

**Survey and Roadmap for Research Infrastructures  
In Finland**

**Social Sciences and Humanities  
Assessment Panel Report**

**October 7  
2008**

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## 1. General Remarks

1. The SSH Panel met in Helsinki between 3 and 5 September 2008 (see 2.1. for membership). 14 proposals were referred to it as Existing Infrastructures (EI) and 9 as proposals for the RI Roadmap (RIR) for Finland.

Regarding the list of proposed EIs, the SSH Panel noted that the CESSDA proposal (140) was withdrawn from the list. It was also noted that CESSDA (R4) remained on the RIR list.

On the EI list, 7 further proposals were initially defined to fall within the remit of all three panels. Of these, FUNET (170) was discussed by the SSH Panel. CSC-Services (171) was also discussed in general terms and with particular reference to its importance as a service hub. The Panel considered that it did not have the expertise to evaluate the other cross-panel proposals.

On the RIR list, 7 proposals were initially defined to fall within the scope of all three panels. Of these, only one (Statistics Finland, R27) was discussed by SSH. As in the case of the EI list, the Panel concluded that the other six fell outside its domain of competence.

2. All proposals were discussed according to pre-defined criteria. The Panel was also proposed the opportunity to conduct site visits. However, instead of site visits, it was decided to invite speakers for some of the proposals to meet the Panel for short interviews on 3 September. These speakers were invited on the assumption that such interviews could be of some benefit to the Process in which the Panel was engaged.
3. On 4 and 5 September, the Panel discussed each of the proposals which had been referred to it. Each discussion was introduced by a lead "A" reader and then followed up by a "B" reader. The other Panellists were invited to contribute towards concluding overall assessments.
4. In addition to making our assessments, the Panel suggested that in a number of cases, rather than deny a place on the Roadmap or an Upgrade to these proposals, that the Process of developing more stable and serviceable infrastructures in Finland would be enhanced if some of the proposals could be associated.

Accordingly, while the Panel's assessments on the individual proposals are given, it was felt that notwithstanding what are in some cases considerable strengths and maturity, some proposals might better serve Finland if they were encouraged to collaborate in more tangible ways. This would also ensure that great national institutions and research centres would not be duplicating efforts.

In making these observations, Panellists also felt that it was not desirable for them, on the basis of the limited information that was available to it, to make choices between the great cultural institutions of Finland given the fact that as individual institutions, they are the keepers of the National Heritage. However, the Panel also recognises that Finland's heritage must be made more accessible and that resources, tools, competences and skills have to be developed towards this end, as well as the training and networking that is also required.

The Panel concluded that co-operation between these institutions, as reflected in those who applied to the Process, is essential to the ability of Finland to develop dynamic and efficient research infrastructures.

The Panel hopes that its comments will assist the Steering Group in this regard. These comments are contained in the section 4 "Suggestions for the co-operation".

5. The Panel also understands that it was asked to assess proposals that aimed to promote the *research* infrastructure of Finland.
6. It also noted that there were no applications relating to arts (galleries, music, theatre).
7. The Panel strongly hopes that after such a detailed and honourable process of consultation, Finland will have regular calls for proposals on Research Infrastructure, or at the very least, a "post-box" by which new and/or emerging ideas can be identified, as well as appropriate financial resources to develop them.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. The SSH panel members**

Three expert Panels were invited to evaluate the proposals for the first Finnish Roadmap on research infrastructures (RI) and survey on existing research infrastructures: Physical Sciences, e-

Science and Engineering (PSE), Life Sciences & Medicine and Environmental Sciences (LME) and Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH).

The composition of the three panels was decided by The Steering Group of the Finnish Research Infrastructure Survey and Roadmap Project (hereafter the Steering Group). The panels consisted of both science policy and scientific experts. The final composition of the panels was balanced according to the field of expertise of experts. Also gender and country of residence of experts was taken into account.

