

Restructuring of arts councils – Status report on preparations

Info briefing on the Finnish Arts and Culture Agency's new peer review structure, 11 February 2026
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Taiteen edistämiskeskus
Centret för konstfrämjande
Arts Promotion Centre Finland



In today's info briefing

- The Finnish Arts and Culture Agency has begun operations as of 1 January 2026
- With the legislative change, the arts council structure will be dismantled and a new peer review structure will come into effect as of 1 July 2026
- Extensive stakeholder consultations were held in the autumn, and info briefings discussing the restructuring have been organised
- Internal preparations for the restructuring are ongoing
- Today's info briefing will focus on the latest information regarding the Pool of Experts

Pool of Experts

Council of Arts and Culture appoints the members

Council of Arts and Culture

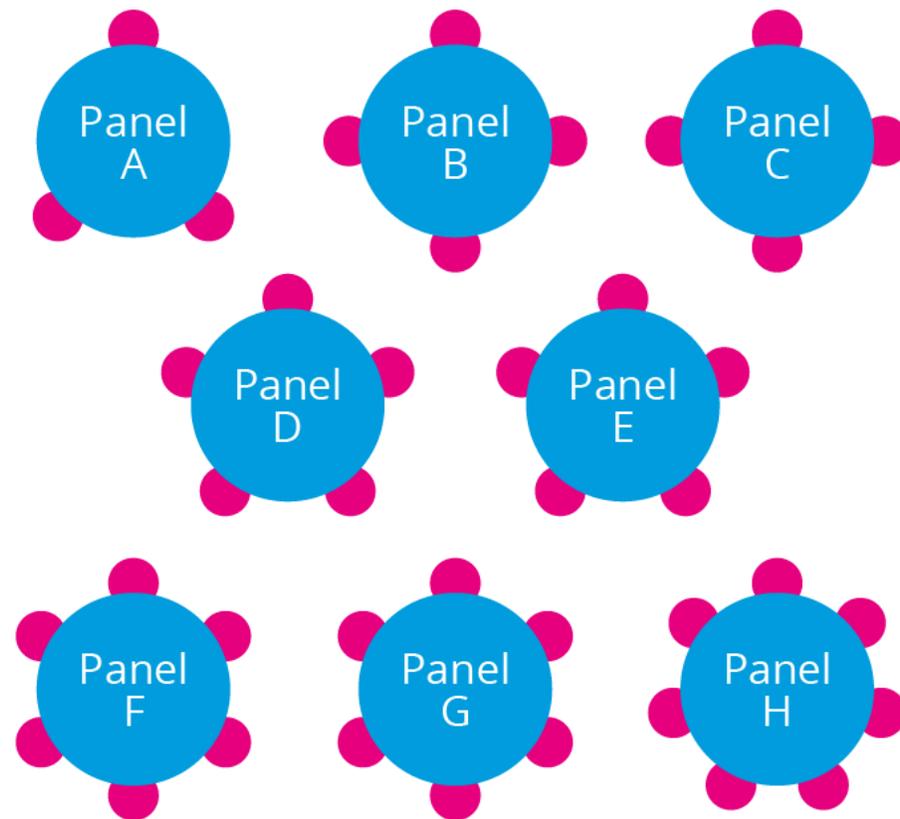
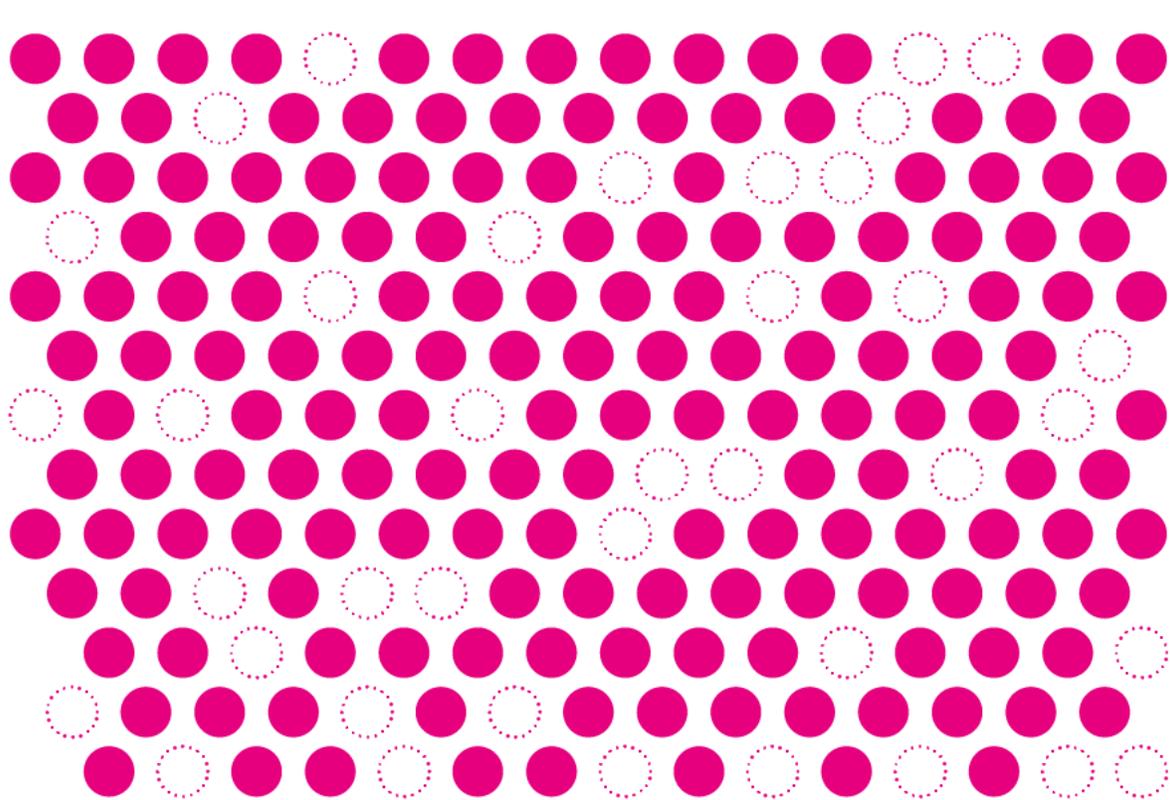
Appointed by the Government

