, and a Master's in International Relations from the University of Tampere, and later pursued advanced studies in higher education leadership and governance. Her current research focuses on internationalization and the changing academic profession.