### **SSH Panel members**

**Dr. Maurice Bric** (*Chairperson*)

Department of History, University College Dublin, Ireland

**Prof. Merle Horne**

Centre for Languages and Literature, University of Lund, Sweden

**Prof. Jan O. Jonsson**

Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), University of Stockholm, Sweden

**Prof. Max Kaase**

Jacobs Center on Lifelong Learning and Institutional Development, Jacobs University Bremen, Germany

**Prof. Elizabeth Lanza** (*Vice Chairperson*)

Department of Linguistics and Scandinavian Studies, University of Oslo, Norway

**Prof. Arto Mustajoki**

Department of Slavonic and Baltic languages and literatures, University of Helsinki, Finland

**Prof. Lea Rojola**

Department of Finnish literature, University of Turku, Finland

### **Secretariat**

Eeva Ikonen

Katri Mäkinen

Marjut Nyman

## 2.2. Criteria and Guidelines for evaluations

The working methods for Panels in the process were prepared in summer 2008 by the Steering Group. Every proposal has been evaluated following the general guidelines introduced by the Steering Group. The Panels applied strict selection criteria and standard evaluation forms in order to identify existing national RIs and mature proposals for the Roadmap.

Some members of the Panel declared potential conflicts of interest in relation to a small number of proposals. The potential conflict of interest arose in relation to proposed ESFRI Roadmap RIs in which some members of the Panel were involved in their own member state. These members took no part in the discussion of the proposals concerned. The declared interests were:

Max Kaase – ESS

Arto Mustajoki – CLARIN

### **The definition of research infrastructure**

*Research infrastructures (hereafter infrastructures) are resources of research methods, equipment, materials and services facilitating research and development in various stages of innovation and maintaining and developing research capacity.*

Examples of infrastructures are large-scale entities of research equipment, research and measurement stations, research vessels, specialized laboratories, collections and databases of research materials, data communication networks for research purposes, archives, libraries and high-performance computing centres, as well as the opportunities of research institutions for large-scale field tests and monitoring. The concept of infrastructure also includes its upkeep and maintenance and support services offered to users.

The optimum structure of a research infrastructure naturally depends on the field of research and the user community, and their needs.

*A single-sited research infrastructure* is appropriate in fields that require major investments in expensive research equipment (e.g. synchrotron light sources, research reactors), special laboratories (e.g. cleanrooms) or research materials (e.g. hazardous chemicals). Single-sited infrastructures may include satellite units or may permit remote use.

A *distributed research infrastructure* is suited to fields in which the available resources are geographically dispersed (e.g. meteorological observation networks, biobanks etc.). A distributed infrastructure may also produce shared, centralized services.

*Virtual research infrastructures* are, for example, databanks, archives etc. that can be accessed and used by researchers from their own workstations.

The Panels applied strict selection criteria and used standard evaluation forms in order to identify existing national RIs and mature proposals for the Roadmap.

### 2.3. Proposal submission and steps in assessments

The call for national RIs and roadmap proposals was open on the internet during April 2008. In total, there were 306 proposals submitted by the Finnish universities, research institutes and scientific communities. From the 306 proposals submitted, 37 proposals were initially assigned to the SSH panel members by the Steering Group in July 2008. The 37 proposals were categorized in four groups: 1) Roadmap proposals initially assigned to the SSH panel, 2) Existing RI proposals initially assigned to the SSH panel, 3) Roadmap proposals initially assigned to the joint evaluation between panels and 4) Existing RI proposals initially assigned to the joint evaluation between panels.

Table 1 indicates the 9 Roadmap proposals initially assigned to the SSH panel by the Steering Group.