- *Makes grant decisions*

Grant Assessment Panels

Applications are evaluated by Grant Assessment Panels

- *Prepare grant decisions*



Taike

• *Assembles Review Panels*



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Council of Arts and Culture

- The Ministry of Education and Culture has sent a request to key arts and culture communities to nominate candidates for the Council of Arts and Culture for the period 1 July 2026 – 30 June 2029
- On the basis of peer reviews, the Council will decide on government grants for artists and other grants awarded to artists and artist groups, as well as art prizes, and proposes the honorary title of Art Academic
- The Government will appoint the Chair, 8–12 other members and up to seven deputy members of the Council for a term of three years at a time
- A member may serve two consecutive terms and again after a period of at least three years
- Members and deputy members should represent a broad range of arts and culture policy expertise from different perspectives

Appointment of the Pool of Experts

- The Finnish Arts and Culture Agency will launch the first round of nominations for the Pool of Experts on 16 March 2026 by sending out requests for nominations
- The launch of the appointment process will be announced on the www.taike.fi website
- The Finnish Arts and Culture Agency will hold a public info briefing on the appointment process on 18 March
- The Agency will prepare the composition of the Pool of Experts at a meeting of the Council of Arts and Culture in August 2026
- The Council of Arts and Culture will decide on the composition of the Pool of Experts in September 2026
- Members of the Pool of Experts would serve a term (probably) of 3 years

Who will receive a request for nominations?

