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A Model for Enhancing International Recruitment in Finnish Higher Education

A Guide for Institutional Leaders and Supervisors

Dear reader,

The University of Helsinki was a partner in the KAVOT project (2023- 2024), funded by the Uusimaa Regional Council, with the City of Helsinki acting as main partner and coordinator. The university's contribution was to develop an international recruitment model that is scalable to higher education institutions in the Helsinki region and to strengthen an operational culture and practices that support international recruitment in higher education. This guide aims to provide you with a comprehensive understanding of the model.

The guide has two sections. The first section aims to enhance the international recruitment and employment capabilities of entire organisations. This section is best suited for the leadership, management and development boards of larger organisations. In higher education institutions, it could apply to faculties or other significant components of a large institution that have some authority to set their own policies and, e.g., invest funds for better international recruitments. The term recruitment should be understood in a broad sense here, to include all the phases of an employment relationship.

This first section also includes suggestions for institutional changes, which often require clear communication from leadership about the institution's goals. Ideally, this section should provide leadership with ideas suited to the organisation's specific context and needs.

The second part of the guide is called [supervisor viewpoint](#). It is designed to assist supervisors or group leaders with the practical aspects of international recruitment, covering considerations both before and during the recruitment and onboarding process. It also provides measures to create an environment where international employees can thrive in their roles.

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New international recruitment – institute management viewpoint

TALENT ATTRACTION

1. Talking the talk: Encourage a change of mindset

- Encourage to modify teams and to grasp the potential of the added value of diversity
- “Just do it” attitude: not everything has to be 100% ready – the most important thing is to just start
- Experiences and tips from experienced teams
- Practice of international recruitment and lowering the threshold: A traineeship programme for international students, other international trainees, etc.

2. Walking the walk: Prepare the structures

- Structures supporting diversity, inclusion and equity. Use e.g., [inclusive materials](#)
- Support resources for international employees: relocation costs, language courses

3. Train supervisors and recruitment managers:

- Social media presence (LinkedIn, X)
- To be ready for basic information on practicalities and everyday questions from internationals
- Intercultural competence, unconscious biases, multicultural teams. Use e.g., [antiracism training material of the Finnish institute for Health and Welfare](#)

4. Invest in marketing and use the available materials:

- Cooperation with marketing unit: employer brand as part of institutional communications
- Collaboration with regional partners (e.g., Helsinki partners' [Helsinki deck](#) and [Helsinki freedoms videos](#), International House Helsinki, e.g., [newcomers information sessions](#) and [guides](#), [welcome Helsinki](#) / [hello Espoo](#) / [vantaa for immigrants](#) pages) [work in Finland page](#), [Finland works LinkedIn page](#) and [work in Finland videos](#)

5. An honest look: Is our website attractive and informational for international eyes?

- Information package online: research, institution, the region, Finland and its benefits (e.g., the Nordic welfare state)
- Services of the institution and public institutions: support for language learning, support for spouses
- Career stories of international employees (text / video / podcast)
- Attention to diversity in images and text

6. Crystallise the brand and attraction factors of the organisation:

- Identify and put into words the special strengths of your institution, from an international perspective

7. Choose the channels suitable for international recruitment in your field:

- LinkedIn, X and research and staff networks (sharing through supervisors and principal investigators, team, international employee network)
- Provide training on active presence on social media
- Sourcing and headhunting, suitable recruitment portals in Finland and abroad; remember also the [work in Finland job portal](#)
- If geographically targeted recruitment is suitable, use the talent managers of Business Finland and the [team Finland knowledge experts](#) of the ministry

RECRUITMENT

1. Ensure equity and transparency in the recruitment process

- Use existing guides and recommendations, e.g., [How to promote diversity in recruitment](#) (TTL), [recruitment guide](#) (Business Finland), [kielitietoinen rekryointi ja työyhteisö](#) (väestöliitto).
- Include a description of the key steps in the recruitment process on the external website.
- In internal instructions, encourage careful evaluation of language requirements for each recruitment and guidelines to ensure equity and fairness in the process.
- Understandability and accessibility of the recruitment system.
- Trainings for staff involved in recruitment: unconscious biases in recruitment.
- Plan and evaluate your process based on key elements, collect feedback.
- Quick processing, transparency (also regarding salaries), smoothness, equal and fair treatment.
- Encourage the team and international colleagues to participate in the process where suitable. Provide the opportunity to meet colleagues and visit facilities if possible.
- Organise a site visit model for e.g. high-profile cases. Make use of the KAVOT materials: [High-profile recruitment process model](#) and *Welcome to Finland presentation slides*.

2. Plan and evaluate your process based on key elements, collect feedback

- Quick processing, transparency (also regarding salaries), smoothness, equal and fair treatment.
- Anonymous recruitment, pre-assignments e.g. through a video, an example of language skills in suitable recruitments.

RELOCATION

1. Build good networks with key services and authorities:

- Public services (national, regional), collaboration with other higher education institutions.
- Temporary housing providers in the region, moving services, external relocation help.
- Engage in active advocacy work with critical services and authorities.
- Draft instructions for relocation:
 - All information in one place, step-by-step, use of message templates.
 - Link to suitable public services: Make use of the KAVOT list of [useful public services](#).
 - Existing guides, e.g. [Guide for international researchers and their families](#), city guides (e.g. [International House Helsinki guides](#)) and [InfoFinland](#), [IHH information sessions](#).

2. Organise relocation support

- Plan the process systematically, especially regarding support in dealing with officials (either done in-house or through partner organisations).
- Where possible, use external relocation and moving services.
- Make use of interactive digital support, see e.g. [UniArrival advisor](#) (UH).

ONBOARDING

1. Provide support for onboarding

- Provide a checklist for the topics to be covered: make supervisors understand their responsibility here → expectations are often different with internationals.
- Special attention to the needs of employees starting in supervisor roles: loose and informal networks also needed, other than HR and supervisor.

2. Build the structures to support long-term integration and networking:

- A mentoring network with special attention to mentoring and support of principal investigators: focus both on practical issues and research related issues.
- Unofficial networking: e.g. A buddy programme, a network of international employees.
- Who organises networking opportunities in your organisation? E.g. postdoc networks, possible alumni relations, language teachers.

3. Collect feedback on arrival services and the onboarding process

RETENTION

1. Develop and support career paths: Make career advancement options visible

- Extend work contracts, enable internal job mobility, provide information on opportunities, provide training structures to support career development.
- Encouragement to participate in development work and institutional level activities outside one's own immediate work.
- Data to evaluate retention success; pay special attention to dual citizenships.

2. Invest in supporting experiences of inclusion, participation, appreciation and equity:

- Create opportunities for participation and impact and inclusivity in decision-making, representative boards and committees, etc.
- Invite internationals to develop services, ask about and listen to needs.
- Pay special attention to international employees' social and informal meetings and events.
- Show appreciation, ensure psychological safety; a recognition system.

3. Strengthen multilingualism in the work environment:

- Encourage and enable learning of Finnish / Swedish, including during worktime: flexibility!
- Create a language policy and guidelines, tips for everyday practices, administrative documentation and operations.
- Use the know-how of experienced multilingual teams.

EXIT

1. Create feedback collection practices for development work: Anonymous exit survey

- Guidelines for an exit discussion at the unit level.
- Systematic use of data for development.
- Create an alumni community for ex-employees, possibly a joint one with students.

International recruitment – supervisor viewpoint

TALENT ATTRACTION

1. Prepare the team for internationalisation

- Which tasks and positions can be opened for applicants with zero or limited Finnish/Swedish language skills? Critical evaluation of mindset.
- Create team's new documentation systematically in English as well.
- Encourage team members to take courses in English where needed.
- Dialogue on division of work and practicalities related to multilingualism.

2. Practicalities related to the position and recruitment

- If possible, make sure to open the position for a minimum duration that allows for the family's social security in Finland (over 2 years).
- For example, with high-profile recruitments: Consider organising a site visit and what kind of a budget you might have for relocation support.

3. Crystallise the attraction factors related to the position

- What are the special attraction factors related to research and facilities to highlight for this position?

4. Draft the job ad

- Attractive position, incl. duration of contract, salary (good to point out that it is the salary before taxes), realistic information and job description, clearly defined duties, required language skills.
- Secondary information: attractiveness of the workplace, information about the benefits of Finland (organisation level pages), inclusivity of the text and statement, clarity of the language used.
- Relevant schedules, incl. possible site visit.

