

OTHER ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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1. OTHER ACADEMIC POSITIONS AT AALTO UNIVERSITY

1.1. DOCUMENT SCOPE

This document outlines the use of academic positions other than tenure track and lecturer career systems at Aalto University. Those career systems are described in separate documents.

Academic positions at Aalto University are represented in the following figure:

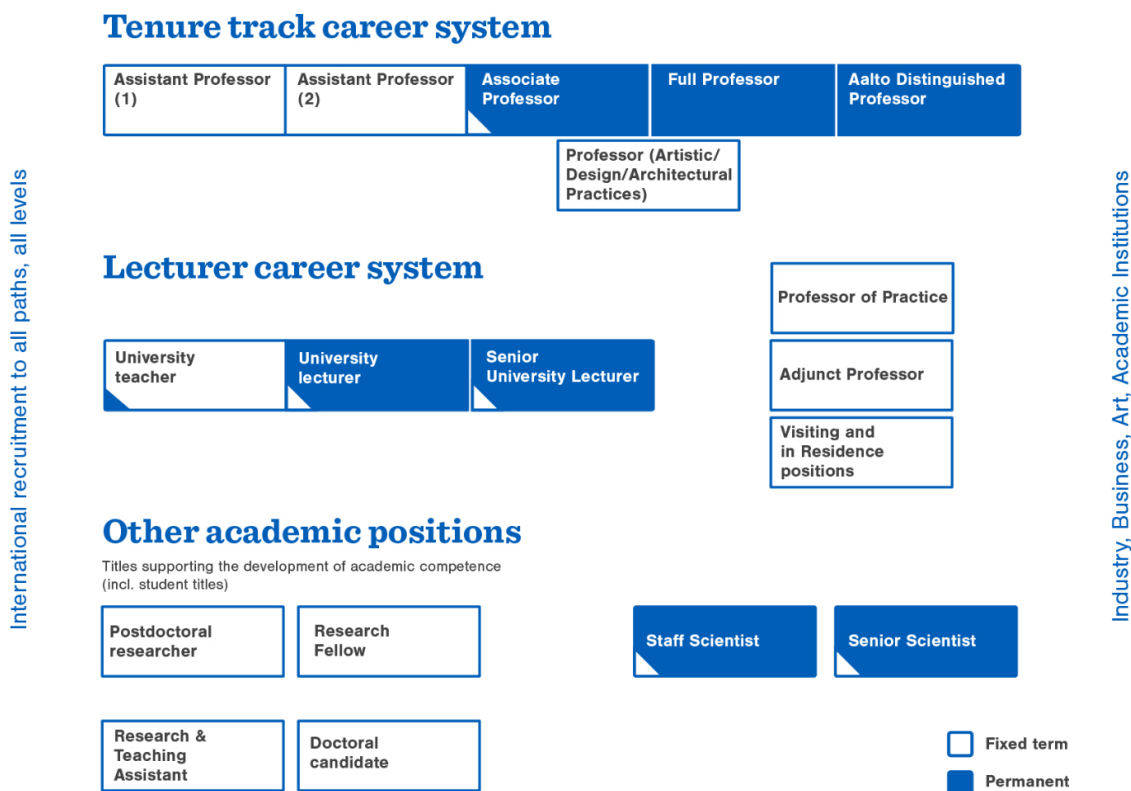


Figure 1. Academic career systems at Aalto University.

In addition, this document outlines the use of visiting faculty titles and the positions in Residence.

The general principles, key aspects of contracts and the recruiting processes for other academic positions – Professor (Artistic/Design/Architectural Practices), Professor of Practice, Postdoctoral Researcher, Staff Scientist and Senior Staff Scientist, Research Fellow, Adjunct Professor, and visiting and student positions – are described here. Schools and departments are responsible for defining the exact evaluation criteria for other academic positions in line with Aalto’s overall policy and on the basis of the factors considered in the recruitment and promotion reviews in the Aalto tenure track.

1.2. PURPOSE OF USING OTHER ACADEMIC POSITIONS

The purpose behind using other academic positions is that they enable:

- departments, schools and the university to employ individuals temporarily or permanently for special purposes on various bases (full-time, part-time, salaried and non-salaried); and
- the harmonization of academic titles used at Aalto University and related practices and expectations.

1.3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF OTHER ACADEMIC POSITIONS AT AALTO UNIVERSITY

A global, competitive recruiting approach

Recruiting for other academic positions is conducted from a global employee pool. Aalto University aims to extensively and actively use current academic and professional networks and academic media advertising, and to promote the university globally. Recruiting for other academic positions is conducted through a competitive recruiting process, unless otherwise specifically decided by the school's Dean or the President of the university.

