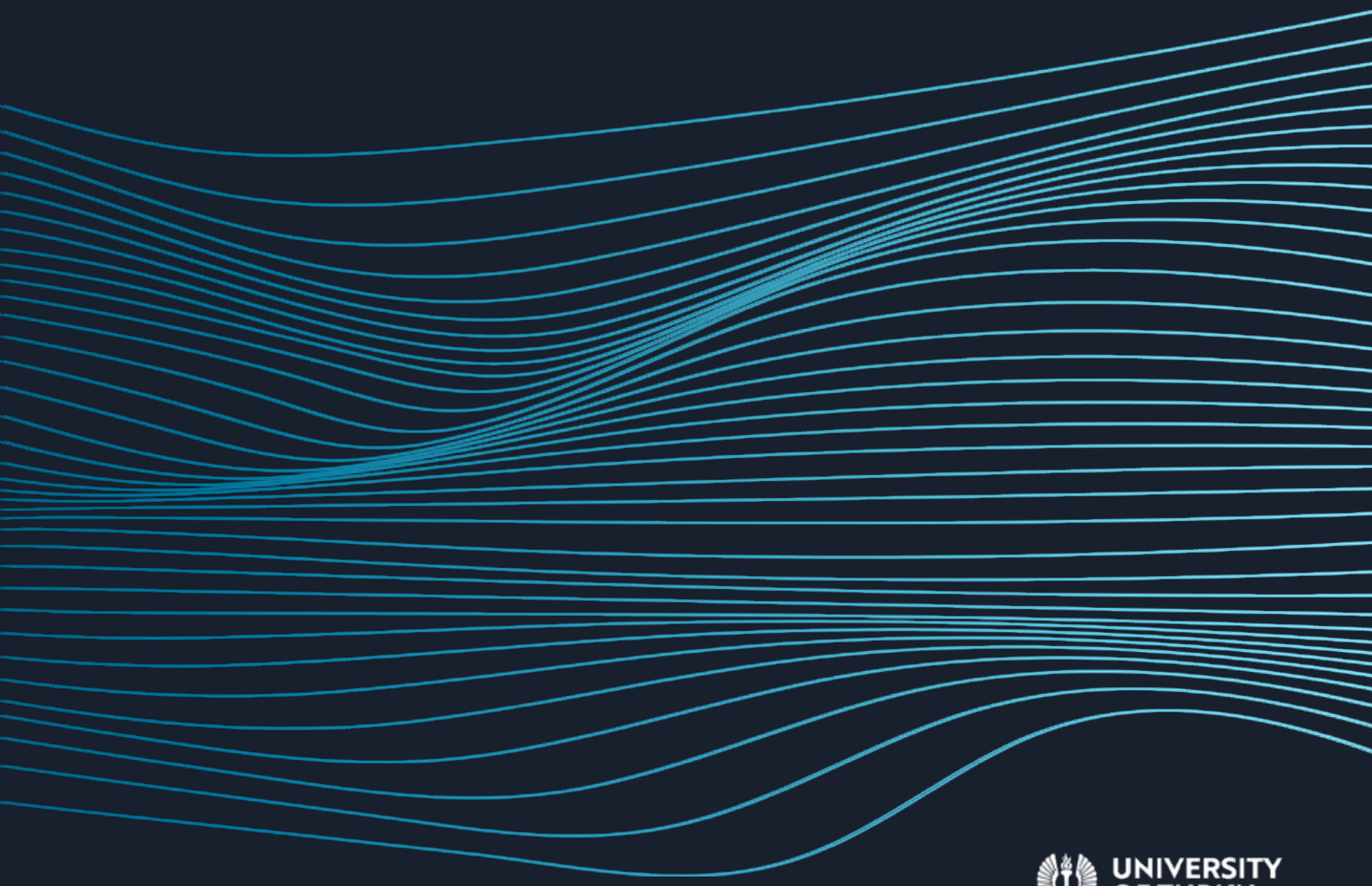
SYS-LIFE
Annual Report 2023–2024



UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

Co-funded by the European Union

SYS-LIFE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The images featured in this report were provided by Nina Nevalainen Georges Kazan, Tuukka Salo, the SYS-life fellows, University of Turku and online image bank.

From the Directors

SYS-LIFE, ”Systemic Approaches to Improve Cardiometabolic and Brain Health during Lifespan” program started with a kick-off event in November 2023, and the first call opened on December 2023. As we reflect on 2024, the SYS-LIFE program has had a transformative impact on the University of Turku (UTU). The year began with the closing of the first call for applications on 31 January, the external peer review of eligible proposals, culminating in our first SYS-LIFE Selection Committee on 3 June. From September, we proudly welcomed a new cohort of talented postdoctoral researchers, fulfilling our vision for an intersectoral, international program that reimagines the bounds of interdisciplinary research. The selected researchers hail not only from Finland and Sweden, but also from India, China, Japan, Iran, Nigeria, Australia and Malaysia. Their holistic projects apply a systemic perspective that envisions the human body as an integrated organism, not just at one life-stage but across the entire life course. Their studies thus explore impact of the gut on the brain, connect oral and cardiovascular health, and explore the significance of blood pressure changes across entire lifetimes.

One of the highlights of the year was our November seminar, Mentoring and Development Day, which brought together SYS-LIFE fellows and mentors. Perspectives from Professor Martin Cloonan, Dr Jenni Kankaanpää (UTU mentoring programmes), and mentees from UTU’s COFUND programme – Turku Intersectoral Excellence Scheme (TIES) kickstarted a valuable exchanges of experiences from across the university. One of the day’s highlights was *Mentoring & Transferable Skills – Key learnings to boost your career*. This wide-ranging presentation by Timo Veromaa (Professor of Practice, Faculty of Medicine) drew on years of experience from across difference sectors. The day culminated in an excursion to Turku’s Pharmacy Museum and the New Pharmacy bar, where fellows and lecturers bonded over drinks and even a bout of arm-wrestling!

SYS-LIFE has established a vast, collaborative platform for cardiometabolic and brain research, bringing together 43 research teams from the faculties of Medicine, Science, and Technology, as well as Turku PET Centre and Turku Bioscience Centre.