**Table 1. Roadmap proposals initially assigned to the SSH panel by the Steering Group (Participation in international RIs in grey tone).**

Number	Acronym	Title
R 1	MIDAS	Micro Data Access System (ReTki)
R 2	FIN-CLARIN (ESFRI)	Finnish Clarin
R 3	ESS (ESFRI)	European Social Survey
R 4	CESSDA (ESFRI)	CESSDA
R 5	Upgrade FSD	Upgrade data services Finnish Social Science Data Archive
R 6	Digitointikeskus	Digitisation Centre
R 12	LUME	Media Centre LUME
R 18		System Architecture for Memory Institutions
R 23	ONA	Oulun nauhoitearkisto

In total 14 proposals for the national level list of existing research infrastructures were initially assigned to the SSH panel through the Steering Group as listed in Table 2. The SSH noted that

the CESSDA proposal (140) was withdrawn by the coordinator of the proposal in the middle of the panel work from the initially proposed existing RI list. However, the CESSDA R4 stayed on the proposed Roadmap list (Table 1).

**Table 2. Existing research infrastructure proposals initially assigned to the SSH panel by the Steering Group (Participation in international RIs in grey tone).**

Number	Acronym	Title
133	FinELib	The National Electronic Library
134	NARC	National Archives Service of Finland
135	NBA	National Board of Antiquities
136	ACLIC/CELC	Archives and collections of linguistic corpora/Collections of electronic linguistic corpora
137	FNL	The collections of the National Library of Finland
138	FSD	Yhteiskuntatieteellinen tietoaarkisto/ Finnish Social Science Data Archive
139	ReTki	Finnish Information Centre for Register Research
140	CESSDA (ESFRI)	CESSDA
141	-	Statistics Finland's research services
142	LUME	Media Centre Lume
145	STAKES	National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health
147	-	Arctic Centre
153	CHRI	The Cultural Heritage Research Infrastructure
162	ONA	Oulun nauhoitearkisto

In total 7 proposals for the national level roadmap were assigned to the SSH panel to be evaluated jointly with other panels through the Steering Group as shown in Table 3. Of these, only one (Statistics Finland R27) was discussed by SSH. The Panel concluded that the other six fell outside its competence.

**Table 3. Roadmap RI proposals initially assigned to the joint evaluation between panels by the Steering Group (participation in international RIs in grey tone).**

Number	Acronym	Title
R 27	Statistics	Statistics Finland's research services (upgrade)
R 33	COPAL (ESFRI)	COmmunity heavy-PAYload Long endurance Instrumented Aircraft for Tropospheric Research in Environmental and Geo-Sciences

R 34	EINAR	European Institute for Atmospheric Research (EINAR)
R 35	ICOS (ESFRI)	Integrated Carbon Observation System
R 38	SMEAR	SMEAR Stations
R 39	ELIXIR (CSC) (ESFRI)	European Life Science Infrastructure for Biological Information
R 41	GBRN	Demonstration project for global biological resource centre's network

In total 7 proposals for the national level list of existing research infrastructures were initially assigned to the joint evaluation between panels by the Steering Group as listed in Table 4. Of these, FUNET (170) was discussed by the SSH Panel. CSC-Services (171) was also discussed in general terms with particular reference to its potential as a service hub. The Panel considered that it did not have the expertise to comment usefully on the others.

**Table 4. Existing RI proposals initially assigned to the joint evaluation between panels by the Steering Group.**

Number	Existing RI	Existing RI proposal
170	CSC-Funet (CSC)	Funet (Finnish University and Research Network)
171	CSC-Services(CSC)	IT Services for Science at CSC
172	Pallas-Sod (LTSER)	Pallas-Sodankylä Super Site
174	STUK	STUK-Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority
175	NCF	NanoCenter Finland
176	NMI	National Metrology Institute
178	MTT Experimental	Agrifood Research Experimental Centre

In sum, from the 37 proposals that were initially submitted to the SSH, the Panel gave evaluation of 23 proposals.