The assurance of a simple, fair and transparent processes as possible

Aalto University pays special attention to the impartial nature of recruiting, evaluations and promotions. This principle relies in using objective evaluation criteria. Aalto also applies the "one level above" approach to all decisions, that is, the closest superior never makes the final decision in recruitments, re-appointments or promotions. The factors considered in the recruitment and promotion reviews in the Aalto tenure track are applied in evaluations in so far as they are considered suitable to that position's work duties.

Employment contract related matters

Fixed-term employment contracts are used for a justified reason in accordance with the employment contract law. In a case of fixed-term contracts, the appointment shall terminate upon expiration of the stated period without a notification of nonrenewal.

The fixed-term periods for positions that support the development of academic competences (doctoral candidate, postdoctoral researcher, research fellow) may be extended for parental or other types of statutory leaves. In these cases, the person holding the position needs to inform the Head of Department of the start date and estimated duration of the leave well in advance of the leave (as advised by regulations). The minimum length of absence for extending the period is three months.

Equal opportunities for all

Aalto University encourages diverse personnel. Accordingly, Aalto University is committed to being an equal opportunity employer such that the deciding factors in personnel selection are qualifications, competence and the overall suitability for the position.

1.4. GENERAL RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The following general recruiting process is followed in all Aalto University academic career structures except in the tenure track system and in the Professor (Artistic/Design/Architectural Practices) positions.

The competitive recruiting process consists of three phases: 1. the proposal for recruitment, 2. the review of candidates, and 3. the decision. Aalto University HR Services (HRS) provides support and service during each of these phases.

An Aalto University unit initiates the competitive recruiting process based on its strategic needs. The recruiting proposal is approved at the school level following the "one level above" principle. An HR representative assists in the process, for instance, in determining the salary level and other terms of employment.

In the next phase, unit representatives review the candidates with the assistance of an HR representative. After a careful pre-screening, the most promising candidates (2-5 candidates) that fulfill the criteria of the applicable position are invited for an interview. If necessary, the teaching competence of candidates is evaluated. Based on the review, the head of the hiring unit makes the recruiting proposal. The final recruitment decision is made according to the “one level above” principle based on the decision-making policies at Aalto University.

1.4.1. INVITATIONAL RECRUITING PROCESS

Recruiting by invitation is possible in special cases (most commonly in the recruitment of postdoctoral researchers) if the Dean approves the use of invitational recruitment. The President approves the use of invitational recruitment in the case of Professor (Artistic/Design/Architectural Practices) (see section 2. “Professor (Artistic/Design/Architectural Practices),”).

Recruiting by invitation follows the same procedure as the competitive recruiting process with the following exceptions:

- The use of recruiting by invitation requires that the proposed candidate is expected to clearly fulfill the requirements of the position.
- The diversity of the academic faculty must be considered when the use of recruiting by invitation is proposed.
- The decision about the use of the recruiting by invitation is made according to the “one level above” principle based on the decision-making policies of Aalto University.

The recruitment processes and decision-making entitlements are described in more detail in connection with each academic position in this document. The implementation of the recruitment processes should follow the general guidelines outlined here.

2. PROFESSOR (ARTISTIC/DESIGN/ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICES)

The titles Professor (Artistic Practices), Professor (Design Practices) and Professor (Architectural Practices) provide departments with the possibility to hire highly qualified professionals to

- open new areas of teaching and research and/or artistic work, and
- re-evaluate and dynamically develop a field.

The positions are intended for the fields of art, design and architecture. The President decides on the allocation of the position. When a professor in such a position leaves, the position remains within the school, but the field must always be reconfirmed by the President (a redefinition is possible).

2.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POSITION AND RECRUITING PROCESS

A Professor (Artistic/Design/Architectural Practices) is considered a professor-level position with university-level requirements and external evaluation.

A doctoral degree or comparable artistic qualifications and significant expertise in teaching and/or research/artistic and professional work are required for obtaining such a position. Furthermore, a commitment to develop the field through research and/or artistic and professional work and teaching activities is necessary.

The recruiting process follows the same procedures used in either competitive recruiting or recruiting by invitation to the tenure track with the following exceptions: the Dean makes the final decision on the recruitment and the contract is for a fixed term (without tenure). As in the tenure track procedure, the President decides whether it is appropriate to recruit by invitation. The diversity of the professor-level faculty must be considered when recruiting by invitation is proposed. The Dean is responsible for giving specific instructions on the requirements for the position. See the tenure track policies and procedures document for more detailed information on the recruitment procedures.