At the heart of our program lies a commitment to interdisciplinary research, ensuring that insights from multiple domains converge to address pressing global health challenges. Whether through computational modeling, biomarker discovery, or clinical applications, our researchers are shaping the future of healthcare. Looking ahead to 2025, we remain committed to fostering innovation, supporting our researchers, and strengthening collaborations with both academic and industry partners. The progress we have made would not have been possible without the dedication of our researchers, mentors, and institutional supporters. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to SYS-LIFE’s success.

With anticipation for another year of discovery and progress, we continue our journey toward improving health outcomes through systemic, forward-thinking research.

Professor Markus Juonala, Director

Dr Georges Kazan, Vice-Director

SYS-LIFE

SYS-LIFE, Systemic Approaches to Improve Cardiometabolic and Brain Health during Lifespan is Marie Skłodowska-Curie postdoctoral programme cofunded by University of Turku and European Union in 2023–2028.

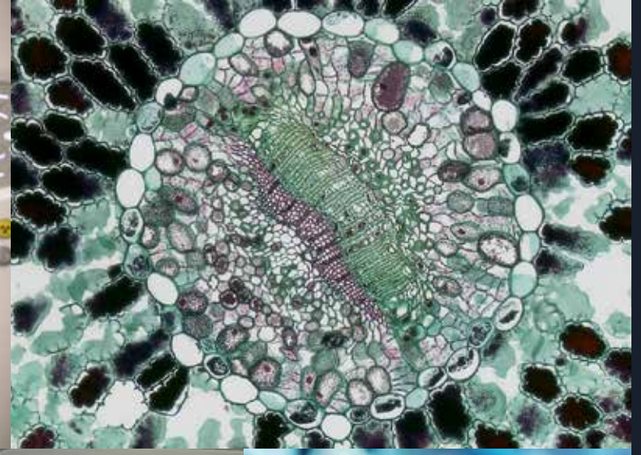
SYS-LIFE supports excellent international early and mid-career stage researchers by providing 22 three-year bottom-up project grants in cardiometabolic and brain research, complemented with training and possibility for secondments outside academia. SYS-LIFE partners include Turku University Hospital, Business Turku, Siemens Healthineers and Ghent University.

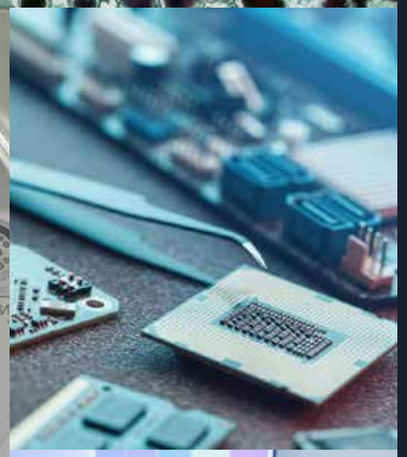
SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE | INNOVATION | CAREER DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES

SYS-LIFE provides a new framework for international excellence in research of cardiometabolic and brain health. This is based on the bottom-up, “blue skies” excellence model coupled with focused training and career development for the fellows. SYS-LIFE has the following goals:

1. To drive breakthroughs in cardiometabolic and brain diseases – e.g., heart attacks, strokes, depression, diabetes – to further improve patients’ health outcomes.
2. To effectively enhance the postdoctoral fellows’ career development through complementing the grant with targeted training on key areas of professional enhancement, networking and collaboration opportunities including the possibility for secondments outside academia and, consequently, to promote scientific renewal and foster leadership in the field.




RESEARCH TOPICS

- Cardiology
- Cell Signaling and Molecular Mechanisms
- Instrumentation, Image Processing and Diagnostic Innovations
- Digital Health Technology
- Metabolism
- Neuroscience
- Gut Microbiome
- Oral Health
- Population Health Research

SYS-LIFE MANAGEMENT

Members of the SYS-LIFE Board of Management (with deputies listed in parentheses):

- Pekka Hänninen, Dean, BoM Chair (Valtteri Kaasinen, Professor), Faculty of Medicine
- Linnea Karlsson, Professor (Olli Raitakari, Professor), Faculty of Medicine
- Pasi Liljeberg, Professor, BoM Vice-Chair (Leo Lahti, Professor), Faculty of Technology
- Pasi Virta, Professor (Tuomas Lönnberg, Professor), Faculty of Science
- Jyrki Heino, Professor, Director of the Turku Collegium of Science, Medicine and Technology
- Pirjo Nuutila, Professor, Director of UTU Graduate School, representing also UTU Research Career unit
- Katja Pahkala, Professor (Sari Stenholm, Professor), Centre for Population Health Research.
- Juhani Knuuti, Professor (Kari Kalliokoski, Research Manager), Turku PET Centre
- Tapio Lönnberg, Senior Research Fellow (Riitta Lahesmaa, Professor), Turku Bioscience Centre

Board of Management Ex officio members

- Markus Juonala, Professor, SYS-LIFE Director
- Georges Kazan, Research Manager, SYS-LIFE Vice-Director
- Sanni Helander, Coordinator, SYS-LIFE Project Coordinator and Research Career Unit representative, replaced with Maiju Kannisto in November 2024
- Anni Wärri, Development Manager, SYS-LIFE Project Coordinator
- Eeva Rainio, Head of Development, SYS-LIFE Project Manager

SYS-LIFE Selection Commitee 2024: Pasi Liljeberg, Ville Kytö, Kari Kalliokoski, Eero Jokinen, Pekka Hänninen, Georges Kazan, Tapio Lönnberg, Anni Wärri, Sari Stenholm, Harriet Wallberg, Pirjo Nuutila, Markus Juonala, Eeva Rainio, Jyrki Heino, Sanni Helander

SYS-LIFE Selection Committee

For the first application period, the SYS-LIFE Selection Committee was composed of the SYS-LIFE Board of Management and the following members:

- Chair: Professor Harriet Wallberg, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm.
- Vice-Chair: Emeritus Professor Eero Jokinen, Finnish Heart Foundation
- Member: Ville Kytö, Research Director of Wellbeing Services County of Southwest Finland

PARTNERS AND COLLABORATIONS

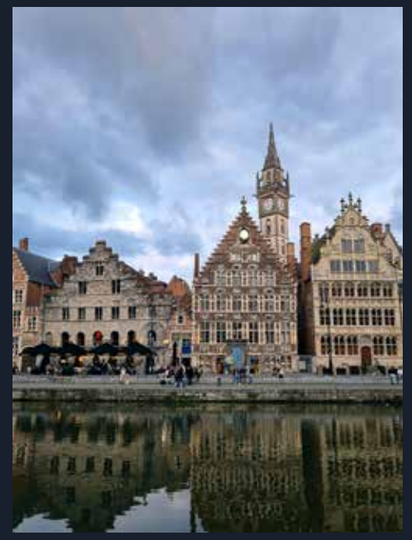
SYS-LIFE is coordinated by the University of Turku (UTU) and its partners include Turku University Hospital, Business Turku, Siemens Healthineers and Ghent University in Belgium.