5. Choose the channels suitable for this recruitment

- LinkedIn, X and research and staff networks (À sharing through supervisors and principal investigators, team, international employee network; remember to also provide training on active presence on social media).
- Sourcing and headhunting, suitable recruitment portals in Finland and abroad; remember also the [work in Finland job portal](#).
- If geographically targeted recruitment is suitable, use the talent managers of Business Finland and the [team Finland knowledge experts](#) of the Ministry for Education and Culture, located in several target countries.
- Remember also your own and other international students studying in Finland! You can reach most university students through the [jobteaser portal](#) and institutions might also have other portals. Participate actively also in recruitment fairs as an employer

and talk about different career options, incl. doctoral researcher's path, specialist positions, etc. Organise info sessions on doctoral researcher's path.

- Other: would it be suitable for the recruitment to have another person, e.g. an international researcher from the same team, involved in the recruitment process from an early stage, for instance, as a contact person for questions?

RECRUITMENT

1. Ensure equity and transparency in the recruitment process - For each position:

- Use pre-defined language requirements (paying attention to all necessary languages) and selection and assessment criteria for the position)
- Include diversity in the appointment committee
- Min. two people involved in the interview and selection process
- Sensitivity and structure in the interview: Make use of the KAVOT [Interview questions and instructions for international recruitment](#)
- Anonymous recruitment, pre-assignments e.g. through a video, an example of language skills in suitable recruitments
- Plan and provide information on recruitment schedules, incl. possible site visit

2. Practicalities related to the position and recruitment process

- Schedule realistically and set a start date for the recruitment process: reserve time for questions and the relocation process
- Discuss if and what costs will be covered for an international employee (e.g. external consultation service, moving services, permits, flights)
- Where suitable, e.g. high-profile recruitments, plan a site visit. [See p. 6](#)

3. Include in the content the special needs of international candidates

- Ask the international candidate what kind of support is needed gives the candidates themselves the possibility to bring up any urgent questions related to family, for instance
- Expectations and available support related to language learning
- Highlight services related to relocation, information also on Finland (especially the benefits of the welfare society), including services for spouse and family
- If a fixed-term contract, explain realistically what the future prospects are as regards continuing in the institution and how to prepare for that
- Note: you are not allowed to ask about family situation before the recruitment decision is made. However, you can briefly mention our services for spouse and family. Often, family-related concerns are naturally brought up by the candidate themselves.

4. Ensure an equitable and fair decision-making process

- Make use of the KAVOT-material [Interview questions and instructions for an international recruitment](#)
- Language-aware methods of reading applications written in Finnish, recognition of qualifications and competencies obtained abroad

- Use pre-defined selection and assessment criteria, substantiated decisions

5. Pay attention to clear and attentive communication with candidates

- Planned process, regular updates, communicating schedules, message templates
- Remember to pay attention also to candidates who were not selected and those who did not accept the position for some reason

6. Site visits – Provide information about the practicalities related to the position and recruitment:

- Encourage the team and international colleagues to participate in the process where suitable. Provide the opportunity to meet colleagues and visit facilities if possible.

RELOCATION

1. Address the practicalities related to the selected employee

- Make sure work equipment, workstation, user ID and access to necessary systems are in order well in advance
- Internal communication about the new employee and the start date to the team and other key stakeholders, external communication where needed and suitable (social media, website)

2. Ensure a smooth relocation experience – make sure they are aware that help is available

- Information on the necessary steps: drafting the Hosting Agreement, before arrival, after arrival. Make use of the [checklist for arriving staff](#).
- Online meeting with the international employee (personal or in small groups)
- Reserve time for questions and use the guidance and advice services of public authorities. Make use of the [list of useful public services](#).
- Check if the employee is moving with the family and what kind of help the family would need (e.g. daycare, school, spouse's situation, social security) before and after arrival. Make use of the [list of useful services available to the public](#). Ordering the possible moving and relocation services, support in finding an apartment. Also use companies that provide temporary housing
- Use a process description to support communication and division of work between HR, supervisor and employee. Invest in internal communications throughout the process. Make use of the [process model](#).

3. Communicate regularly with the employee:

- Follow-up on the process and support where needed. Be prepared for delays in the process
- Note also: Would it be useful and possible to nominate an international colleague to support in the relocation process?
- Remember to feed into the enthusiasm related to moving to Finland: share seasonal information, pictures and videos, for example from [Visit Finland](#), and regional marketing agencies such as [My Helsinki](#)

ONBOARDING

1. Remember pre-boarding

- Regular communication with the employee, suitable material shared beforehand
Establish a contact person for questions, if possible meeting the team before arrival
- Build the feeling of being welcome even before arrival

2. Plan and communicate the onboarding process:

- Draft the onboarding schedule and unit-level procedure in advance
- Allocate resources and time for onboarding (supervisors, team, new employee)
- Reserve time for processing information and dealing with the required authorities, including possible family-related arrangements
- Careful estimation of what is urgent and what can wait for a few weeks
- Attention also to experiences in Finland and the region
- Communicate the programme for the first days/weeks beforehand

3. Include a social element in the onboarding plan:

- Activate the team in onboarding and beyond to engage with the international newcomer by using the KAVOT guide "[How to welcome and support an international colleague in the team](#)"
- Invaluable peer support, particularly from possible international colleagues
- Designated onboarding buddy

4. Cover the special needs of the international employee during onboarding

- Remember that many things in Finnish working life are usually completely new to the international employee (e.g. employee rights and duties, holiday system, salary structure, labour unions, unemployment benefits, advocacy, target and development discussions, work culture, regulations related to higher education and the functioning of higher education institutions). These issues are even more important for those starting in the supervisor role. Reserve time for processing these issues and check that the employee understands them.
- Introduce useful services and key contact people (e.g. research services for researchers), suitable professional networks and instances in Finland and Europe, importance of building networks
- Remember the management of expectations and the organisational culture: expectations and goals in the position, performance evaluation criteria, role-related expectations (e.g. freedom vs. reporting duties, supervisor's role, etc.), the organisation's strategy, values and ethical guidelines, principles guiding the organisational culture
- Wishes, goals and expectations related to learning Finnish/Swedish and the available support
- Also informal onboarding: activity outside work, social networking, hobbies, unofficial meetings with the team and colleagues
- Ask the employee what needs they have. Be attentive and follow up on the onboarding process.

- Use existing guides and pages, e.g. [Guide for International Researchers and Their Families](#), guides by the cities (e.g. guides from [International House Helsinki](#)) and [InfoFinland](#)
- Attention also to the needs of the family and the spouse and available services (e.g. spouse network), relevant information related to Finland

5. Long-term onboarding and support for integration throughout the employment relationship

- Encourage participation in a mentoring programme, if possible even at the same level of position (e.g. for supervisors, a mentor who is also a supervisor)
- Encourage participation in a buddy programme
- Networking across career levels and units, e.g. doctoral researchers and postdoc researchers in the same faculty, language cafés
- Continuous support for language learning: learning Finnish/Swedish requires continuous investment
- Attention to long-term integration and career path with checkpoints, for example in discussions on career targets and development. Knowledge of the wider context of the operational environment? Support competence development, recognition of possible career paths and active participation within the institution and outside of it. Make use of the [checklist for supervisors](#).

RETENTION

1. Invest in creating a multilingual work environment

- Team-specific goals for creating a multilingual environment
- Evaluation process for the success of the multilingual team, e.g. through target and development discussions or something else
- Discuss the practice of multilingualism (Finnish, Swedish, English), encourage, support and enable: a relaxed atmosphere to try, make mistakes and learn, open dialogue, language safe space. Note: multilingualism does not mean using only English, but truly multilingual environments.

2. Support the learning of Finnish/Swedish/English:

- Encourage language learning and available support – for the whole team
- Address language learning, integration and career goals in development discussions
- Actively ask for feedback on multilingual daily work from the international employee and the team

3. Support career development and participation in services available:

- Encourage participation in e.g. coaching, mentoring, staff trainings, target and development discussions, internal job mobility, opportunities to develop and impact, institutional activities outside the immediate job description
- Getting familiar with the general operational environment in Finland (e.g. education policy)

- Researchers: use of research services, particularly support for securing further funding through different channels, support for sharing research results to the wider public in Finland

4. Provide support for long-term integration:

- Showing appreciation, ensuring psychological safety
- Easily approachable support and opportunities for feedback also after the initial onboarding stage, e.g. a support coffee break, Teams channels, events, language mentors
- Help with networking within and outside the higher education community, finding hobbies and free time activities, etc., paying attention to the active participation of the whole family and integration in Finland

EXIT

1. With fixed-term contracts, inform of the continuation well in advance

- With international employees, their right to stay in Finland is often bound to job status → time needed for decisions, stress, anxiety

2. Prepare to help with future career stages

- Support with finding another job within the institution
- Provide a reference, if possible
- Support in evaluating different career options, particularly with junior talents
- Deliver a message of caring

2. React to Feedback

- Identify what the challenging points have been in the unit → what to ask for feedback on in the exit discussion