The Panel used three forms to help the members to focus on the most important criteria in their evaluation. All members of the Panel were asked to give a primary opinion on each proposal in written format based on existing material submitted by the coordinators of the proposals through the Secretariat. In addition, a lead A reader and a B reader were nominated for each proposal from the SSH Panel to introduce the proposal in Panel discussions. The Chair and the Vice Chair collected and reported the results of these evaluations for the consensus report of the Panel.

Additionally, the evaluation forms and consensus reports of every Panel were available to the chairs of other Panels on the TSV intranet site of the Panellists. The LME and SSH Panel chairs as well as the LME and PSE Panel chairs had a meeting together with each other before the meetings

with other Panel members.

### Steps in detail

1) Before the Panel meetings in September, every member of the Panel read all the proposals and filled in the form for a Preliminary Summary of the evaluation of each proposal. Every member made his/her first opinion of each of the proposals based on the existing material. The Roadmap proposals were given a grade (Mature (M), Emerging (E) or Out of scope (O)) as based on the initial evaluation. The proposals for the existing national RIs were evaluated according to whether they fulfilled the criteria for a national level RI or not.

The scale of the RI proposals was also evaluated:

Global = proposal has a clear global dimension

European = proposal has a pan-European nature

National = proposal has a national dimension

Local = proposal has a local dimension

The Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV) established a site as a working platform for all three expert Panels. All members received a username and a password to the site. The Secretariat for the Panel took care of posting documents on the site. All documents were available for all Panel members on the TSV site with the understanding that the discussions in the meeting were confidential.

### 2) Hearings

The SSH Panel had a meeting in Helsinki 3.-5.9.2008. The Panel invited the coordinators of 14 proposals to hearings on 3 September 2008 in Tieteiden talo (Table 5). The aim of the hearings was to get clarifications of arguments in the applications, and to answer open questions from the proposal templates.

**Table 5. List of the proposals invited to the hearings, R= proposal for RI Roadmap, (see Step 2).**

Number	Title	Acronym
133	The National Electronic Library	FinElib
134	National Archives Service in Finland	NARC
135	National Board of Antiquities	NBA
136	Archives and collections of linguistic corpora/Collections of electronic linguistic corpora	ACLIC/CELC

137	The collections of the National Library of Finland	FNL
138	Finnish Social Science Data Archive	FSD
139	Finnish information Centre for Register Research	ReTKi
140	CESSDA (ESFRI)	CESSDA
141	Statistics Finland research services	Statistics Finland
142	Media Center Lume	LUME
170	Funet (Finnish university and research network)	CSC Funet
R2	Finnish Clarin	FIN-Clarin
R6	Digitisation Centre	Digitisation Centre
R18	System Architecture for Memory Institutions	System Architecture for Memory Institutions

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### 3) Panel meetings

After the hearings, the nominated A and B readers gave a presentation on each proposal based on the results of the preliminary evaluation, and started the Panel discussion. The panel discussed on all the proposals, decided on the Roadmap proposals, and identified the national level research infrastructures in closed sessions.

The secretariat provided assistance for the Panels during their work and took notes of the meetings.

4) The final consensus evaluation report/synthesis for each proposal was prepared by the Chair and the Vice chair of the SSH panel and submitted to the entire panel for review. These consensus reports were aimed to be as informative and analytical as possible for any future reference.

### 3. Results of the evaluations

The SSH panel recommended that 7 projects should be introduced to the national level Roadmap (Table 6). Of these 7 projects 3 are mentioned in the ESFRI Roadmap.

**Table 6. Projects recommended by the SSH Panel for inclusion on the Roadmap RIs.**

Number	Acronym	Title
R 1	MIDAS	Micro Data Access System (ReTki)
R 2	FIN-CLARIN (ESFRI)	Finnish Clarin
R 3	ESS (ESFRI)	European Social Survey
R 4	CESSDA (ESFRI)	CESSDA
R 5	Upgrade FSD	Upgrade data services Finnish Social Science Data Archive
R 6	Digitointikeskus	Digitisation Centre
R 18	-	System Architecture for Memory Institutions

The SSH Panel identified 9 projects for the list of the existing RI and gave support for 2 projects without evaluating them (Table 7).

