

Honorary Members

Distinguished scientists and academics or patrons of science may be invited to join the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters as honorary members. The first honorary members were elected in 1910.

In 2022 the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters has elected three new honorary members: Professor Marjatta Hietala, Professor Bengt Holmström, and Academician Risto Nieminen.

MARJATTA HIETALA

Professor Marjatta Hietala is a pre-eminent Finnish historian. During her long career, she has been an exceptionally active international researcher and a tireless defender of science.

Having earned her doctorate at the University of Helsinki in 1976, Hietala first worked as an Assistant Professor at the University of Helsinki and as a researcher for the Academy of Finland, then continuing to the University of Joensuu in 1994,

where she worked as a Professor of General History. Hietala was a Professor of General History at the Tampere University in 1996–2011, serving as an Academy Professor for a five-year term during that time. She has also held numerous domestic and international positions.

Professor Hietala's research has focused on a versatile range of subjects, including urban history, intellectual history, and cultural history in particular. Hietala has led several extensive research projects and supervised numerous doctoral dissertations. Research projects led by her have focused on, among other things, the eugenics movement, memory of war, urban history, and the history of the diffusion of innovations. She has also contributed to the development of historical research methods and published several methodology guides.

In her international assignments, Professor Hietala has exported Finnish historical research to the world. For example, she served as the President of the International Committee of Historical Sciences as the



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first, and so far the only, woman to do so.

Professor Hietala has served in various demanding positions in science and education administration including the Academy of Finland, the Matriculation Examination Board, various committees and working groups, and numerous foundations.

Professor Hietala was invited to join the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters in 1997.

BENGT HOLMSTRÖM

Professor Bengt Holmström is a microeconomic theorist, whose theoretical research has a clear link with practical issues.

After receiving his bachelor's degree in mathematics and science from the University of Helsinki in 1972, Holmström transferred to Stanford University, where he earned his Ph.D. in economics in 1978. Holmström worked as a Professor of Economics first at Northwestern University and then Yale University as well as Hanken School of Economics. Since 1994, Holmström has worked as Paul A. Samuelson Professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, heading the department in 2003–2006, as well as at the Sloan School of Management.

In his research, Bengt Holmström has focused particularly on the construction of contracts in the presence of information

asymmetry and the application of contract theory in the analysis of companies and organizations. His work has centered on corporate incentivization systems, such as performance-related pay, and expanded the research to include situations where employees have multiple simultaneous tasks – i.e. multitasking – and companies use incentives other than financial instruments as well. Holmström has also examined financial systems, including the supply and demand of liquidity and their connection to financial crises.

For his extensive achievements as a researcher, Bengt Holmström has received several honorary doctorates. He has also been awarded various economic and financial prizes. In 2016, Holmström became the first Finnish recipient of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences together with Oliver Hart. The Prize was awarded for their contributions to contract theory.

In addition to his academic career, Holmström has served in various positions in Finnish companies and organizations. Holmström has contributed actively to economic policy debate in Finland and taken part in several expert groups that issue recommendations to policymakers.

Holmström has been invited to join the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Econometric Society, and the American Finance Association. He is also a foreign member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and the Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters. Holmström was elected as external member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters in 2007.

RISTO NIEMINEN

Academician Risto Nieminen is considered a pioneer and trailblazer in the application of nanoscience and materials physics within scientific research.

Nieminen is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the Department of Applied Physics at Aalto University. In 2010, Nieminen was appointed as the first Aalto Distinguished Professor of Aalto University. He has also served as the Dean of the School of Science of Aalto University and as a member of the Aalto Management Team.

Nieminen became a Doctor of Technology in 1975, earning his doctorate at the Helsinki University of Technology. He served as an Academy Professor in 1997–

2008. Nieminen was the head of the Centre of Excellence in Computational Nanoscience (COMP) in 2000–2013, and he was also part of the team that founded the unit.

Risto Nieminen has specialized in computational methods of materials physics, including the modeling of materials in particular, computer simulations, and high performance computing methods, in which fields he has published more than 500 scientific papers.

Nieminen has held numerous scientific positions in major universities and research centers both domestically and internationally, particularly the Helsinki University of Technology and later Aalto University, the Finnish IT center for science and the Nordic Institute for Theoretical Physics in Denmark and Sweden, Cornell University in the United States, and Cambridge University in England. At the age of 30, Nieminen became the youngest Assistant Professor appointed at the University of Jyväskylä.

In 2013, Nieminen received an honorary prize from the Jenny and Antti Wihuri

Foundation as an acknowledgement for his remarkable merits in scientific research and contributions to Finnish science. He was also named Professor of the Year in 2003 by the Finnish Union of University Professors as a versatile representative of his profession, a leading international researcher and teacher, and an advocate for science policy. Throughout his career, Nieminen has emphasized the importance of communication on science.

Professor Nieminen received the honorary title of Academician of Science in 2014. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) as an International Member in 2018.

The Finnish Academy of Science and Letters elected Risto Nieminen in 1984. Nieminen served one term as the President of the Board of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters in 2018–2019. In 2019–2021, he served as the Chief Executive Director of Sofi – Science Advice Initiative of Finland, a joint venture of the four Finnish science academies that was funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture.