

# How to find *the right researcher*

## 1. Form a clear understanding of the knowledge need

The first step in finding the right expert is to have a good understanding of what kind of knowledge is needed and in what form.

**You can use the following questions to help you:**

1.

What in specific terms is the nature of the knowledge need?

2.

What kind of questions need to be answered?

3.

What academic disciplines are related to these issues and questions?

## 2. Identify the right pool of experts

Identifying the most relevant academic disciplines and perspectives in terms of the knowledge request is a key first step in finding the right researchers.

**To do this map:**

- In which research institutes and universities is the topic researched at?
- Are there any existing research projects or groups studying the topic?
- What kind of existing research and publications exist on the topic, and who have written those?

The expertise of researchers is needed more and more to understand and solve complex societal challenges. However, finding the correct researcher for a knowledge need may feel tricky.

This guidance aims to help in identifying suitable researchers. It is intended to serve particularly knowledge brokers, who are compiling knowledge synthesis or organising science-policy dialogues.

Utilise a snowball method and researchers' own networks: Find a key researcher and request them to name other relevant researchers.

Universities and research institutes maintain lists of researchers on their websites. These can also include listings based on studied topics. In addition, communication experts and media services at universities and research institutes can advise you on the best experts in their organisations.



### 3. Evaluate and select experts

Once a pool of experts has been identified, it is time to select the most suitable researchers. It is a good idea to take into account any qualities or skills required of the researcher. The researcher's affiliations should also be assessed. You can use the following questions to help you:

**What characteristics are desirable? For example, are you looking for a young researcher or an experienced professor?**

**What kind of role do you want the researcher to take? For example, do you want the researcher to summarise research knowledge or to provide recommendations?**

**What other skills (e.g. statistical methods), experience or skills (e.g. presentation skills) should the selected researcher have?**

**What is the nature of the knowledge need, is it an expert consultation, writing a knowledge synthesis, or are you looking for a speaker, for example for media or a public event?**

**What kind of affiliations should/should not the researcher have?**

**Use the following sources to find suitable experts:**

1. Research.fi search function:  
<https://research.fi/en/>
2. Research organisations' thematic lists of experts for the media:  
<https://www.aalto.fi/fi/asiantuntijat-medialle>
3. Expert search functions of research institutes:  
<https://www.luke.fi/en/contact-information>
4. Programme Directors of the Strategic Research Council's Programmes:  
<https://ratkaisujatieteesta.fi/ohjelmat/>

