



## RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

For participants in  
the innovation  
competition



# The Future of Care Work: Alleviating the care crisis by exploring innovation, CAREFUTURE

We would like to invite you to participate in the Huomisen hoivatyö (Care Work of Tomorrow) innovation competition and our project, in which we investigate the causes of the care crisis and look for new solutions. We support and investigate the top innovations in the competition and their dissemination. Together, we create a new culture of renewal and competence so that future care work remains attractive and ethically sustainable.

The aim of the Huomisen hoivatyö (Care Work of Tomorrow) innovation competition of the Future of Care Work project is to research and promote innovation initiated by citizens, employees, organizational management and social influencers. An innovation is a process, technology or practice that is new or different within its own operational environment and **has already been piloted or launched** in a local setting. Innovation is not just an idea. We are looking for innovations that can create high-quality care for the future and alleviate the caregiver shortage, thereby alleviating the care crisis in our society. By participating in the national innovation competition, you are also participating in our research. Participation in the research and the innovation competition is voluntary. This information is intended for all candidates participating in the innovation competition.

## What is the innovation competition about?

The innovation competition seeks proposals for care directed at children, adults or the elderly. By care work, we mean professional care and nursing as well as care provided by loved ones. We will launch the

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innovation competition in three different phases and competition categories during spring 2026. By competition categories we mean:

1. **Employee-driven innovation:** New processes, working methods or practices in an organization and daily work that have been initiated by employees. Innovations can also arise through interaction with clients or other stakeholders.
2. **Citizen-driven innovation:** A new operating method or solution initiated by citizens that produces positive social effects or new types of business. For example, organizations and societal companies in the field of care can participate in this category.
3. **Technology-, policy- and organization-driven innovation:** Organizational, structural and technological solutions or practices initiated by organizational management. Particularly solutions using artificial intelligence that significantly change care and nursing fall into this category. The competition category also includes new political initiatives in the field of care related to the reorganisation of unpaid and paid care work. New management methods that support employee- and citizen-driven innovation also belong in this category.

Panels have been assembled to evaluate the proposals in each competition category. The members of the panels are social operators and researchers. All categories are also assessed by the so-called Future of Care Work panel, consisting of nursing students. The panels will select the best candidates, about 20 in total. By participating in the evaluations, the members of the panels agree that the results of the evaluation work and the evaluations they make will be used as research material.

Communication support will be organized for the selected candidates to present their proposals, and they will be invited to an innovation announcement event. Among the selected 20 or so candidates, the panels will select 5 to 10 winners, who will be announced at the aforementioned event. The winners of the innovation competition will become case studies in our project. As a reward, we offer innovations the opportunity to access researched knowledge about their operations, joint development arenas and support for dissemination during the project until 2031.

The project will develop more comprehensive innovation competence and culture in the field of care work and nursing, in which employees' and citizens' initiatives gain more visibility. The project assesses the impacts of policy- and technology-driven innovations and promotes the dissemination of local innovations and the interaction between them. The results are reported as policy briefs, in trade journals, scientific publications and as an edited book.

## What does it mean to participate in the innovation competition?

You can sign up for the innovation competition by filling out the candidate form. The best candidates selected through the innovation competition will be included in the Future of Care Work project as case studies. The information collected about all participants in the innovation competition, interviews with the selected candidates, social media content related to the competition, for which the candidates give their separate permission, and the announcement events of the innovation competition will be stored as research material and used in scientific research analyses during the project. The information is collected from the participants who fill out the candidate form. Those who fill in the candidate form must read the text in this bulletin and the privacy policy of the innovation competition. By filling in the form, the candidate gives their consent to participate in the scientific research. Participants are separately asked for their written consent for interviews conducted during the competition. Later, the winners of the competition, who are asked to be the subjects of case studies, will be asked for written consent to participate in the study. In addition, a research permit is requested from the organization that serves as the operating environment. The processing of personal data in the research is based on public interest.

## What information will be collected?

You can enter your innovation in one of the competition categories by filling out the candidate form. When signing up, we collect the following information: the name of the innovation, a description of the content of the innovation, where and how the innovation was tested, the names of the people involved in the development, contact details (email address and telephone number) of the contact person and descriptions related to the assessment criteria, such as the impact of innovation on the ethics, productivity, efficiency or appreciation of care work. Candidates personally review all the information related to research and communications concerning the innovation before it is published. Intellectual property rights remain with the innovators at all stages of the research.

In the interviews (voice recording), we collect the ideas of the top 20 candidates in each category about the problem or need that the innovation solves, experiences in the development and use of the innovation, the importance of communication and views on the future development of the innovation. The interviews will take place after the evaluation panel has selected the best 20 candidates from each competition category before announcing the winning candidates. The interview will take about 30 minutes and will be conducted in Teams. At the innovation competition events, we will video the candidates' presentations and public discussions about them. Participants will be informed of the recording of discussions for research purposes when signing up for the event and, by participating in the event, participants also agree to the use of the materials for research purposes. We also collect social media content from the top 20 candidates related to the content of their proposals as research material. We separately request permission from the author of the content for the research use of social media content related to the innovations. We do not collect personal data, comments or discussions from social media.

## Who is in charge of the research?

The research is funded by the Strategic Research Council of the Academy of Finland and is part of the Skills, Labour Supply and Migration in Future Finland (SKILLS) programme. The consortium project is led by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health in partnership with VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland Ltd, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, the University of Jyväskylä and the Tampere University of Applied Sciences. The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health is responsible for organising the national innovation competition and owns the research material concerning the competition. The data is stored on the secure platforms of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, to which only consortium researchers analysing the data have access. Personal data will be deleted from the materials used by the evaluation panels.

Only the consortium researchers will have access to any identifying material and it will be used as initial data for the case studies of the best innovations. Those participating in the case studies will be informed in more detail about the conduct of the study and the methods of data collection. The research methods will be mainly qualitative, such as interviews and the observation of innovations in the environment in which they are used. Written consent will be obtained from all individuals participating in the case studies. In research publications, we will report the results in such a way that individuals cannot be identified.

The project involves an extensive network of actors supporting innovation, including employee organisations, decision-makers, technology developers, NGOs and educational institutions (see project page). They will participate in the evaluation panels of the innovation competition, joint development, the organization of joint events and the dissemination of research data. The collaboration network can be

expanded during the project. An extensive network of researchers from various countries will also help us analyse ways of resolving the care crisis in other countries and learn from them.

## When will the research be carried out?

The first funding period of the research runs from 1 October 2025 to 30 September 2028 and the second funding period runs from 1 October 2028 to 30 September 2031. The data collected in the innovation competition will be stored at the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and used in the work of the innovation panels and as material for scientific publications until the end of 2034. In the candidate form, consent is also requested for possible participation in further research on the same subject area. This bulletin only concerns participation in the national innovation competition. The other project work packages will provide a more detailed description of the research in their own bulletins and prepare their own consent procedures.

Do you have any questions? Please contact us!



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**Further information:**

Project website: [www.ttl.fi/en/the-future-of-care-work-carefuture](http://www.ttl.fi/en/the-future-of-care-work-carefuture)

Privacy policy: [Huomisen hoivatyö \(Care Work of Tomorrow\) innovation competition](#)