Turku area has a large collaborative Life & Health Science community, which includes three more higher education institutes (Åbo Akademi University, Turku University of Applied Sciences, Novia University of Applied Sciences) and several life science societies/corporations and companies. Consequently, through its collaborations, frontline research, infrastructure and core facilities SYS-LIFE provides its fellows with cutting-edge methodologies, research facilities and networks, including for example big data of several high-quality cohorts.

In the past year, the SYS-LIFE programme has expanded its network of collaborations, enriching the research environment and creating new opportunities for fellows. Below is an overview of key partnerships:

Ghent University (UGent), Belgium:

At UGent, our primary collaborator is Professor Bernard de Baets, who is leading the KERMIT research unit. In March, SYS-LIFE team visited UGent's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences to explore opportunities for joint research and academic collaboration. Professor de Baets, who also holds the title of Doctor Honoris Causa from the University of Turku (UTU), led a workshop on data management for SYS-LIFE fellows in December, enhancing their research competencies.



COLLABORATIONS WITH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MSCA PARTNERS

Finland

- TIES Programme (University of Turku): Offering up to eight postdoctoral fellowships, with 16 additional positions in 2025, TIES promotes interdisciplinary and intersectoral collaborations, incorporating secondments with non-academic partners.
- UTU-GreDiT Programme (University of Turku): This programme offers 25 doctoral fellowships, focusing on transformative research for green and digital transitions.
- HAIF Programme (University of Turku): Focusing on human-centric AI for sustainable futures, HAIF offers 25 doctoral positions, addressing challenges in AI ethics, health technology, and cybersecurity.
- Data4Healthcare Programme (University of Oulu): With 25 postdoctoral positions, Data4Healthcare promotes big data and AI in healthcare to advance decision-making.
- I4WORLD Programme (University of Oulu): Offering 25 ESR positions, I4WORLD addresses sustainable development through advanced imaging methods, with a focus on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.
- Neuro-Innovation PhD Programme (University of Eastern Finland): Focused on brain health, this Horizon2020 MSCA programme fosters collaboration in neuro-research.

Spain

- Cure Heart & Brain Programme (CNIC, Madrid): This programme offers 12 postdoctoral positions and focuses on the innovative intersection of cardiovascular and neurological diseases.
- ARISTOS Programme (CIBER, Spain): ARISTOS provides 27 postdoctoral positions in Biomedicine and Health Sciences, fostering international and interdisciplinary research.

Sweden:

- PRISMAS Programme (MAX IV, Lund): PRISMAS offers 10 PhD positions, focusing on synchrotron radiation research in materials science, structural biology, and environmental science.
- AMBER Programme (Lund, Sweden): AMBER offers 47 postdoctoral positions in biological imaging across Europe, supporting research in structural biology, clinical work, and bioinformatics.

COLLABORATIONS WITH OTHER RENOWNED RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Karolinska Institutet and the Finnish Foundation for Cardiovascular Research

- Professors Harriet Wallberg and Eero Jokinen served as Chair and Vice-Chair of our selection committee, respectively, strengthening our cardiovascular research excellence.

Leiden University Medical Center

- Through our collaboration with Jeroen Bax, visiting professor of Mentoring, SYS-LIFE enhances its mentoring programmes, benefiting fellows with comprehensive career guidance.

These partnerships and collaborations reflect SYS-LIFE's commitment to fostering a dynamic, interconnected research community, advancing health science, and supporting the professional development of our fellows.

SYS-LIFE FIRST CALL

APPLICATION PERIOD:

5 December 2023 – 31 January 2024

- 33 applications

EXTERNAL EVALUATION

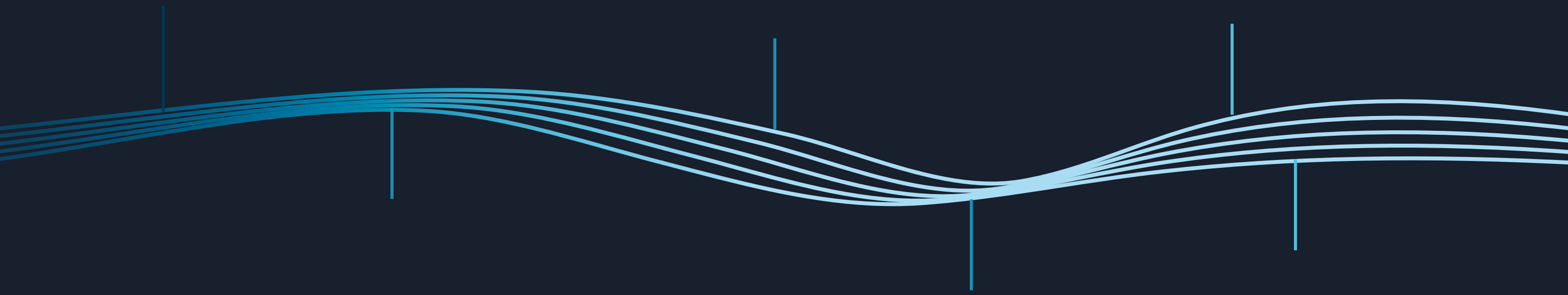
February – April 2024

- 14 external reviewers
- 3 reviews per application
- max score: 3 x 30 points

SELECTION COMMITTEE MEETING

3 June 2024

- 11 fellows selected
- 9 placed on reserve list



ELIGIBILITY CHECK:

February

- 20 eligible – 9 females, 11 males
- 2 appeals - both approved

CONSENSUS MEETINGS

April – May 2024

- 6 online meetings
- for applications with divergent reviewer scores with a deviation of >10 points

FIRST FELLOWS START THEIR PROJECTS

September 2024

- Induction Day

SYS-LIFE FELLOWS

- Nitin Bayal, Data analytics *
- Jarkko Johansson, Turku PET Centre *
- Yaxing Meng, Centre for Population Health Research (POP Centre) *
- David Molnar, Turku PET Centre
- Dattatray Mongad, Data analytics *
- Sanaz Nazari Farsani, Turku PET Centre
- Mika Ogawa, Institute of Dentistry
- Oluwafemi Ojo, Institute of Biomedicine *
- Suman Vimal, Internal Medicine
- Jiawei Yang, Health Technology
- Li-Fang Yeo, Internal Medicine

* Started in January 2025

Li-Fang Yeo, Dattatray Mongad, Nitin Bayal, David Molnar, Sanaz Nazari Farsani, Suman Vimal, Mika Ogawa, Jiawei Yang

Nitin Bayal

Senior Researcher, Data analytics

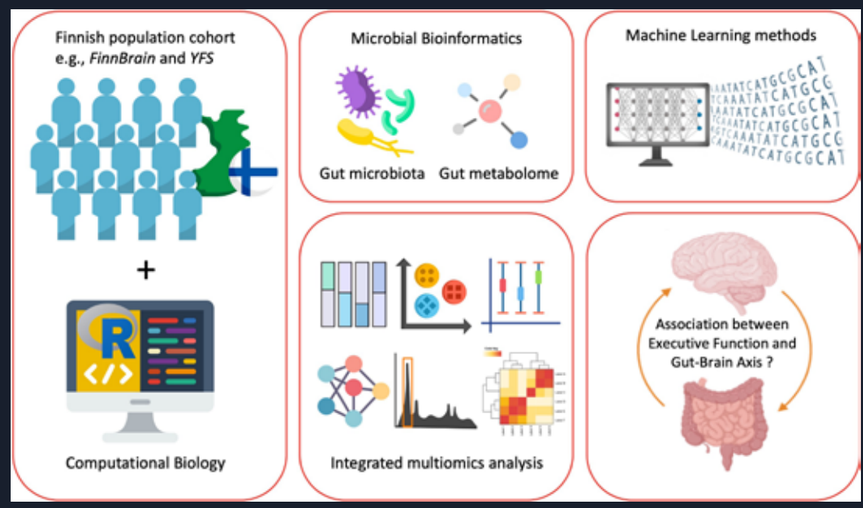
The mediating impact of gut microbiome on Executive Function: a multi-assay analysis

I am fascinated by the role of cognition in the human brain, as it forms the basis for emotions, resilience, language development, and social behaviour. Among cognitive abilities, executive function governs attention, memory, and problem-solving skills that are essential across the lifespan. My research interests focus on investigating the connection between the gut microbiome and these cognitive functions, using the concepts in data science and population cohort data. Additionally, I contribute to the global data science community as a member of the Data Ethics Task Group within the Committee on Data (CODATA) of the International Science Council, where I support the development of policy briefs and related publications.

Gut Microbiome: Computational microbiome research in population cohort studies

Supervisor:

Leo Lahti



Jarkko Johansson

Senior Researcher, Turku PET Centre

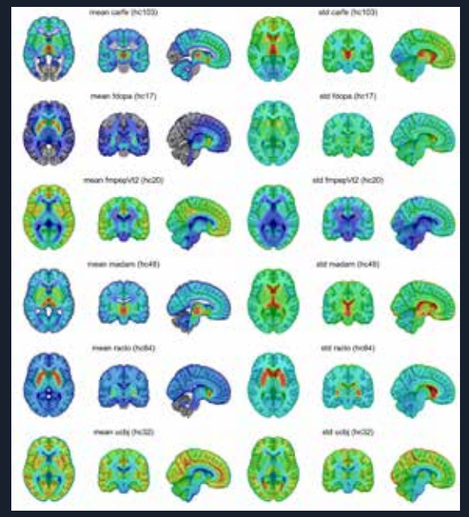
Normative dopaminergic function and activation of cognitive control: neuroimaging studies across the lifespan

I have a broad interest in cognitive and affective neuroscience, with a solid working and academic experience in the field of neuroimaging dating back to early 2000s. Beyond curiosity, I'm driven by the potential to improve people's lives through our discoveries. The present project focuses on several aspects of normal and disordered brain function investigated using state-of-the-art PET (positron emission tomography). The main advantages of PET are its outstanding molecular sensitivity and specificity guaranteed by quantified pharmacokinetic analysis, which is a technical aspect that is developed in parallel to the biological investigations in the present project.

Neurology: Human Emotion Systems Laboratory

Supervisor:

Lauri Nummenmaa



Yaxing Meng

Senior researcher, Centre for Population Health Research (POP Centre)

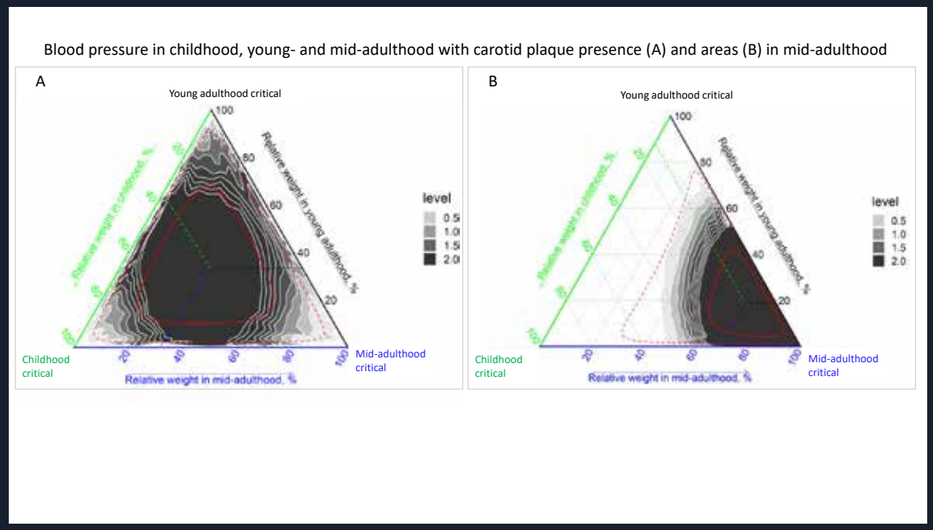
Life course blood pressure and cardiovascular prevention

My research focuses on cardiovascular disease prevention across the life course. Specifically, I study how early-life exposures—such as blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and lifestyle factors—contribute to cardiovascular risk in adulthood. I'm particularly interested in how changes in these risk factors over time can alter disease trajectories. This field fascinates me because it blends clinical relevance with long-term public health impact, helping to give young people the best possible start in life and laying the foundation for healthier, longer lives.