The President may invite an exceptionally merited candidate to the honorary title of Aalto Distinguished Professor.

2.2. CONTRACT, DUTIES AND EVALUATION

Professor (Artistic/Design/Architectural Practice) contracts at Aalto University are granted in most cases for a term of three to five years.

Work responsibilities in research and/or artistic and professional work, teaching, and service (i.e., activity in the scientific community, academic leadership and societal interaction) are individually agreed with each candidate.

The factors considered in the recruitment and promotion reviews in the Aalto tenure track are used in applicable parts. The evaluation is based on the comprehensive assessment of the candidate in each main dimension of the work profile (research and/or artistic and professional work, teaching, and service) in accordance with the weight of the dimensions in the candidate's work profile. See the tenure track policies and procedures document for more detailed information.

3. PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE

The Professor of Practice -position provides an opportunity to engage qualified, business or public sector leaders and experts with academic background to Aalto University for special purposes.

The title acts as a mechanism through which practical expertise and societal knowledge transfers to the university community. The position is allocated by the school and the Dean decides on the position.

3.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POSITION AND RECRUITING PROCESS

The Dean is responsible for specifying the requirements and the recruitment process for Professor of Practice positions in each Aalto School.

3.2. CONTRACT, DUTIES AND EVALUATION

Work responsibilities in research and/or artistic and professional work, teaching, and service (i.e., activity in the scientific community, academic leadership and societal interaction) are individually agreed with each candidate, however, the emphasis is on the teaching duties.

The Professor of Practice position is a fixed-term (full-time or part-time) position, for which contracts are mostly made for three to five years.

4. POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

The title “Postdoctoral Researcher” provides an opportunity to highly qualified, recent doctoral graduates to mature as researchers.

4.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POSITION AND RECRUITING PROCESS

Qualified candidates for postdoctoral positions hold a doctoral degree in the field relevant to the position. Successful candidates also demonstrate evidence of high quality research work. Special attention is paid to the duration (efficiency) of doctoral studies and the international experience of the candidate. Further, applicants are normally expected to be at the early stages of their academic career (0-5 years after receiving the doctoral degree, excluding possible parental leaves and similar issues) and to show potential of reaching the next level of their academic career within the contract term. A research plan covering the postdoctoral period is required.

The recruiting process follows the competitive recruiting process described in section 1 of this document. If considered appropriate, the department may use a nomination committee assigned by the Dean, which reviews the candidates and makes a proposal on recruit(s). The final recruiting decision is made according to the “one level above” principle based on the decision-making policies of Aalto University.

Recruiting by invitation follows the same procedure as the competitive recruiting process with the exceptions described in section 1.4.

4.2. CONTRACT, DUTIES AND EVALUATION

Postdoctoral Researcher contracts at Aalto University are granted for a term of one to five years depending on the department-, school- and university-level strategy and available funding.

Postdoctoral positions are designed to enable outstanding early career researchers to strengthen their research and teaching experience, which improves their prospects for obtaining a tenure-track position or otherwise advance their academic career. Therefore, the majority of work time is allocated for research and/or artistic work. The general work time allocation follows the general university level recommendations for Assistant Professors (1st term) on the Aalto University tenure track. However, flexibility is allowed, meaning that teaching and service requirements may be negotiated separately with each Postdoctoral Researcher.

Also, the evaluation criteria follow the university-level evaluation criteria set for Assistant Professors (1st term). The factors considered in the recruitment and promotion reviews in the Aalto tenure track are used in applicable parts since the appointment is temporary. The evaluation is based on the comprehensive assessment of a candidate in each main dimension (research and/or artistic and professional work, teaching and service) based on its weight in the work profile.

A postdoctoral research period serves as a phase in the career when competencies are developed and merits are gained for the advancement of the academic career. With this in mind, Aalto University aims to provide Postdoctoral Researchers competence development support similar to that offered for Assistant Professors (1st term) on the Aalto University tenure track.

5. STAFF SCIENTIST AND SENIOR SCIENTIST

Staff Scientist and Senior Scientist are positions for academics focusing on specialized tasks in research and/or artistic work. These positions support the work of tenure track and lecturer career systems personnel, Professors of Practice, and Postdoctoral Researchers that form the main body of the research and teaching personnel of Aalto University's schools and departments. Staff Scientists and Senior Scientists contribute to the research agenda of the main research and teaching personnel. Typically these positions are connected to the use and development of research infrastructures and complex research equipment or support the main academic faculty through their specialist expertise in methodology or other areas.