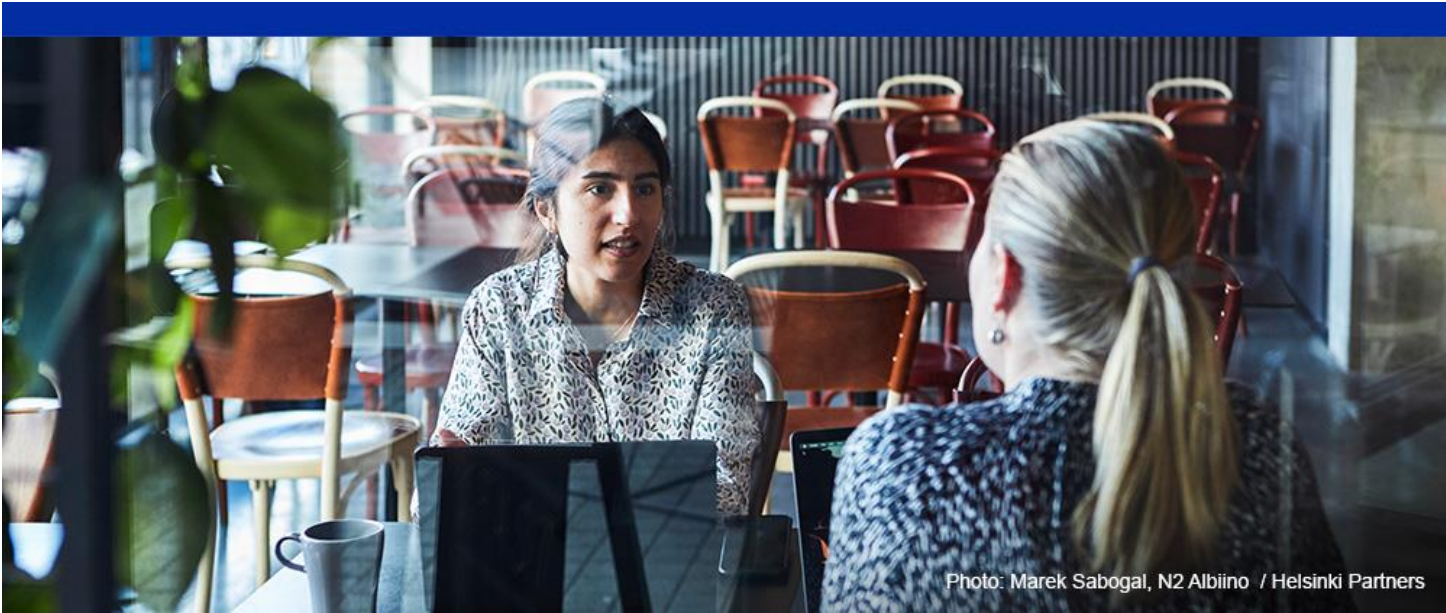


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Appendix 1

Interview questions and instructions for international recruitment

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The international aspect of recruitment

We tend to make assumptions regarding people based on generalisations, but we also assume people know certain things and think in a certain way. These assumptions are often proved wrong when we interact with people outside of our own culture. With international candidates, it is often worthwhile to explain things a little more, ask and encourage the candidate to discuss things and not jump to conclusions so quickly.

The goal of a successful interview

The purpose of the recruitment interview is to evaluate the suitability of an individual to an open position and specific role, and to the organisation/company and its culture. During the interview, the applicant gets a more detailed picture of the specific position and its tasks, at the same time forming an idea of the employer as an organisation. So, the employer is this way being evaluated as well. Regardless of the outcome of the recruitment process, it is important that the applicant retains a positive but honest image of the organisation, i.e., as an attractive employer for the applicant.

Preparation

Get ready for an interview by going through the background information provided by the applicant. Think about the aspects that you want to find out more about. Compare the application and the planned questions with the job ad and the evaluation criteria that you have set in advance.

The interview form below serves as a framework for the interview. It can be used to ensure that, for example, with all applicants, all themes are being covered thoroughly. The questions on the form are just examples of issues related to the various themes. The HR-person should especially be prepared to also tell about the immigration and other services the employer has to offer. Also, the supervisor should at least be aware of their existence. It is also recommended to inform the candidate in advance about what will take place in the interview.

The agenda for the recruiting interview

You can include at least the following themes to the agenda:

- Introducing the interviewers and creating an atmosphere of confidence and psychological safety. If you are uncertain with this kind of concept, you can always discuss them with the HR-specialist in advance.
- Interview themes/questions
- Answering the interviewees questions
- Agreeing on follow-up and recruitment process schedule

Be aware of biases – don't make hasty conclusions

Familiarise yourself with instructions or guidance materials concerning biases at job interviews. Especially when you are faced with a candidate from outside your own cultural sphere, e.g., “similar to me” biases and on other unneutral attitudes can play a role in your judgement, without you even noticing it. Please also note the following factors in your considerations:

- Contributing factors to making conclusions, e.g., own feelings at the moment, values and subjectivity
- Halo effect: positive trait overemphasised
- Horns effect: one negative trait unduly influences the perception of a person
- Primacy and Recency error: Remembering only the beginning and end of the interview – Make notes!

Some things to avoid:

- Hurry – the applicant should have the feeling that the focus during the interview is on him/her.
- Interviewer talks/directs/interrupts too much, makes assumptions.
- Excessively difficult questions or many questions at the same time.
- Helping and asking too easy questions.
- False promises in marketing.

Other practical tips for the interview

The interview situation is simultaneously always a marketing situation; nevertheless, be honest whilst promoting the job. Remember that the interview builds up the employer image of the University. An interview should be utilised both to attract good applicants to take the position, but also to give realistic information on the position and work environment, as well as to evaluate the candidate. Reserve time for giving information about the task, unit and the University as a work environment. For example, the good work and personal life balance and general “family-friendliness” has, in general, been one of the biggest attracting factors of the Nordic job market.

- Note that cultures can differ a lot with regard to the job search process and behaviour with authority figures. For instance, for many cultures, the typically Finnish low hierarchy and level of in-formality is not common and a higher level of formality and politeness might be used. Try to avoid jumping to conclusions. Also, note that titles might mean different things in different cultures. Encourage elaborating on previous job roles and competences and do not assume that a “project manager” has the same kind of skill set as you expect.
- It is good practice to have two people involved in the interview process. We all pay attention to different things and interpret situations differently, so having two interviewers tackles unconscious bias that interviewers might have.
- Use open questions, do not lead, thus the way in which the applicant approaches the issue tells a lot about him/her. Ask more specific questions, in order to make sure you understand it correctly.

- During the interview, although the conversation may get intense, it should never feel unpleasant nor rude. The interview becomes lighter towards the end, leaving the applicant a pleasant picture of the situation.
- Remember that the end goal is that the applicant speaks far more than you do.
- It is worth taking notes, but in a way that is natural for you and the entire situation.
- Regarding the negotiations concerning the salary and other conditions of the contract, the relatively inflexible Finnish system of defining salaries might come as a surprise to a candidate.
- Be ready to tell about the [basic characteristics of the Finnish health care system](#), as you might receive a question about health insurance. In Finland, the employers do not offer health insurance; do not mix health insurance up with occupational health care. You might also be asked about a pension scheme, which in Finland cannot be enjoyed before pension age.
- Please note, that in some countries (especially the US), giving notice might not be possible just a few months prior of start in a new position, if the applicant is working in a teaching position (e.g., a professor).
- If you ask for references, ask for permission to be in contact with them.
- Certificates might be difficult to interpret, even though they would be in English. The Finnish National Agency for Education has a [service for the recognition of qualifications](#), especially for recruitments that require a certain kind of qualification or education.
- Residence permit issues might postpone the earliest possible starting date.
- Providing information about the future and how the recruiting process progresses is a way of good marketing towards all the applicants.
- If the position requires a certain level of Finnish/Swedish, agree at the beginning on the language use during the interview. For instance, you can encourage the applicant to use both English and Finnish.

Law, regulation and interview

You are only allowed to ask questions which are relevant to the specific position (criteria). Refrain from asking the following: religion and belief, pregnancy, sexual orientation. Please note, that it is recommended, at a convenient phase of the recruitment process, to also tell about the services for spouses the employer has to offer. It can be done without asking the candidates situation on the matter.

Observations during the interview

- Anxiety and how the applicant is able to control it, social skills, interactional skills
- How the applicant handles the interview questions, i.e., focusing on the essential, dodging questions, etc.
- The external presence in relation to the job applied for
- How prepared the applicant is for the interview, e.g., what sort of information the applicant has in advance, how well s/he is familiarised, motivation
- Assessing the applicant's suitability for the job: the way of thinking, processing information, etc.

Finally

Inform the applicant about the outcome of the recruiting process and / or about the future, i.e., inform about your schedule and agree to it. Also, prepare to provide feedback and justify your decision. Utilise your interview notes with the feedback you give. Each interviewee should be contacted via the phone.

Interview template example

You can edit this document to the needs of your recruitment and recruiting unit.

Name of the applicant	Interviewer	Date

Questions	Notes and comments made by the interviewer
BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education?• How have you usually succeeded in your studies?• Could you briefly go through your past / current employers? (tasks & responsibilities, core challenges, as well as achievements)• How do you enjoy your current job (pros and cons)?	
MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why are you applying for this role? Why Helsinki University?• What interests you the most in these tasks?	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your long-term career goals? • What sort of aspects usually motivate you at work? • What sort of expectations do you have in relation to your work community? • What kind of expectations do you have for Finland and your future life in Finland? • Readiness to travel / move / remote working 	
<p>PERSONA AND WAY OF WORKING</p> <p>Strengths and development areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sort of strengths do you identify in yourself? • In which aspects do you wish to / or must develop yourself further and how? <p>Collaboration and communication skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe yourself as a member of the work community / what sort of team worker are you? What role do you take in the group: leader / equal / stay in the background? • How do you support and promote a good working atmosphere? • How do you build cooperative relationships with the team or with a client? • Do you also speak some Finnish? Would you like to practice and develop your Finnish skills while you 	

<p>work with us?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have you done to better understand another person's different perspective? • What kind of problems related to the people have you encountered in the working community and how have you tried to solve them? • How would you characterise your communication skills? Tell us about your experiences holding presentations. <p>Behaviour under pressure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sort of aspects create pressure for you in your work? • We all have situations in which we feel like we do not have time to complete everything on time. Could you please describe a similar situation and how did you overcome it? • How do you behave in stressful situations? • How do you relieve stress? 	
<p><i>The competences and skills required for this specific position, for ex.:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independence • Technical skills • The customer's schedule dominates your work and schedule, flexibility is needed • In order to succeed in the given role, a constant desire for self-development is required 	



Appendix 2

A process model for providing support for an international employee

This model lists the most important tasks and steps related the moving to Finland and the following time of onboarding and integration into Finland. The roles of the international employee, supervisor and the HR have been indicated. The process model is therefore there to help clarify the steps and responsibilities of the relocation and support process.

Before recruitment decision is made, the HR specialist can advise the top candidates to get to know all the materials on the organization website for arriving internationals.

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WHEN	WHAT
Prior to arrival	<p>1. Once an applicant is chosen to be recruited, the supervisor and the future employee agree on the following matters. It is recommended that the supervisor first consult HR about these matters, especially if there is any uncertainty of the employer's policies related to them. The agreed details are in every case communicated to HR as soon as possible.</p> <p>a) Start and end date of employment: Relocation practicalities including getting a residence permit must be taken into consideration. The supervisor and the future employee should keep in mind that employment must begin (after arriving) in Finland.</p> <p>b) Salary and other details of the contract. The supervisor agrees with the future employee, what (if any) relocation costs are compensated by the employer. Normally compensations can include travel costs, moving costs, permit costs or relocation services. The supervisor should consult HR if there are some guidelines or policies in the unit regarding compensation. If external funding is used, it must also be made sure that these are eligible costs according to the financier.</p> <p>c) If there are possible family members moving along (to inform that the employer offers spouse support).</p>
	<p>2. The supervisor will discuss with the team regarding who will help the new employee after starting and assist the supervisor with tasks related to onboarding.</p>
	<p>3. The supervisor will get familiar with the Guidelines for Language Awareness at the University, especially if she/he is recruiting an employee who does not speak Finnish for the first time. The guidelines can help with practical language issues in everyday work, as well as with supporting the new employee with learning Finnish or Swedish.</p>
	<p>4. HR will prepare and deliver a Hosting Agreement (HA), if such is needed for residence permit or other reasons.</p>
	<p>5. HR will send a welcoming info email along with the HA. This includes information about relocation and integrative services, but also of the services for spouses.</p>
	<p>6. The employee will get familiar with the relocation and other instructions sent, and will ask further questions from HR. If a spouse is moving to Finland with the employee, the employee</p>

WHEN	WHAT
	will inform her/him about the spouse network and other services for families at the organization.
	7. HR will organize a pre-arrival info-session for several newcomers simultaneously, while they are still in the departure country. This includes a section for family spousal questions.
	8. The employee will apply for a residence permit if needed and will take care of the other necessary matters in the departure country: Housing is vital, but also e.g. booking meetings in advance (especially the registration of an EU-citizen) with officials in Finland is highly recommended.
	9. The employee will let HR and the supervisor know about the schedules regarding the residence permit and the general arrival schedule.
After arrival in Finland	1. The supervisor and employee meet at the workplace, onboarding starts.
	2. Depending on the situation, HR and the employee meet in person and the employment contract is signed, and the employee gives (if possible) her/his personal ID-number and address in Finland. HR will remind the employee of at least the most immediate things to be done (DVV and KELA registrations, tax card, bank account, Finnish ID-card), and will do the normal HR-onboarding (not related to international matters). Alternatively, this exchange of information can also be done via email or Teams.
	3. The new employee is introduced to the relevant people in the team / at the unit.
	4. The employee will register with the relevant officials and take care of other related necessary things. The employee has earlier received instructions about this from HR, and it has been a topic in the pre-arrival info session. HR will naturally help if there still are questions.
	5. HR will provide a post-arrival onboarding session specifically tailored for internationals. The focus here are the services that help integration at the workplace and into society at large.

WHEN	WHAT
After approximately 1-3 months of starting	1. HR will invite the employee to the main welcoming and onboarding events of the organization.
	2. After getting familiar with the duties of work, the work community, etc. the employee will again consider the events and services for internationals (welcoming events, UniBuddy, etc.), that the organization has to offer, also for the spouse if applicable. If questions arise, the employee will contact HR or other relevant organizer of the service.
	3. After getting familiar with the duties of work, the work community, etc. the employee will again consider the events and services for internationals (welcoming events, UniBuddy, etc.), that the organization has to offer, also for the spouse if applicable. If questions arise, the employee will contact HR or other relevant organizer of the service.
	4. New employee answers the relocation feedback form of HR/organization.



Appendix 3

Checklist for supervisors for international recruitment – relocation and onboarding

Note: The main source of info to arriving international staff is the website of the institution

Before arrival

1. **Details of contract:** Agree with the future employee of the details of the employment contract. Keep in mind that the employment should begin only after the employee has arrived to Finland, for social security reasons.
2. **Cost compensation:** Agree with the future employee, what (if any) relocation costs are compensated by the employer. If you are uncertain, ask HR if there are some guidelines or policies in the unit regarding compensation. If you are using external funding, also make sure that these are eligible costs for the funding instance. Normally compensations can include travel costs, moving costs, residence permit costs and relocation consultancy services by an external service provider. The employee may also assume that travel costs back to the home country are covered.
3. **Services for spouses:** Mention our services for spouses just in case. The family situation and related needs may also come up in the discussions. There is more info on the spousal services on our website.
4. **Hosting Agreement:** Provide the agreed and other employment details to HR for the Hosting Agreement and later, the employment contract. Sign the Hosting Agreement.
5. **Involving the team:** Have a discussion with your team about who will help the new employee at the beginning and assist you with the tasks of onboarding.
6. **Communication:** Pre-arrival communication is important with any new employee, but it is particularly important for an international employee. They are preparing a move to a new country, so it is crucial to feel welcome and paid attention to. Remember also to communicate to the team and other relevant people about the new employee.
7. **Starting contract process:** When the arrival and the beginning of employment have been confirmed, begin the process for an employment contract, if necessary.
8. **Language practices:** Especially if you are recruiting an employee who does not speak Finnish/Swedish for the first time in your team, get familiar with the language policy of the institution. Have a discussion in the team about language practices in a multilingual environment.
9. **Onboarding plan:** When making an onboarding schedule, please keep in mind that an international employee also has a lot of other things to consider and arrange besides work. Share at least the programme of the first few days with the employee.

After arrival

1. **First meeting:** Meet with the employee at the workplace on the first day and begin onboarding. Remember to focus on creating a welcoming atmosphere and sharing some first experiences of life in Finland. See the list of general onboarding topics on a separate document (*Topics for onboarding*).
2. **Immigration necessities:** Be prepared for the possibility that the employee will also need to take care of official arrangements at the beginning during working hours.
3. **Presenting the unit and the people:** Make sure the new employee also meets relevant people related to the task at a bare minimum and that they also meet / are informed of the new employee. Show the important facilities and practical information on working at the institution. Supporting networking is crucially important for a new international employee: discuss important internal and external networks and introduce the employee to relevant people.
4. **Expectations:** Discuss what is expected from the employee in this role. What duties and goals are set and how is performance evaluated and measured? Having clear expectations is particularly important for an international employee, as the whole Finnish academic work culture will be new to them.