Population Health Research: Cardiometabolic health and its determinants across life-span

Supervisor:

Katja Pahkala



David Molnar

Senior Researcher, Turku PET Centre

Morphological and functional characterization of the peri-coronary epicardial adipose tissue in atherosclerosis and its incremental diagnostic value

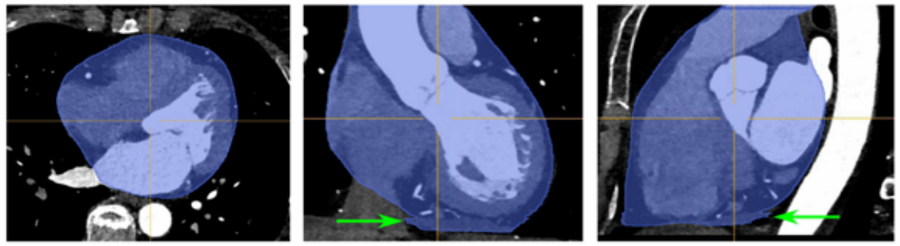
I work with epicardial adipose tissue, which directly surrounds the coronary arteries, investigating its role in cardiometabolic disease at the population level. Specifically, I utilize large imaging databases available through the Swedish SCAPIS study and the Turku Cardiac CTA Registry.

Cardiology: Advanced imaging in coronary artery disease

Supervisor:

Juhani Knuuti

Fully automatic AI-based segmentation of pericardium used for delineation of the epicardial adipose tissue (fatty tissue surrounding the coronary arteries and the heart). Manual corrections are performed where segmentation is not perfect, in order to fine-tune the model (arrows in green). *Molnar et al. (2025)*



Dattatray Mongad

Senior Researcher, Data Analytics

Multi-omic characterization of gut microbiome dysbiosis and resistome: Implications for cardiovascular risk

My research focuses on the ”Multi-Omic Characterization of Gut Microbiome Dysbiosis and Resistome: Implications for Cardiovascular Risk”, utilizing data from the FINRISK and Young Finns Study cohorts. Over the past decade, the gut microbiome has been increasingly recognized as a crucial factor in human health, yet its complex role in cardiovascular disease remains unresolved. During my PhD, I worked on microbiome research, and recent findings highlight the potential of gut microbiome-based therapeutics. Understanding the intricate multi-omics relationships between the microbiome and cardiovascular disease could provide promising alternatives to conventional medication.

Gut Microbiome: Computational microbiome research in population cohort studies

Supervisor:

Leo Lahti

Sanaz Nazari Farsani

Senior Researcher, Turku PET Centre

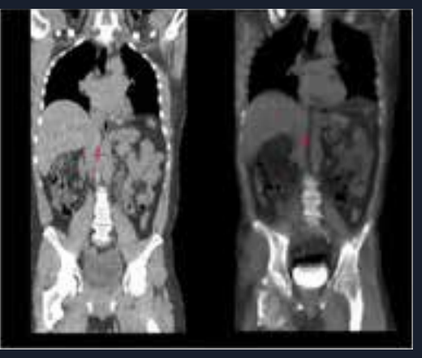
Identifying prior and novel undetected stroke lesions in suspected CAD patients through total-body PET/CT imaging and generative deep learning

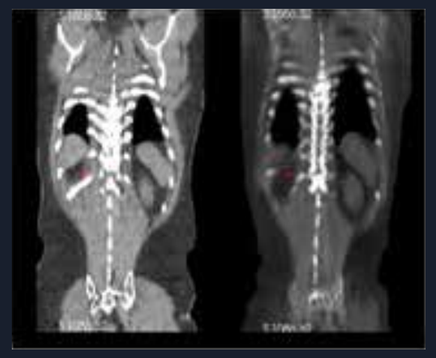
My research interests focus on the application of AI in medical image analysis and processing. My expertise lies in applying AI-based solutions to health technology challenges, with the goal of enhancing diagnosis and treatment, minimizing patient risk, and reducing clinicians' workload. In particular, I work on lesion segmentation from brain scan, medical image translation and synthetic data generation, and medical image denoising and quality enhancement.

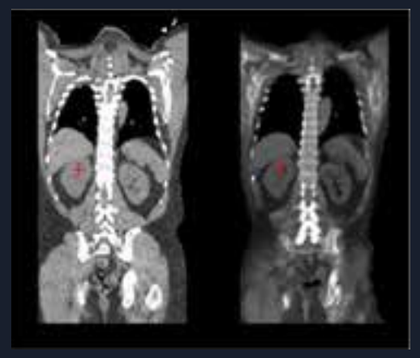
Neurology: Human Emotion Systems Laboratory

Supervisor:

Lauri Nummenmaa







Examples of synthetic CT images generated from PET images using a Generative Adversarial Network (GAN) for three patients (Real CT – Synthetic CT).

Mika Ogawa

Senior Researcher, Institute of Dentistry

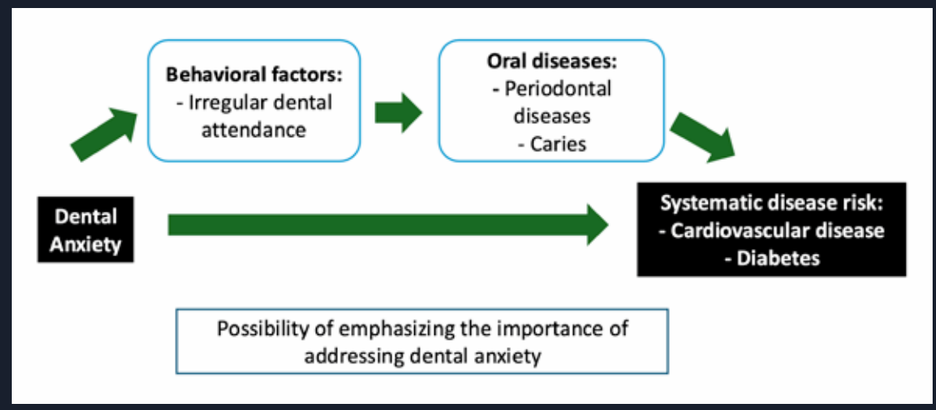
The relationship between oral health, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease: a dental anxiety perspective

My research focuses on dental anxiety and its impact on oral and systemic health, particularly how it influences dental attendance, periodontal disease progression, and overall health outcomes, such as cardiovascular disease. I am interested in this topic because dental anxiety is a major barrier to dental care access and has long-term consequences on health, yet it remains an underexplored area in public health and behavioral sciences. By investigating these mechanisms, I hope to contribute to better intervention strategies and patient care models.