5.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POSITION AND RECRUITING PROCESS

Qualified candidates for Staff Scientist and Senior Scientist positions hold a doctoral degree (or comparable artistic qualifications) in the field relevant for the position, possess special expertise in research and/or an artistic field, and demonstrate evidence of successful research and/or artistic work. In addition to these, considerable academic merits are required for Senior Scientist positions. If the position is based on artistic qualifications, the titles used are Staff Designer/Artist/Architect and Senior Designer/Artist/Architect.

The recruiting process follows the competitive recruiting process described in section 1.4 of this document. If considered appropriate, the department may use a nomination committee assigned by the Dean, which reviews the candidates and makes a proposal on recruitment. The Dean makes the final recruiting decision.

Recruiting by invitation follows the same procedure as the competitive recruiting process with the exceptions described in section 1.4.

5.2. CONTRACT, DUTIES AND EVALUATION

Staff Scientist and Senior Scientist contracts are made for either fixed terms or permanently. Fixed-term contracts are made for one to five years and are renewable once in special cases, depending on the strategic needs of the department or unit and funding.

The personal work profile is set in accordance with the strategic needs of the school and the hiring unit. This also includes both teaching and service tasks as appropriate.

The factors considered in the recruitment and promotion reviews in the Aalto tenure track are used in applicable parts for these positions. The evaluation is based on the comprehensive assessment of the candidate in each main dimension (research and/or artistic and professional work, teaching and service) based on its weight in the work profile. (See the tenure track policies and procedures document for more detailed information.)

6. RESEARCH FELLOW

The title of “Research Fellow” may be used for qualified researchers who are developing further academic competence to advance their academic career and who already have significant postdoctoral research experience.

6.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POSITION AND RECRUITING PROCESS

Qualified candidates for Research Fellow positions hold a doctoral degree in the field relevant to the position, and they have already acted as postdoctoral researchers mainly at another university. They also have developed their research and teaching competence, and the academic community has recognized their scholarly contributions. In principle, the Research Fellow position is not a continuation of the postdoctoral research period for Aalto Postdoctoral Researchers.

The recruiting process follows the competitive recruiting process described in section 1.4 of this document. Open competitive recruiting for Research Fellow positions is highly recommended. If considered appropriate, the department may use a nomination committee assigned by the Dean, which reviews the candidates and makes a proposal on recruitment. The Dean makes the final recruiting decision.

Recruiting by invitation follows the same procedure as the competitive recruiting process with the exceptions described in section 1.4.

6.2. CONTRACT, DUTIES AND EVALUATION

Research Fellow contracts are made for a fixed term of one to five years. A fixed-term contract as a Research Fellow is not renewable. The candidate should already plan their future academic career after the Research Fellow period when the appointment as Research Fellow is agreed.

The work profile for Research Fellow is set in accordance with the strategic needs of the school and the hiring unit. This also includes both teaching and service tasks as appropriate.

The factors considered in the recruitment and promotion reviews in the Aalto tenure track are used in applicable parts for these positions. The evaluation is based on the comprehensive assessment of the candidate in each main dimension (research and/or artistic and professional work, teaching and service) based on its weight in the work profile. (See the tenure track policies and procedures document for more detailed information.)

7. ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

The title of “Adjunct Professor” is a contract-based, fixed-term appointment (maximum of five years). The position is intended for persons external to Aalto University who are employed on a part-time basis and whose qualifications have been assessed against the factors considered in the recruitment and promotion reviews in the Aalto tenure track. The Adjunct Professor position allows highly qualified researchers to engage in teaching.

The title of Adjunct Professor is part of the other academic positions of Aalto University. It is distinct from the honorary title of Docent (*dosentti* in Finnish). The policies and procedures concerning the title of Docent are described separately.

7.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE POSITION AND RECRUITING PROCESS

The requirements for Adjunct Professor follow the criteria set for Associate Professors on the Aalto University tenure track. The minimum requirements for the title of Adjunct Professor are: 1. excellence in research and/or artistic work and high quality teaching, or 2. excellence in teaching and high quality research and/or artistic work. It is recommended that those working as Adjunct Professors should have a professional profile supporting the strategic focus areas of Aalto University and its schools. Applicants are externally evaluated based on the tenure track evaluation criteria set for at least the Associate Professor level. (See the tenure track policies and procedures document for more detailed information.)