1-3 months after arrival and onwards

1. **Integration:** Also discuss integration into the society outside work with the employee. This could mean things such as if they have found meaningful free time activities, etc. These are a part of general wellbeing, which also affects work wellbeing. If needed, ask HR for tips.
2. **Language issues:** Discuss with the employee whether the language practices or other language-related matters affect their work. If they have begun learning Finnish/Swedish, discuss the possibility to practice their language skills in the work community.

3. **Family's wellbeing:** If the employee has also brought a spouse/family to Finland, ask about their integration. Mention the services for spouses as well. If needed, ask HR for tips.
 4. **Finnish work culture:** Keep in mind the cultural differences related to the supervisor-employee relationship. For instance, international employees expect on average more interaction and even guidance from the supervisor than what is normal in Finnish work communities. According to surveys, many international employees feel "left alone" after onboarding, not knowing what is expected of them.
 5. **A new contract?** When you consider further employment contracts, keep in mind that employees who need a residence permit should be given information on the continuation at least 3 months before the end of their contract. Without a work contract, they will need to leave Finland, as they typically do not have any other grounds to show for a residence permit.
-



Appendix 4

Checklist for a new international employee – Steps of the relocation process

Note: This document lists the steps that a newcomer must take after moving to Finland. Its purpose is to remind the newcomer of these necessary things, which are explained in detail on the website of the institution or on the website of the related official/service. The checklist should not be used without getting acquainted with the detailed instructions related to each part of the checklist.

Before arrival

1. **Employment contract and relocation costs.** Congratulations on getting selected! Firstly, agree with your supervisor on the details of your employment contract and possible cost compensations regarding relocation. Please keep in mind, that you need to be in Finland at the start of employment.
2. **Welcome email.** You will receive a welcoming info email from HR. After that, you provide HR with certain necessary personal data, including e.g. your citizenship(s). You are also able to ask questions from HR. After this exchange of information, you will also receive a Hosting Agreement, if you need one.
3. **Residence permit:** If you are not a citizen of an EU country, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland, please apply for a [residence permit](#) following the instructions of HR. It includes the application in the [Enter Finland system of the Finnish Immigration Service \(Migri\)](#), as well as a visit to a Finnish embassy or a VFS Global application centre. You can use the Hosting Agreement as an attachment. Please keep HR informed of the proceeding of the residence permit process, together with your plans of arrival in Finland.
4. **Pre-arrival info session:** HR will organise a webinar for newcomers to Finland to learn more and ask about the practicalities of moving to Finland. It includes the possibility to ask questions from HR. Please also check the [Newcomers' Information Sessions](#) and the [guides](#) of International House Helsinki.
5. **Housing:** Please take care of your housing arrangements and inform HR of your address in Finland. Note: you usually need a home insurance when renting an apartment. Utilise the [Housing in Helsinki guide](#) of International House Helsinki.
6. **EU registration:** If you are a citizen of an EU country, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland, please book a time for [EU registration at Migri](#) in advance.
7. **Registration at the DVV:** [Please book a time at the Digital and Population Data Services Agency \(DVV\)](#) for local registration in Finland in advance.
8. **Certificates for the DVV:** Take care of the original and translated marriage certificates and birth certificates of children needed at the DVV, if applicable. [The apostille is not required with documents awarded by EU countries.](#)

9. **Finnish health care system:** Especially if you will not be employed at the institution or if you have a spouse / family coming along, please check [your situation regarding the Finnish health care system](#) in advance.
 10. **Relocation programs and learning Finnish:** Explore what kinds of relocation and integration programs the institution provides for you. There might also be networks of internationals which organise activities and provide peer support. If possible, start to learn some basics of Finnish/Swedish already. Utilise the [Language Boost website](#) to explore courses and self-study options.
-

After arrival

1. **Meeting with supervisor:** Welcome to Finland and the institution! At the start of your employment, you meet with your supervisor at the workplace and your onboarding starts.
2. **Meeting with HR:** This can also be done online or via email discussion, depending on the unit/situation. Your employment contract is signed, if signing has not been possible otherwise before. You give your Finnish ID number and address in Finland to HR. Depending on your citizenship, you show your residence permit card to HR. You receive onboarding related to general HR matters, including your user account, computer, phone, workspace, etc.
3. **EU registration:** Please do the EU registration at Migri (at [International House Helsinki](#)), if you are a citizen of an EU country, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland. Once done, please present the registration document to HR.
4. **Registration at the DVV:** Please register at the DVV (at [International House Helsinki](#)) and apply for a municipality of residence. There you will get a Finnish personal number, if you have not received one before.
5. **Registration at Kela:** Please register for the Finnish social security system Kela (at [International House Helsinki](#)). That way you will normally get access to public health care. The duration of your employment may affect your access to some social services.
6. **Tax data:** Make sure the Tax Administration has your tax data correct. Optionally please get a tax card and send it to HR.

7. **Finnish ID card:** Please order a Finnish personal ID card which also gives you the possibility to utilise strong identification online, very useful in Finland.
 8. **Bank account (with online banking):** Please open a Finnish bank account and inform HR of your account number. Make sure to apply for online banking credentials as well, very useful for online identification in many needed services. Note that this might take several weeks.
 9. **Ticket for local traffic:** Please find out about how local traffic ([Helsinki Region Transport, HSL](#)) works for you and download the HSL application.
 10. **Onboarding events and learning Finnish:** Please get familiar with the onboarding events and programs of the institution, as well as Finnish courses and other language support provided.
 11. **Spouse services:** If your spouse moved to Finland with you, make sure they are informed of the services and information the institution and other actors in the region offer.
-

1-3 months after arrival and onwards

1. **Events and programmes:** Please take part in welcoming and onboarding events and make sure that you are at least aware of programmes for social or professional networking, language courses and other opportunities to learn Finnish or Swedish.
2. **International onboarding:** Please take part in the international post-arrival onboarding sessions by HR.
3. **Life outside work:** Please explore the information provided by different actors (e.g., the city or region websites, [InfoFinland](#)) regarding important services and freetime activities.
4. **Feedback form:** Please answer the relocation feedback form sent by HR.
5. **Services for spouses:** If your spouse moved to Finland with you, please make sure that they have checked the information on services for spouses. If they are looking for a job, [contact SIMHE services and book an appointment with them](#).

6. **Clarifying details of onboarding:** If some things related to work (how does this work, who does what, etc.) are still unclear to you, e.g., because of too much information too quickly at the start, please do not hesitate to ask HR or your supervisor. We are here to help you!
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Photo: N2 Albiino / Helsinki Partners

Appendix 5

Process of high profile recruitments

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NOTE! You can modify the process to suit your organization's needs.

WHEN	WHAT	NOTE
When opening the recruitment process	Prepare the regular recruitment process. Pay special attention to presenting the position in an attractive way to an international candidate and to determining the salary for the position. Also, candidate communications are crucially important throughout the process.	If centralised HR is involved in the process, make sure that they are alerted on the position opening. Share with them the information on the position/title, the planned start date, and the length of contract.
	Decide and communicate on the site visit. If one will be organised, include the date and information in the job advert. Coordinate the initial site visit preparations.	
	Determine the cost compensations and possible external support provided. These can include, e.g. relocation consultation, moving services, flights, permits and housing.	Costs vary depending on the country of origin and residence and on the possible family members. When discussing flight costs, note that the flights for applying for a residence permit can also be included in the compensation package. In addition, some candidates may expect some flights back to the home country during the employment period to be compensated.
When selecting the top candidates	Coordinate the site visit preparations. Discuss the site visit with the candidates.	