**Table 7. Projects recommended and supported by the SSH Panel for inclusion on the list of the existing RIs.**

Number	Acronym	Title
133	FinELib	The National Electronic Library
134	NARC	National Archives Service of Finland
135	NBA	National Board of Antiquities
136	ACLIC/CELC	Archives and collections of linguistic corpora/Collections of electronic linguistic corpora
137	FNL	The collections of the National Library of Finland
138	FSD	Finnish Social Science Data Archive
139	ReTki	Finnish Information Centre for Register Research
141	-	Statistics Finland's research services
145	STAKES	National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health
170*	CSC-Funet (CSC)	Funet (Finnish University and Research Network)
171*	CSC-Services(CSC)	IT Services for Science at CSC

\*In joint evaluation with other panels: Discussed and supported but **not evaluated** in the SSH panel

#### 4. Suggestions for Co-Operation

1. Further to the general observations made in Chapter 1 and the detailed observations made on individual proposals, the SSH Assessment Panel felt that the Steering Group might consider a process for collaboration between the various proposals.

This was substantiated for the Panel by an observation by one proposal that the data was “ours” and should be developed “by us”. We do not believe that such views cannot be considered to serve the best interests of Research Infrastructure in Finland.

The Panel also noted that in some cases, more than one proposal was in some way or other, associated with the same Host Institution.

2. In advocating more pragmatic and practical modes of collaboration, the Panel welcomes the positive moves that have already been made towards this end. The Panel wishes to encourage these moves and is making the suggestions that follow in this spirit.
3. The Panel also wishes to stress that in making its observations, it is doing so on the basis of the information that was at its disposal. Furthermore, while the Panel dealt with RI s from two different lists, the list of Existing Infrastructures, and the Roadmap. Nonetheless, it was not felt that their focus and function were sufficiently different to discourage us from this approach.

However, the Steering Group may wish to access more detailed information and evidence in order to arrive at more definitive conclusions. Our observations are made in good faith and are merely one input into this.

4. The Panel also stresses that its proposals are directed towards greater collaboration. As such, the suggestions that are made are indicative and may be altered upon further reflection and more detailed information, including the strategic assessments which in some cases, have been made of some of the institutions involved and to which the Panel did not have access.
5. In general terms, our suggestions for collaboration have been constructed around a “Hub” and “Spoke” model, where the “Spokes” consist of individualised centres, each with its own, though sometimes overlapping agenda with others. While we see the “Hub” (or, “Reference Point”) as recognising the diversity of these “Spokes”, it can also serve those

Spokes as they develop their areas of focus, protocols for quality control, governance and distribution, and strategic visions to promote research infrastructure which can best serve the SSH in Finland and enhance Finland's knowledge-based economy.

Such a model might also be relevant to some absentees from the Process (such as Finland's galleries of art, museums, theatre and possible activities on data sets).

6. Without intending any particular order of importance, the Panel has clustered the applications that have been referred to us as follows:

6.1. <b>Proposed Spokes</b>	<b>Proposed Hub</b>
Statistics Finland (141)	
STAKES (145)	MIDAS (R1)
ReTki (139)	

The Panel noted that if MIDAS were to assume the role of a Hub for the three others, its role would have to be specified in a clearer way than what we could see from the submissions. It was realized that while the existing cultures of some of the Spokes were mature in different ways, they would be strengthened by being considered together. It was felt that this will would bring greater strengths to all their activities, that the combination of data would best serve the interests of SSH research in Finland, and that this would well serve the development of Finnish research infrastructure as well as bring added value.

Further it was felt that if such a strategic role were assigned to MIDAS, the potential for SSH research in Finland would be very significant as would the potential usage of the RI by SSH researchers.