The title of Adjunct Professor is granted on the basis of invitation. The process of appointment by invitation applied to Adjunct Professors is a simplified version of that used for tenure track professors. The Dean makes the final appointment decision based on the proposal by the Head of Department. The process proceeds as follows.

Step 1

The Head of Department proposes to the Dean that a recruitment process is to be started. The proposal includes:

- grounds for appointment by invitation,
- field of the professorship,
- merits of the person to be invited,
- other matters, and
- composition of a departmental committee (2-3 professors of the department).

Step 2

The Dean approves the use of appointment by invitation and the field of the professorship for the person to be invited to the position of Adjunct Professor.

Step 3

The departmental committee, appointed by the Dean, launches the review process:

- the departmental committee collects the necessary material;
- the departmental committee asks for expert reviews (at least 2 experts); and
- the candidate visits the university, their teaching competence is verified and they are interviewed by the departmental committee.

Step 4

On the basis of the evaluation of the candidate’s merits and competence, the departmental committee puts forward a proposal to the Dean for inviting the person to an Adjunct Professor position.

Step 5

The Dean makes the recruitment decision after consulting the School Tenure Track Committee.

7.2. CONTRACT, DUTIES AND EVALUATION

The appointments for Adjunct Professors may be with or without pay and shall be made for a stated period of time not exceeding five years. If the contract is without pay, Adjunct Professors are paid separately based on their contribution to the department, school or Aalto University as a whole. The percentage of working time allocated to Aalto University duties is agreed with the person appointed as Adjunct Professor. The typical percentage of working time allocated to Aalto University duties is, for example, 20%.

Reappointment for an Adjunct Professor is possible if it is still considered beneficial for the department, school or the university. The decision is made after careful judgment of the person's results during the last Adjunct Professor term.

An individual with the Adjunct Professor title shall be given those privileges commensurate with the individual's contributions to the department, school or Aalto University as a whole as determined by the Dean.

Evaluation criteria for appointments with the title of Adjunct Professor correspond to the criteria set for at least the Associate Professor level in the Aalto University tenure track. (See the tenure track policies and procedures document for more detailed information.)

8. VISITING PROFESSOR AND OTHER VISITING POSITIONS

As a general rule, individuals holding a professor position at their home institutions are given the title of Visiting Professor, visiting doctoral candidates at Aalto University the title of Visiting Doctoral Candidate, and other visiting teachers, researchers and/or artists the title of Visiting Scholar or Visiting Artist. Exceptionally, the title "Visiting Professor" may also be given to a recognized scholar who has previously held the post of professor at another university or institute.

Nominations for visiting positions are accepted according to the "one level above" principle and based on the decision-making policies of Aalto University, with the exception of Visiting Professor, in which case the Dean makes the final decision.

8.1. CONTRACT AND DUTIES

The contracts for visiting positions may be with or without pay and shall be for a stated period of time. Renewals of contracts for visiting positions are possible.

Funding for a Visiting Professorship is agreed in each separate case and accepted by the Dean. As a general rule, Visiting Professors are paid separately based on their contribution to the department, school or Aalto University as a whole. Visiting Professors shall be given other privileges commensurate with the individual's contributions. Visiting Professors may be paid travel expenses and accommodation in accordance with the rules of Aalto University. Each Visiting Professor is provided with office support.

9. POSITIONS IN RESIDENCE

The position in Residence may be given to a distinguished senior executive, an academic leader, or a distinguished expert or artist who has been invited to Aalto University for a specified purpose. These purposes include building new education modules, developing business relationships, or comparable qualified developing of scientific or artistic collaboration. The Residence position is fixed term depending on available, mainly external, funding.

The position may be conferred upon an individual with significant merits.

Nominations are accepted by the Dean based on the proposal by the Head of Department or unit.

9.1. CONTRACT AND DUTIES

The position shall be given only for a fixed period of time, not exceeding three years. The position is typically half-time, giving the person an opportunity to practice other activities. Besides salary, the person can be provided with support for travelling and other expenses.

10. STUDENT POSITIONS

Student positions are in use for students with employment contracts at Aalto University.

10.1. DOCTORAL CANDIDATE

Students who are studying for a doctoral degree at Aalto University are called Doctoral Candidates. Their main duty is to complete the doctoral degree. Participation in research projects and teaching must support completion of the doctoral degree.

10.2. RESEARCH ASSISTANT AND TEACHING ASSISTANT

A Research Assistant or Teaching Assistant is a person appointed to assist a faculty member in research or courses, respectively. Research Assistants and Teaching Assistants are mainly Master's-level students.