Oral Health

Supervisor:

Satu Lahti



Oluwafemi Ojo

Senior Researcher, Institute of Biomedicine

Understanding the role of HSD17B12 in body adiposity regulation and lipid homeostasis

I am deeply interested in defining the role of HSD17B12 in body adiposity regulation and lipid balance because it holds significant potential for advancing our understanding of lipid regulation and metabolic health. The enzyme HSD17B12 plays a crucial role in lipid metabolism, and its dysregulation could provide key insights into the mechanisms underlying obesity-driven conditions such as cardiovascular disease and fatty liver disease - two prevalent and interconnected health issues. Exploring this research topic could pave the way for identifying and developing novel therapeutic strategies for obesity and lipid-related disorders. Additionally, unraveling the complexities of HSD17B12 may improve the quality of life for millions affected by metabolic diseases. This research will also advance our understanding of lipid regulation, aiding drug developers and clinicians in creating precision therapies. My passion for translational research drives me to investigate how these molecular insights can be applied to real-world treatments, ultimately contributing to healthier societies and reduced healthcare burdens.

Metabolism: Metabolic regulation of lipid homeostasis: Protection of whole-body adiposity by inhibiting HSD17B12

Supervisor:

Matti Poutanen

Suman Vimal

Senior Researcher, Internal Medicine

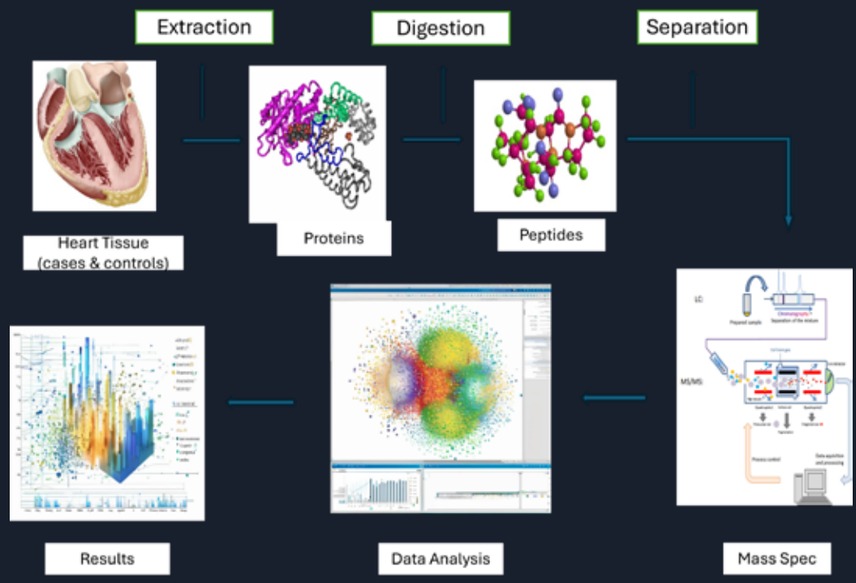
Proteomic evaluation of Stress Granules and Processing Bodies in pathophysiology of Atrial Fibrillation

My research investigates the role of stress granules and processing bodies in the pathophysiology of atrial fibrillation, using the CAREBANK dataset to explore their involvement in post-operative AF episodes through proteomic analysis. I took up this study because it aligns with my previous research done during my doctoral studies. I believe with my background in cardiovascular diseases, I would be able to justify the vision of SYS-LIFE of innovations in improving cardiometabolic health.

Cardiology: Novel research on atrial fibrillation – CAREFIB

Supervisor:

Tuomas Kiviniemi



Jiawei Yang

Senior Researcher, Health Technology

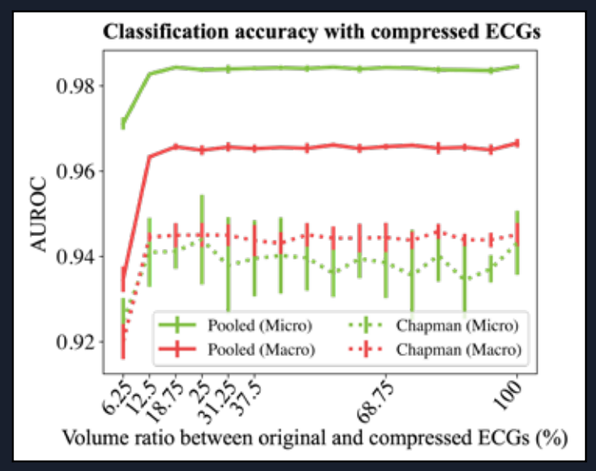
AI for heart monitoring using exercise aware wearables (Exercise4Heart)

I have been working on modeling tabular data, time series data, image data, and trajectory data using artificial intelligence methods. Currently, I focus on digital health research because it is of vital importance to human society. With the development of wearable technology and artificial intelligence, more and more home solutions make healthy living more convenient and reduce the burden on public healthcare systems. I believe AI4health will bring great value to our society and benefit each of us.

