SCHOOL OF DESIGN   February 26th 2009

School of Design Policy for Visiting Researchers

1. General

1.1 Who should read this page

This policy applies for doctoral students and post-doctoral researchers interested in becoming a visiting researcher at The School of Design. It describes the application procedure policy for applying to the School.

There are two reasons for the policy. The School of Design needs to make sure that

- the visitor benefits from exchange in Helsinki
- it can arrange resources needed for a successful exchange.

This policy does not apply to full professors wiling to visit the School of Design.

1.2 The number of visiting researchers

The School of Design can accommodate at maximum four (4) visiting researchers each semester. This is for space and computer resources. As a rule, we suggest that an exchange period is a semester; shorter stays are not encouraged.

2. Application

2.1 Application deadlines

The School of Design processes applications twice a year. Applications must be submitted to research secretary Johanna Rauhaniemi (firstname.lastname (at) taik.fi) before

- 15 March
- 15 September

It is enough that the application has a stamp that is dated before these dates.

Decisions will be sent to your e-mail in about 4-6 weeks after the application has been received. An application can be submitted up to two years in advance.

2.2 Application format

Application format is free, but to make the application informative, the School would like to get:

- A short research plan to make sure the School has something to offer.

- A letter of motivation indicating what makes the applicant think Helsinki is a particularly interesting place. Information for the application exists on the Web at www.taik.fi/designresearch.
- A short description what the applicant aims to do while in exchange.
- Possible recommendations.
- A description of how the applicant learned about the School of Design.

3. Process

3.1 Acceptance criteria

In processing applications, the School of Design focus primarily on its fit to the School's research agenda (see www.taik.fi/designresearch) and its quality. Applications are evaluated using the following criteria:

- Relevance. Is the topic important. If it is, to which field of design, and how?
- Plan: theory. Is theoretical background solid, and does the plan review literature enough? Is something missing?
- Plan: accuracy. Is the plan accurate enough so that you can evaluate it?
- Plan: execution. Is the plan realistic? Scheduling, tasks, the order of tasks, the applicant's background. (DA requires about 4 years of full-time work)
- Art, if applicable. Is the artistic quality of the plan and artwork high enough?

In addition, the School expects the applicant to have a sponsoring professor at the School. If he does not have one before contacting the School, a sponsor ought to be foundduring the application process.

3.2 Decision making

As soon as the application DL is over:

- Vice dean for research gets all applications and reads them.
- Vice dean checks department resources and department interests with research secretary.
- Vice dean asks at least one fellow professor's opinion about the application.
- Then he submits them to the School of Design's managerial board for decision.
- Decisions are sent to the applicants soon after.

4. Miscellaneous

4.1 Upon arrival

Persons to contact are amanuensis Aila Laakso, research secretary Johanna Rauhaniemi, and the sponsoring professor. The student ought to prepared to give a lecture about his research topic within two weeks.

4.2 Costs

Applying is free. School of Design has no funds to assist living in Helsinki.

4.3 Reapplication

If the application is turned down, it can be resubmitted.

4.4 Working modes in Helsinki

Naturally, the main focus of the stay should be on the applicant's own research topic. However, a successful exchange typically requires more.

We suggest that the applicant

- Take classes designed either to MA students or, preferably, doctoral students.
- Participate in teaching.
- Helps in supervising BA and MA students, depending on the applicant's schedule and skills.

In addition to looking good in your CV, this integrates keeps you busy, gives things do to, and integrates you to local life.

5. Transfer rules

These rules were accepted by the School of Design Board in January 2009. The are valid in February 2009.

Other things to keep in mind

For accommodation, the applicant ought to check HOAS (www.hoas.fi), which is the biggest student housing provider in the Helsinki region. Student housing in Helsinki is in general comfortable even at the lower end of the scale.

To make the stay in Helsinki productive, the applicant should belong to the highest 5-10% range in TOEFL English language test (or similar).