WHEN	WHAT	NOTE
	<p>Pay attention to the family. If possible family members are welcome to join the site visit, inform the top candidates about this.</p>	<p>Asking about the family situation during the selection process is not permitted. Prepare to inform the candidate about family-related services and support on a general level, and allow the candidate to bring up any questions and concerns to do with family members, if they wish to discuss them.</p>
<p>When preparing the site visit</p>	<p>Plan and coordinate the content of the site visit while highlighting the attraction points. As well as the recruitment-related aspects, include information not only on the attraction points of the position, institution, unit, job and research, but also on Finland and the region, useful support services and relocation. Prepare to show the relevant research facilities and to enable meeting the relevant colleagues. Include some Finland-related experiences in the programme as well (e.g. when making selections on locations for meetings, meals and types of food). Consider meeting the candidate and possible family members at the airport upon arrival.</p>	<p>Finnish institutions are often unable to compete on salaries. Highlight the good points about Finland: its safety, work/life balance, family friendliness, nature, well-functioning society, the welfare state, etc. Remember that you may be competing with other top-level institutions in the world for the same candidate, so you must focus on positively marketing the position.</p>
	<p>Prepare for difficult questions. Top candidates often have expectations and demands that you need to prepare for (e.g. related to salary, part-time or remote work at the beginning, belated start of the job). Encourage the candidates to deliver possible questions in advance, so that you can prepare to discuss these during the site visit. Prepare and gather as much information as possible before the event.</p>	<p>High-profile candidates may: 1) have longer notice, 2) have previous engagements to their home organisations that you need to negotiate on, 3) expect a higher level of service and "selling" of the position than with a regular recruitment, 4) use a recruitment process for salary negotiations in their home organisation without actually</p>

WHEN	WHAT	NOTE
		having a strong commitment to change their employer.
	Pay attention to the family. If a candidate brings family members along, check if the spouse and children will join suitable parts of the discussions. Prepare activities for possible children if they participate in some of the discussions, e.g. crafts- and Finland-themed children's books (Tatu and Patu, Mauri Kunnas). Share tips for exploring the city outside the site visit programme.	Often family-related questions, e.g. a spouse's employment prospects or a school for the children, can be decisive in the decision whether to take the position. Prepare to provide support with these matters or to guide the family to other service providers.
	Prepare for relocation-based information. Encourage the candidates to send possible questions about relocation in advance so that you can prepare accordingly. Check the candidate's nationality and previous possible stays in Finland.	If centralised HR is involved in the process, share the name(s) and the information on nationality/-ies and other relevant details (such as an accompanying family, if known already) on the candidates for preparation purposes.
During the site visit	Pay attention to a sense of welcome and smooth logistics. Make sure the top candidates feel welcome, prepared for and supported, and that they have a clear understanding of the programme and logistical arrangements.	
	Communicate the cost compensations and other agreed benefits. These are selling points for you.	Make sure to share the impact on taxation of various types of financial support, either during or after the site visit. These vary from one cost category to another.

WHEN	WHAT	NOTE
After the selection is made	Organise internal communications. Schedule a meeting including the supervisor, HR (centralised and local services, if applicable) and other possible relevant parties for agreeing on the support process, communication to the chosen candidate and next steps.	
	Offer the chosen candidate a possibility for an online one-to-one discussion on the position and relocation related questions, including a possible spouse. Encourage to send any questions in advance in order to prepare. Communicate clearly if employment and relocation related questions will be handled separately (e.g. one discussion with the supervisor and the other with HR).	You can send a list of typical relocation related topics or a questionnaire to the chosen candidate, so that it is easier for them to think about questions. Remember that at this stage you are most likely still selling the position. It is important to focus both on convincing the candidate to take the position but also on sharing realistic information.
	Make sure that the relevant information is communicated internally. The key people need to be updated about the discussions and the status of the process.	
When the chosen candidate confirms acceptance of the position	Take care of all regular employment- and relocation-related arrangements promptly. Order possible external services, e.g. relocation consultancy and moving services. Prepare the onboarding plan and explain the programme for the first days to the candidate.	
	Focus on ongoing support and communication. This can be done by email or via another online meeting. Where applicable, connect the employee with regional services that are useful for the employee.	

WHEN	WHAT	NOTE
	<p>Arrange a same-level mentor or other form of peer support.</p> <p>It is important to support the understanding of how academic culture works in Finland and what kinds of expectations there are for a professor/supervisor/leader. Mentoring or other such peer support networks are useful in this connection. This also provides a channel outside the immediate unit to ask any questions.</p>	
	<p>If applicable, pay extra attention to the family. Is a job needed for the spouse? If yes, how can you support in this? Utilise, e.g. SIMHE services that provide study and career guidance. Remember to also check if application internal positions are available. If employment is not applicable, support with any possible needs, e.g. social benefits. How can you help with the school and housing arrangements?</p>	<p>If you have a dual career programme for supporting the spouse's employment within the institution, check the funding situation and ask for the CV and key skills. When suitable units are identified, provide information on the opportunities for the spouse and coordinate interviews with relevant units. If the spouse is recruited, provide employment period career support as well. In the Helsinki region universities, an interview promise is also agreed, i.e. the possibility for an interview will be arranged for a suitable open position.</p>
Upon arrival to Finland	<p>Focus on a sense of feeling welcome and being prepared for. The first days are crucial for first impressions and a sense of support. Pay attention to integration to Finland for the whole family as well. A high-quality onboarding process is key to a successful employment relationship.</p>	
	<p>Arrange meetings with relevant high-level representatives of the</p>	<p>Consider if it could be possible to extend the</p>

WHEN	WHAT	NOTE
	institution. Depending on the position, this can include, e.g. the rector, vice-rectors, deans, unit leaders, etc.	invitation to also meet a possible spouse.
	Provide support for dealing with the official steps. This can be done in-house or by external consultation services.	
After the first month	Offer the possibility for a follow-up meeting within one to three months of arrival. Check what sort of further assistance the family needs for their life and integration in Finland and if some information on available support services needs to be repeated. Make sure that the employee knows of the person with whom discussion of any employment-related questions can be arranged and with whom relocation- and integration-related questions can be directed, and help them find the answers. This is a good moment to collect feedback on your services and also on possible external service providers.	Typical questions at this point include support with children's hobbies and free time, the spouse's employment, learning Finnish, and finding networks both at work and during free time, etc.
	When needed, offer another one-to-one meeting to occur after the first year.	

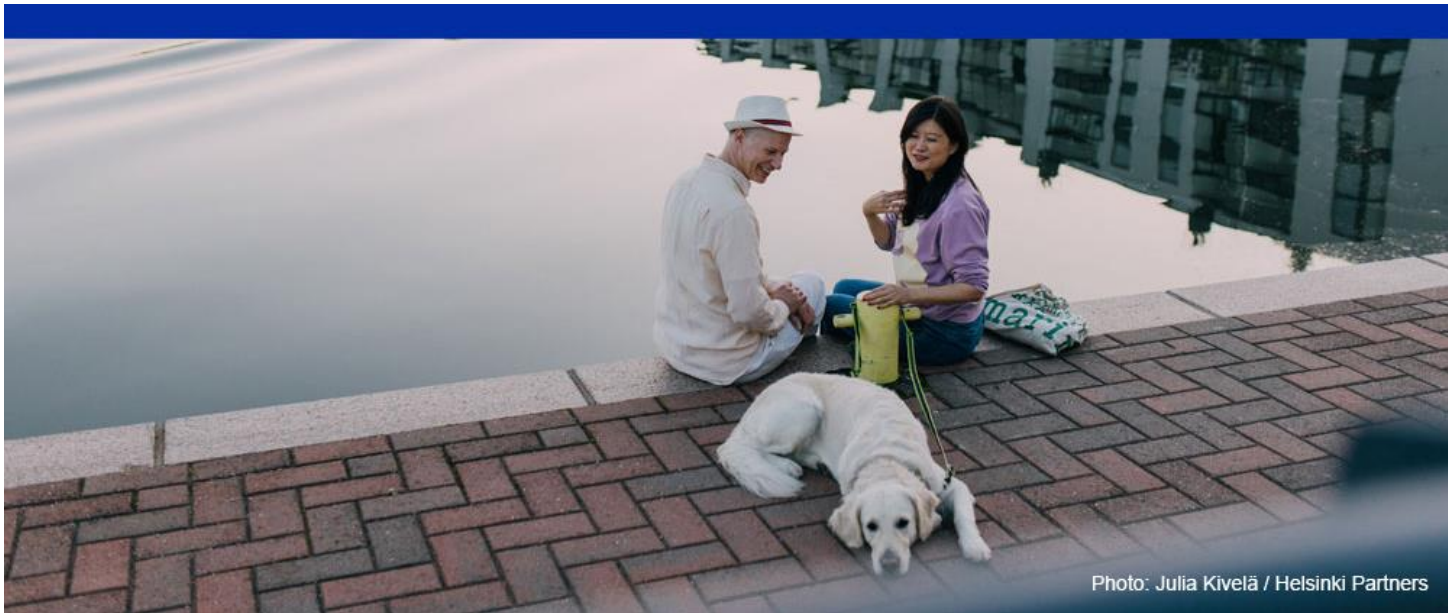


Photo: Julia Kivelä / Helsinki Partners

Appendix 6

Useful publicly available services

Support for newcomers

Guidance and advice

[Key authority services](#) in one place, by the International House Helsinki

[Guidance and information services](#), by the International House Helsinki

[Newcomer information sessions](#), by the International House Helsinki

[Relocation guidance](#), by the International House Helsinki

[Espoo Info service](#) on public services

[Helsinki-info service](#) on public services

[Vantaa multilingual guidance](#) on public services in several languages

Guides

[The Newcomer's Guide](#), by the International House Helsinki

[Housing in Helsinki: A newcomer's guide to finding a home in the capital](#), by the International House Helsinki