Digital Health Technology:
AI driven diagnostics
for early detection of
cardiovascular diseases

Supervisor:

Matti Kaisti



Li-Fang Yeo

Senior Researcher, Internal Medicine

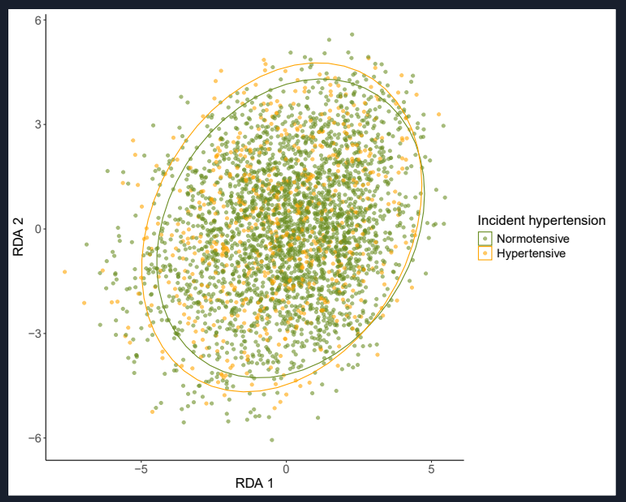
Gut micRobiome and Metabolome in modulating Blood Pressure (GRuMBP)

I work on the gut microbiome in association with cardiometabolic diseases such as hypertension and obesity. I first got into microbiome research because I wanted to go on fieldtrips for sample collection and I thought it was cool to learn coding. Then over time, I learnt that microbiome could have therapeutic potential for diseases and that's how I ended up continuing my work in microbiome.

Gut Microbiome:
Gut microbiome and
cardiometabolic health

Supervisor:

Teemu Niiranen



TRAINING AND MENTORING

During the first months of the fellowship, SYS-LIFE fellows have prepared their Personal Career Development Plans with the help of their supervisors and mentors. Mentors were assigned to the fellows based on their mentoring preferences, and the fellows may also select a mentor from outside academia.

To facilitate career development, SYS-LIFE arranges a training day for fellows each month. Trainings cover themes which are targeted for developing both research and transferable skills. SYS-LIFE trainings are also open for other researchers at the Turku campus.

SYS-LIFE Training for Fellows in September –December 2024

- September: Scientific Writing
- October: Induction Day
- November: Mentoring and Development Day
- December: Data Management and Research Funding

More on SYS-LIFE training and other events at www.syslife.fi/news/.

SYS-LIFE is LIFE!

SYS-LIFE, along with the other Marie Skłodowska-Curie COFUND doctoral and postdoctoral programmes established at the University of Turku since 2022, was celebrated by the City of Turku at a splendid reception held in City Hall in November.

SYS-LIFE fellows and other guests at the City Hall

SYS-LIFE was present in:

- Computational Microbiome Research Summer School 2024
- Biocity Symposium 2024
- University Opening Carnival 2024

Kelpo K. Kettu from the Regional Council of Southwest Finland visited the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Turku. Kelpo also attended the University Opening Carnival, where SYS-LIFE was presenting together with Health Campus Turku. You can find more about Kelpo's visit at www.youtube.com/watch?v=E2nj1NgoncU

Wednesday
January 8th
2025

POSTDOC DAILY

Your guide for moving to Finland

Issue
#10

SYS-LIFE

Li-Fang Yeo, PhD, SYS-LIFE fellow

New postdocs / PhD students arrive in University of Turku

The simplest guide

Congratulations for making it all the way here! The university has many guides for staff moving to Finland. This is a simple guide written for a confused and overwhelmed you.

Before arriving:

1. Make an appointment online with the DVV even before arriving in Turku. Take the earliest appointment possible.

https://dvv.fi/en/foreigner-registration

*Tip: You will need your Finnish home address and Finnish phone number at the DVV appointment. If you don't have a home address yet, that's fine. You can submit it later through post.

Upon arrival:

1. Get a Finnish prepaid SIM card. You will need it for everything.

*Tip: You can survive with a prepaid number throughout your employment. You may only get a postpaid account after living here for two years. The only downside to a prepaid is that you get limited internet coverage in selected EU countries.

2. Make an appointment online with a bank. You need to have visited the DVV first. You will need your Finnish social number or ID number.
3. Make an appointment with the police station. You will need your Finnish social number. Also, you need to go to a photo studio to take a photo.

https://poliisi.fi/en/identity-card

*Tip: Just tell the studio that you are making an ID card, and they will give you a code. You need the code to make the appointment. This will take 5 minutes.

*Tip 2: Make the police appointment ASAP because the wait time can be long. The police ID will allow you to have strong identification and you no longer have to carry your passport around. It makes your life easier.

A huge daisy sculpture outside Forum Marinum (Navy museum), which is a very interesting museum to see in Turku. This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

Get tips from your supervisor

4. Make an appointment with the tax office. This is a very simple and fast process. It takes 30 minutes to get a tax card (which is actually an A4 paper) but do it before the end of the month and send it to HR.

*Tip: Vero (tax) office is near the campus, in Data City. This is where you can ask them about tax. Just remember to adjust your tax ceiling if your income changes. Ask them to explain this to you.

Housing in Turku

There are many guides out there, so read those. In general, houses are rented without furniture. Usually, the kitchen is furnished with basic items like fridge, stove and cupboards. Things to keep in mind:

1. There is no furniture, lights or electricity (usually). So, think carefully how you will live there on the first night.

*Tip: you can either call or do it online (may require Finnish ID) at Turun Energia to get them to turn the electricity on for you. They will send you a bill monthly.

2. Block of flats (apartments) tend to have central heating (you don't have to pay for it) but the temperature will be about 20°C. Depending on where you come from, you may find this a bit chilly at the start.

*Tip: avoid places where you have to heat the place yourself, at least at the start. Electric heating can get pricey.

Arriving in Turku from Helsinki

If you arrive by flight to Helsinki Airport, you will need to take the VR train to reach Turku. If you are arriving near the university, choose Kupittaa station. Turku train station is very much further away (not walking distance with luggage).

From the airport, follow the crowd and sign to reach the underground station. Then look for the green VR machine to buy your ticket to Kupittaa (Turku). Take any of the trains you see, they will both bring you to Pasila. Get down there and look for the platform for the train to Turku (Åbo). Ask for directions if you get confused. It is in the same station. Just find the right platform. Get on it and welcome to Turku!

Co-funded by the European Union

Dressing for Turku

This is only for the more challenging seasons if you were arriving in winter or spring where there may be snow.

1. Water-resistant shoes are recommended upon arrival, especially if it is snowing or if snow is melting into a muddy slush. This means cloth shoes are likely going to get wet and on your first day, that will be unpleasant and very cold.
2. The airport and train are quite warm. Make sure you have a wind- and water-proof jacket. Gloves and a beanie will help very much too.
3. If you come from a warmer climate, and its winter, wear warm leggings under your jeans and wear layers. Layers means something like a shirt, a jacket, followed by a big coat.