6.2. <b>Proposed Spokes</b>	<b>Proposed Hub(s)</b>
National Archives (134)	
Board of Antiquities (135)	System Architecture for Memory Institutions (R18)
National Library (137)	

During its discussions, the Assessment Panel was aware that each of these institutions is a prestigious repository of the Cultural Heritage of Finland. They also represent diversity.

Moreover, even as individual institutions, they are often the sum of seemingly separate units which partly explains why in some cases, the Panel received multiple applications from the same general host. The Panel felt that this did not serve the Process well.

With respect to the above-mentioned proposals, the Panel recognised that a “Hub-and-Spoke” model may be more difficult to develop here (if at all), if only because some of these institutions, at a “sub-set” level, have already developed strategies of their own in the area of research infrastructure. Moreover, the Panel recognises that in any event, there may be no natural “hub” for the humanities.

Nonetheless, given the rationale that each “Spoke” can still develop on its own terms, regardless of how mature and/or dynamic its activities related to research infrastructures are at the present time, the Panel suggests that it is always useful to develop practical relationships between cognate institutions.

For these purposes, the Panel recognised that the System Architecture for Memory Institutions (R18) might provide a suitable template as a service “Hub” even if, in such circumstances, its template, as presented to the Panel, would have to take into account how it might optimally serve the constituent Spokes.

7. The Panel also recognised the potential of the Digitisation Centre (R6) and the National Electronic Library (133) and that they have already developed a distinctive maturity.
8. The Panel observed that a “Hub-and-Spoke” model might not be either practical or advantageous in the following cases, not least because of the nature and advanced maturity of the relevant activities. However, we suggest that the following proposals might benefit from better increased collaboration between cognate areas.
  - 8.1. FinCLARIN (R2)  
Electronic & Linguistic Corpora (136)

The Assessment Panel noted the **advanced** maturity of the CLARIN Proposal within the ESFRI process and its funding profile under FP7. It noted the stiff and competitive process that has brought CLARIN to this stage of the ESFRI process and that FinCLARIN can only benefit as the national contact point for SSH researchers in Finland. CLARIN already provides a European reference point which will be of great advantage to SSH researchers in Finland, not least by benchmarking research in Finland by international standards.

Nonetheless, we add that those who are involved with the Electronic and Linguistic Corpora (136) should also engage with FinCLARIN and develop strategies of collaboration with Finland's Cultural Institutions, most notably with the National Library of Finland.

- 8.2. CESSDA (R4)  
FSD (138)  
ESS (R3)

The Assessment Panel noted the **advanced** maturity of the CESSDA Proposal within the ESFRI process and its funding profile under FP7. It noted the stiff and competitive process which has brought CESSDA to this stage of the ESFRI process and that FSD (138) can only benefit as the national contact point for SSH researchers in Finland. CESSDA already provides a European reference point which will be of great advantage to SSH researchers in Finland, not least by benchmarking research in Finland by international standards.

Nonetheless, while we recognise that the ESS (3) is a research-driven activity, it might benefit from strategies of co-operation with CESSDA/FSD.

9. The Assessment Panel also strongly encourages the Steering Group to make greater room for researchers in the governance of its cultural and research institutions, especially where research infrastructures are being developed with respect to the processing and accessing of data, and the management of surveys and other infra networks.

In this connection, the Panel also noted that only few proposals had been submitted to the Panel from researchers themselves.

The Panel thus concluded that given that there were some important absentees from this Process that the present call is a beginning rather than an end.

10. The Panel also noted that there are different actors involved in promoting research infras in Finland: Ministries, Cultural Institutions (and in each of these cases, sub-sets of each), as well as Research Institutions. The Steering Group might wish to find ways of ensuring that these are not developed in mutually exclusive ways.
11. The Panel recognises that as in evaluation processes of this kind, there may be overlaps in the proposals submitted. However, in offering the foregoing suggestions, the Panel

stresses that they are made in good faith with the intention of making SSH research in Finland robust and of the best possible service to Finland.