[Guide to early childhood education and care](#), by the International House Helsinki

[Guide for International Researchers and Their Families](#), by the HEI LIFE project

Practicalities

[Residence permit for a researcher \(Finnish Immigration Service\)](#)

[Taxation when arriving in Finland](#), by Tax Administration

[Advice line for international tax matters](#), by Tax Administration

[Tax card and tax counselling](#), by Tax Administration at the International House Helsinki

[Pensions advice](#), by the The Finnish Centre for Pensions (ETK) at the International House Helsinki

[Notification of change of address, notification of move \(Finnish postal services Posti\)](#)

[Importing Your Car to Finland from an EU-country - Practical guide by Alfa Mobility](#)

Working in Finland

Information sources on working in Finland

Higher education specific: contact your own institution's HR

[Work in Finland](#) website, by Business Finland

[Finnwards blog](#) on working and living in Finland, by Finnwards

[Finland works](#) course, by Aalto University

[TE Live video: W&L in Finland – Episode 8: Finnish working culture](#)

Rights and duties in the Finnish labour market

[InfoFinland: Employee's rights and obligations](#), information in 12 languages, by the City of Helsinki

[Fair play at work website](#), by The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK)

[SAK employee rights hotline](#), by The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK)

[Blog: Trade unions in Finland: labor union membership explained](#), by Finnwards

[Video: Worker's rights](#), in 16 languages, by Victim Support Finland (RIKU)

[Work Help Finland application](#), by the Ministry of the Interior

Learning Finnish / Swedish

Available courses

Check your own institution's courses for staff

[Finnishcourses.fi](#): search engine for Finnish courses in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, Turku, Tampere and Oulu

[Course location search](#), by the Language Boost project

Tips and resources for learning Finnish / Swedish

[Language Boost portal](#): tips for language learning, course search, self-study material, useful services etc.

[Finnish language cafés and discussion groups](#), by Helmet libraries

[Let's read together network](#): a group particularly for women to practise reading, writing, listening and speaking in Finnish, by Finnish Federation of Graduate Women

Job search and career development

Guidance and advice

[Supporting Immigrants in Higher Education in Finland \(SIMHE\) services](#), study and career guidance for international higher education graduates and those eligible for higher education, by different higher education institutions in the Helsinki region and around Finland

[Employment coaching service](#), by International House Helsinki

[Ohjaamo for under-30-year-olds: a one-stop guidance centre](#), by cities around Finland

[Karriärcenter Arabia](#), service in English and in Swedish, by Arcada, Prakticum, SVEPS and Konstsamfundet

Guides

[International jobseeker's guide](#), by the International House Helsinki

Practices for job search in Finland

[InfoFinland: Find a job in Finland](#), by the City of Helsinki

[TE Live video: W&L in Finland: Episode 7/ how to find & apply for the jobs, the Finnish way!](#), by TE services

[TE Live video: W&L in Finland: Episode 6/ How to find your skills for the jobs](#)

Blogs: [Finnish salary levels, part I: an overview](#), [Salaries in Finland, part II: a focused look](#), by Finnwards

[Learning Hub: Find a job module](#), by The Shortcut

Labour market, skills needs and career prospects in Finland

[Employment Bulletins: reports on the recent trends in unemployment, vacancies and labour market policy services](#), by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland

[Labour Force Barometer](#), outlook and labour needs of areas and sectors and occupation-specific labour market information, by TE offices

[Data on Placement after graduation](#), graduates from Finnish higher education institutions, by Education Statistics Finland

[Deck of skills cards by sector group](#), skills needs for 2035 in Finland (page in Finnish but scroll down to the title Yhteiset osaamis- ja koulutustarvekortit for the pdf in English), by The National Forum for Skills Anticipation

[Technology Industries Finland Skills Pulse survey \(2021\)](#), page in Finnish but see selected materials in English or with English subtitles, by Technology Industries Finland

Mentoring programmes

[EntryPoint mentoring](#), by City of Espoo

[Suomen mentorit mentoring](#), by Suomen mentorit ry

[FIKA mentoring programme](#), by Luckan Integration

[Think Career mentoring](#), by Think Africa

[Auroras mentoring for women](#), by The Finnish Federation of Graduate Women

[Womento mentoring for women](#), by the Family Federation of Finland

Courses on career planning

[Design a meaningful career](#), by Aalto university, free of charge

[Future of work](#), by Aalto university, free of charge

Organisations regularly organising events, workshops, hackathons etc. for internationals

[The Shortcut](#): support for job search and entrepreneurship

[Startup Refugees](#): support for job search and entrepreneurship

[International Working Women of Finland](#): support for job search and career building

[MONIKA Multicultural Women's Association](#): group activities, mentoring, guidance and advice, integration support

[Helsinki YMCA - Toiminnan Avulla Työelämään \(TAT\)](#): social programme, language cafés and job search guidance

[Talent Hub Espoo](#): TalentMatch recruitment events, TalentMatch Company Speed Dating events

[City of Vantaa/Talent Vantaa](#): Design sprints and hackathons

[International House Helsinki](#): newcomers' info sessions, insights to settling into Finland
[Luckan Integration](#): events, mentoring, guidance; specialised in integration in Swedish
Follow also hashtags #finlandworks and #talentboost

Entrepreneurship

Guidance and advice

[Business Helsinki: events and advice](#), by the City of Helsinki
[Business Espoo services for \(new\) entrepreneurs](#), by the City of Espoo
[YritysVantaa services for \(new\) entrepreneurs](#), by the City of Vantaa
[Startup softlanding services](#), by Business Helsinki
[Softlanding services](#), by Helsinki Partners
[Landing services](#), by the City of Espoo
[Softlanding services](#), by the City of Vantaa
[Starting up](#), a free, open access online course by Aalto Ventures program
[Entrepreneurship course](#), by Startup Refugees

Networks and encounters

[Maria 01](#), an entrepreneurial community and selection-based campus for tech-teams
[Finnish Startup Community](#), a membership-based association also lobbying for startups
[Slush](#), the worlds leading startup event with lots of side events, organised every year in November, not-for-profit
[Business Finland services, support, programs and networks](#) for startup entrepreneurs
[Startup Sauna](#), a co-working space at the Aalto University campus in Otaniemi, Espoo
[Helsinki Think Company co-working space](#)

Other support for entrepreneurship

[Startup Refugees Business Programme and events](#), by Startup Refugees

[Learning Hub: Run your own business in Finland module](#), by The Shortcut

[Establish your business](#) website, by Business Finland

Incubators and innovation hubs: [Helsinki Think Company](#), [University of Helsinki campus incubators](#)

[Residence permit for startup entrepreneurs](#)

[Start-up grant](#), support for new entrepreneurs

Life in Helsinki and Finland

Information sources on living in the region and Finland

[InfoFinland](#): your guide for living in Finland, in twelve languages, by the City of Helsinki

[Welcome Helsinki](#): a website for newcomers by the City of Helsinki

[Hello Espoo](#): a website and events for newcomers by the City of Espoo

[Vantaa for Immigrants](#): a website with information on key services, by the City of Vantaa

[MyHelsinki](#): your local guide to Helsinki with tips on exploring the Helsinki region, by the City of Helsinki

[This is Finland](#): things you should and shouldn't know with tips and information on different aspects of life in Finland, by Visit Finland

[Finnwards blog](#) on working and living in Finland, by Finnwards

Leisure

[Leisure](#), by InfoFinland

[Cycling routes and route suggestions for exploring Helsinki](#), by the City of Helsinki

[Freetime activities in Helsinki](#), by the City of Helsinki

[Museum Card](#), access to 360 Finnish museums

[Library services \(Helmet\)](#): books, events, groups, equipment, activities for children

[Helsinki Institute of Adult Education](#): courses on languages, food, sports, crafts etc.

[Helsinki Finnish Adult Education Centre](#): courses on languages, food, sports, crafts etc.

[Vantaa Adult Education Centre](#): courses on languages, food, sports, crafts etc.

[Espoo Adult Education Centre](#): courses on languages, food, sports, crafts etc.