Money matters

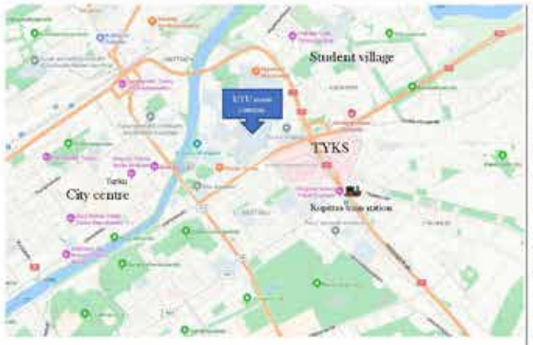
For your rent, you need to be able to transfer the money via bank or credit card. They will not accept cash.

For shopping, most vendors will take cash, including restaurants, supermarkets and shops. The university cafeterias only accept card payment.

Your colleagues will almost expect you to have problems with your bank, so just ask nicely and they will be happy to pay on your behalf. But pay them back afterwards!

Some banks may have a problem with you depositing cash into your Finnish bank account. So, clarify with your banker at the start. They just need to know where your money is from so transaction receipts are handy. If not, it's okay to just let them know to expect a cash deposit into your account.

Snow in Turku comes overnight and melts in a few days, especially when it's a "warm" winter. Photo by author.



The main areas are showed on the maps. City centre is where the nearest shopping mall, Hansa Kortelli, is located. The Kupittaa train station is walking distance to the University hospital and main campus. The student village is roughly located around Holiday Club Turun Caribia (which is a hotel).

Tips for living in Turku

Common sense that is not common

1. Dry your clothes indoor. The air is so dry, your clothes will dry overnight and will not smell musty. You most likely do not need a dryer unless you really want one.
2. If your nose bleeds in cold weather, get a humidifier for your home. Also, there is a nasal oil spray you can get from the pharmacy.
3. To buy fruits or vegetables (and pastries) at the supermarket, check the number found on the name tag, then take your fruit to the weighing machine, enter the number found on the tag and you will get the sticker with the price printed on it.
4. Finland has the cleanest water in the world. You can drink from most taps (except if you are living in a cabin). Drink water from the cold end, NOT the hot water.
5. Finns use winter blankets, which have thicker down fillings. The cheaper ones you see on discount are most likely summer blankets.

Furniture and lights

Second-hand is the way to go

You may get furniture delivered from JYSK or IKEA. You can also get them from Facebook groups, or the recycling centre, Turun Ekotori. The recycling centre and other second-hand stores are a very good option. It is possible to arrange for delivery for a small fee but usually there is a few days wait, unless you get a Taxi.

Remember to take a look at your light socket. You may have to fix the lights yourself but it is a very simple job and youtube videos to check.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vB4gLJNkHk4

Cutleries, pots and pans, lights, appliances can all be found at either IKEA, Prisma and K-citymarkets. You will likely need an extra pair of hands to carry everything because these places are all a bit further away.

Places like UFF, Maanantai Market etc sell second-hand clothes, shoes and bags. They are usually in quite good condition.

Posankka, or what I like to call the pig-duck, welcomes you to Turku. Photo by author

SYS-LIFE IN THE MEDIA

SYS-LIFE in Press (published on 26.10.2023)


LUE NÄKÖISLEHTI
OTA YHTEYTTÄ
KAUPUNKIMEDIA Aamuset

Turun yliopisto johtaa yli 7,3 miljoonan euron EU-rahoitteista tutkijatohtoriohjelmaa, tavoitteena terveyteen liittyvät läpimurrot

26.10.2023 Aamuset

Turun yliopisto on saanut yli 3,1 miljoonan euron EU-rahoitu
tutkijatohtoriohjelmalle, johon rekrytoidaan 22 kansainväli
Ohjelman tavoitteena on luoda läpimurtoja terveyteen liittyv
saralla ja edistää tutkijatohtoreiden urakehitystä.

Euroopan komissio myönsi Turun yliopiston sisätautiopin pro
Juonalan johtamalle *Systemic approaches to improve cardiom
health during lifespan (SYS-LIFE)* -ohjelmalle yli 3,1 miljoonan e
Skłodowska-Curie Cofund -rahoituksen. Hankkeen kokonais
miljoonaa euroa. Tutkijatohtoriohjelmaan rekrytoidaan 22 ka
postdoc-tutkijaa kolmeksi vuodeksi.

Aamuset--kaupunkimedia

www.aamuset.fi/artikkeli/6142953


TUTKIMUS

Turun yliopisto rekrytoi 22 tutkijatohtoria ja tavoite on kova: Nyt tähdätään terveyteen liittyviin läpimurtoihin

"Tällainen lähestymistapa on ainutlaatuinen Suomessa ja suurimmassa osassa Eurooppaakin", hanketta johtava sisätautiopin professori Markus Juonala kertoo.

Turun yliopisto
University of Turku

KAUPPALEHTI: Anni Teppo,
(Image: Jaakko Stenroos)

www.mediuutiset.fi/uutiset/turun-yliopisto-rekrytoi-22-tutkijatohtoria-ja-tavoite-on-kova-nyt-tahdataan-terveyteen-liittyviin-lapimurtoihin/858c1add-8665-41ed-b9f6-516feb0f-90b2


Turun Sanomat

Vaalit · Liikenne nyt · Paikalliset · Uusimmat · Näköislehti · Katso

Turun yliopisto

Turun yliopisto johtaa yli 7,3 miljoonan euron tutkijatohtoriohjelmaa – tavoitteena terveyteen liittyvät läpimurrot

ARI-MATTI RUUSKA

Turun Sanomat: Marika Anttila,
(Image: Ari-Matti Ruuska)

www.ts.fi/uutiset/6142863

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about SYS-LIFE, its fellows and its activities, please visit our website at www.syslife.fi

SYS-LIFE can be contacted by e-mail via syslife@utu.fi

For further information about The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, European Union's reference programme for postdoctoral training, please visit: https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/actions/postdoctoral-fellowships

UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

Co-funded by the European Union

project 101126611