- National artist associations
- Key regional arts and artist communities
- Other arts communities representing professionals
- Parties representing higher education and research in the arts and culture
- Museums with regional responsibility and regional recipients of central government transfers
- Arts information centres and specialised arts museums
- Parties representing production and distribution channels
- Arts and culture parties representing linguistic and cultural minorities
- Parties promoting cultural inclusion and accessibility
- Regional councils



Composition of the Pool of Experts

- Between 200–300 members will be appointed to the Pool of Experts
 - (Peer) representatives of the arts and their different genres
 - Regional and operational expertise
- Members with expertise in the following will also be requested:
 - Inclusion, accessibility, special groups
 - Cultural diversity and specific minority groups
 - Entrepreneurship, administrative, economic and production expertise
 - International collaborations, cultural exchanges
 - Arts research, new technologies, publishing channels

Open channel for nominations

- In addition to recipients of nomination requests, any community or individual active in the arts may nominate members
- Also, individuals may express their own interest in serving on the Pool of Experts by submitting an online form
- An application form will be made available on the www.taike.fi website for further information about the applicant's expertise in the arts and culture
 - The same criteria will apply to all nominees

Tasks of members of the Pool of Experts

- The Finnish Arts and Culture Agency will appoint Grant Assessment Panels from among the members of the Pool of Experts for each call for applications
- Grant Assessment Panels will review
 - Grant applications by individuals and present an opinion to the Council of Arts and Culture, which will make the final decision
 - Grant applications by communities and present an opinion to the Finnish Arts and Culture Agency, which will make the final decision
 - Applications for supplementary artist pensions and present an opinion to the Finnish Arts and Culture Agency, which will make the final decision
- Grant Assessment Panels will also present opinions to the Council of Arts and Culture regarding
 - Recipients of prizes
 - Recipients of the honorary title of Art Academic

Members of the Pool of Experts

- Are eligible to apply for a grant from the Finnish Arts and Culture Agency, but cannot serve on the Grant Assessment Panel for that call for applications
- Will be paid a fee based on the number of applications to be reviewed and meetings attended
- Have the right to resign from the Pool of Experts in the middle of their term
- Can influence how many applications they review and how often
- Will be given a varying number of review tasks



Key themes during preparations, structure of Grant Assessment Panels

- Sufficient rotation is required in the composition of the panels
- Each application will be reviewed by more than one person
- Collective evaluations will be made within the panels, and their opinions will be based on the outcome of their meetings and a joint opinion
- The composition of the panels will be published on the Finnish Arts and Culture Agency website



Key themes during preparations, structure of Council of Arts and Culture

- All decisions on grants for individuals and prizes will be made within the Council of Arts and Culture
 - Grants for communities will be decided by the Finnish Arts and Culture Agency
- Decisions made by the Council will be based on peer reviews made within the Grant Assessment Panels and a presentation of their opinions
- The Council will itself take a position on peer review procedures
- The council will prepare procedures for situations in which its own opinions differ from those of the Grant Assessment Panels
- Timely communication will ensure the transparency of decision-making



Key themes during preparations, regionality

- The discontinuation of regional arts councils has raised concerns about regional representation
- The Agency will set a target for how many members of the Pool of Experts reside outside Helsinki Region
- Regional expertise refers not only to the place of residence of members but above all to their expertise in the operating environments for the arts in different parts of Finland
- The restructuring will not affect the regional operations or offices of the Agency
- The regional impacts of the restructuring will be monitored and assessed

How will the restructuring affect applicants?

- The preparations are being on the basis of current forms of support, but the new model should also be flexible enough for changing situations
- Applicants will apply and receive decisions in the same way as before
- Applicants will not necessarily know during the application period who will review their applications
- Schedules for decisions may be slightly longer in the initial phase (two-stage processing)
- Applicants will have the right to appeal in the same way as before



Thank you!