Health and wellbeing

National emergency number: 112

[Health services in Finland](#), by InfoFinland

[24/7 telephone health service Helsinki](#), by the City of Helsinki

[HUS Emergency help line](#), by the medical district of the Helsinki-Uusimaa region HUS

[International situations / Moving to Finland](#), by Kela the Social Insurance Institution of Finland

[Social security in Finland](#), by Kela the Social Insurance Institution of Finland

[Health services in Helsinki](#), by the City of Helsinki

[Health services in Espoo](#), by the City of Espoo

[Health services in Vantaa](#), by the City of Vantaa / the Wellbeing services county of Vantaa and Kerava

[Poison Information Center](#), by the medical district of the Helsinki-Uusimaa region HUS

[Mental Crisis helpline](#), by MIELI Mental Health Finland

[Women's Line](#) for girls and women who have experienced violence or abuse or are close to them, by the association Naisten Linja Suomessa ry

[MONIKA Crisis Center and Shelter Monika](#), by MONIKA – Multicultural Women's Association

Family life

Networks and peer support for spouses

[Spouse program](#), by the City of Helsinki

[HEI LIFE Spouse Network](#), by Aalto University, University of Helsinki, Hanken School of Economics, University of the Arts and the Technical Research Centre of Finland (VTT)

City and state services for families

[Kela for families](#): social benefits in Finland, by Kela the Social Insurance Institution of Finland

[Social services for families with children](#), by Lastensuojelu.info

[City of Helsinki services](#), e.g. playgrounds, early childhood education, schools

[City of Espoo services](#), e.g. playgrounds, early childhood education, schools

[City of Vantaa services](#), e.g. early childhood education, schools

[Ohjaamo One-Stop Guidance Centers](#) for youth (under 30 years old)

Information and support for childcare and schooling

[Daycare and education guidance](#), by International House Helsinki

[Guide to early childhood education and daycare](#), by International House Helsinki

[Guide: Starting School in Helsinki](#), by International House Helsinki

[MLL short term child care service, by the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare](#)

Useful organisations for families

[Familia ry](#): expert and advocate organisation for intercultural families, with activities, training, peer support etc.

[The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare](#): advocacy, tips for parents, short term child care, volunteering, friendship / peer support programme for immigrant mothers

[Rainbow Families in Finland](#): counselling and support, groups and events

[Finnish Multiple Births Association](#): peer support, advice

Information related to families and family life in Finland

[Families](#), by InfoFinland

[Pets and domestic animals](#), by the City of Helsinki



Photo: Marek Sabogal, N2 Albiino / Helsinki Partners

Appendix 7

How to welcome and support an international colleague in the team

Unlike perhaps most guides of this kind, these instructions are meant for the team members of an international employee. What is also emphasized by this is that all employees play an important role of creating a welcoming environment and that the supervisor cannot do it alone.

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Who counts as an international?

A Friendly breakdown

An international can refer to a wide range of individuals, including immigrants, expatriates, refugees, exchange students, and temporary workers, among others, depending on the context in which it's used. The recently arrived ones, who have no prior experience of Finland often need the most advice and information, but also people (e.g., students) who have lived in Finland for many years do not necessarily know the unwritten rules of Finnish work life nor the basics of Finnish work culture.

Team building: getting to know each other

A natural first step of bringing a new employee to the work community is to introduce the colleagues to her/him and naturally, informing the community about the new employee. However, this is often neglected, perhaps with the idea that it would happen by itself when the new employee starts etc. Another obstacle here is the new culture of remote working, which makes traditional “show arounds” less effective. Introductions are nevertheless important. Even if the employee would not remember all the new colleagues because of the sheer number of them, the community might remember the individual employee more easily. So, let's make sure to open our hearts and doors, finding those small but meaningful ways to welcome new faces into our team, because every introduction is a step towards making someone feel at home, no matter where we're all logging in from.

The practicalities of our workplace: what to know

Coffee breaks, going to lunch and the special events and festivities of the year are important topics to mention already in the beginning of the employment. An international employee does not necessarily know the nature of different events, dress codes etc. It is of course not a bad idea to think about developing social events for the workplace in general. For a person living alone in a new country all such events might mean a lot for general wellbeing. For example, the slightly forgotten afterwork traditions could well be revived with a new employee joining the team. These kinds of events can also function as a chance for the international employee to practice the local languages, at least by listening to the conversations of others.

Our team's rulebook: the dos and don'ts at work

Cohesion and good spirit within the team can be increased when it is clear to everyone what kind of activity you are promoting, what kind of behaviour is expected from all employees, and what is not tolerated. This could be for example, that is important to promote anti-racist or anti-sexist activity, DEI actions, etc.

The university as a safe space: keeping our workplace welcoming for everyone

Psychological safety refers to an atmosphere where everyone can be oneself, and bring out differing opinions forward, without the fear of being humiliated or belittled. Everyone in the team is partly responsible for this atmosphere and how your colleagues experience the workplace. One can always show respect to a colleague, even though one would not agree with her/him. The Finnish working culture has been generally considered to include a low hierarchy, but on the other hand, the straightforwardness can seem blunt or even unfriendly. For a person coming from a different culture these things are difficult to see or interpret. Therefore, please keep an open mind, listen and allow your colleagues at the workplace to speak their minds and suggest things.

Meet your work-buddy: your special help with questions at start-out

The onboarding process falls under the supervisor's purview, yet it's beneficial to distribute specific tasks across various individuals for efficiency. Involvement often extends to colleagues from different departments or locations, enhancing the integration process. Additionally, assigning a peer as a consistent go-to resource, when others are unavailable or unable to provide necessary assistance, is invaluable. This approach is particularly supportive for international hires, ensuring guidance and connectivity especially with questions which fall between the cracks of the designated onboarding material, or remain unanswered for some other reason. The idea of the work-buddy is not to redistribute onboarding tasks to the work-buddy, but to ensure that the new employee always has someone to ask when they have questions. The work-buddy can also direct the new employee to the appropriate experts, facilitating a smoother and quicker assimilation of tacit or "silent" knowledge within the organization.

Teammates beyond the work-buddy

While a work-buddy focuses on more practical questions, other teammates can provide broader support for getting to know Finland, including themes like networking within and outside the organization. This could mean many topics from telling about the main actors in the field of research in Finland up to how the university works beyond the immediate borders of your unit. One can also talk about how Finnish society works in some relevant issue and even suggest reasons for it. No one is expected to be an all-knowing expert of such things, but from the perspective of the international newcomer, basically everyone knows many useful things. So, a low threshold on topics and a casual attitude are good starting points.

Talking the talk: picking up on our workplace's unique language

Every workplace has a variety of names, abbreviations and nicknames for work-related things, that mean nothing to an outsider. As these are difficult for any new employee, they might even not have a clear, well-known translation into English. Therefore, it is a good idea to make a list of these important concepts.

Regular check-ins: drop in and chat every now and then

In the beginning, make it a habit to check in with the international colleague to ask and discuss their adjustment to the workplace and to talk about any ongoing support they might need. Also just asking how they are doing every once and a while is valuable and creates an atmosphere of a welcoming work community.

Inclusion in decision-making processes

Involve the international colleague in team decisions and brainstorming sessions to value their perspective and encourage a sense of belonging. Take into consideration that because of the language and not knowing many people at the workplace they do not necessarily have all the same information you have. Make sure the international colleague receives that info in some way. Even explaining things quickly, on the spot, is better than no information at all.

Celebrating cultural diversity

Organize events or moments where different cultures within the team can be celebrated and shared, such as international potluck days or cultural presentation sessions. This not only helps the international colleague to feel valued but also enriches the team's cultural awareness. You can for example encourage the international colleague to use a team meeting or other common occasion of the team for this kind of activity.

Language matters: making communication comfortable for everyone

Especially if there is no prior experience of internationals in the team, it is a good idea to discuss the language practices within the team already before the international employee starts. Team members often have different relationships to using languages at work, not to mention different language skills. All must of course be taken into account. Kielibuusti has good practical tips for this action, especially the GUIDELINES FOR LANGUAGE AWARENESS AT THE UNIVERSITY is worth getting familiar with. In general, a facilitator of a discussion, be it a big or a small meeting, must ensure that everyone in the space has the opportunity to take part and receive the necessary information, e.g. by checking whether

everyone has understood or by summarizing the discussion. One can also often ask about the preferred language in advance. It is ok to interrupt, if this criterion is not met, and the team should also inform/remind, e.g., an outside speaker of the language situation within the team.

Language questions: supporting the learning of local languages

The team can also support an employee learning Finnish or Swedish by agreeing on the occasions (certain meetings, coffee breaks etc.), when Finnish can be spoken also with the international employee. One can also support learning with simple language phrases. Still, keep in mind the mental resources of the colleague, as learning a language at work can be very tiring. The emotions associated with learning a language and the opportunities to learn vary on a daily basis, even from hour to hour. The acquisition of language skills is a long-term process that must be given time and space. You should also recognize the power relations (e.g., supervisor, meeting/event organiser, teacher) associated with language use. For example, your position can make you responsible for choosing the language used. Make sure that your choices enable everyone to fully participate and understand. A commonly used way is to have the slides (also) in English, but to allow discussion in Finnish too.

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The document has been partially funded with the 'Supporting sustainable growth and vitality in the regions'-funding (AKKE), granted by the Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council.