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CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN SELECTING AND EVALUATING CANDIDATES FOR LUKE'S RESEARCH PROFESSORSHIPS

The objective of the conflict of interest regulations is to ensure that matters are considered and decisions are made impartially and to prevent any inappropriate influence on the outcome. A disqualified person must not take part in the consideration of a matter or be present when it is considered. The person is personally responsible for evaluating and presenting their own disqualification. Regulations on disqualification in official activities are laid down in the Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003).

A person is disqualified from participating in the application, evaluation and decision-making process for research professorships at the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) and from issuing evaluation statements on applications as an expert evaluator if:

- They, or a person close to them, can be expected to experience a particular gain or loss from the decision on the matter.
- They have cooperated with an applicant, including:
 - joint peer-reviewed scientific publications with the applicant over the last five years
 - joint research projects or other similar research cooperation over the last three years
 - joint funding or a funding application(s) with the applicant during the last three years
 - acting as the applicant's immediate superior, employee or thesis supervisor during the last three years
- They are applying for the same position as the applicant.
- The applicant is close to them. A person close to a public official refers to:
 1. a person's spouse, child, grandchild, sibling, parent, grandparent or other especially close person (e.g. a fiancé or fiancée, or a close friend), and their spouses and co-habiting partners
 2. a sibling of a person's parents and their spouse or co-habiting partner, a child of the person's sibling, or the person's former spouse or co-habiting partner
 3. a child, grandchild, sibling, parent or grandparent of a person's spouse or co-habiting partner, as well as the spouse of such a person, and a child of a sibling of the spouse of the person participating in the consideration of the matter
 4. a step relative corresponding to the aforementioned

A person must also disqualify themselves from the selection process for Luke's research professorships and from issuing evaluation statements on applications as an expert evaluator if confidence in their impartiality is endangered for any other special reason or if the person experiences a conflict of interest. Another particular reason may be the person's specially significant and close friendship, partnership or dispute with an applicant or other strong link or mutual loyalty that may arise, among other things, from common economic interests.

Persons participating in the selection process for Luke's research professorships and invited expert evaluators will be informed of the Conflict of Interest regulations, and they commit to complying with them when approving the task. If a person is disqualified to participate in the process, they must contact Eeva Sievi (eeva.sievi@luke.fi) immediately after becoming aware of their disqualification.

CONFIDENTIALITY IN SELECTING AND EVALUATING CANDIDATES FOR LUKE'S RESEARCH PROFESSORSHIPS

As a rule, documents are public in government activities as laid down in the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999). However, the Act on the Openness of Government Activities defines that research plans and any expert statements issued on them are confidential (section 24, subsection 1, paragraph 21). Similarly, documents containing information on a psychological test or aptitude test on a person or the results thereof, or the assessments for the selection of employees are confidential (section 24, subsection 1, paragraph 29).

A person participating in the application, evaluation and decision-making process for research professorships at Luke or an invited expert evaluator must not provide any information about application documents or expert statements for external parties or use confidential information obtained from them for their own benefit or the benefit or detriment of any other person. After the evaluation, all documents related to the application process and any copies thereof must be destroyed or returned to Luke. The confidentiality obligation remains valid even after the process has ended.

Once the decision on the person to be appointed to the position of a research professor has been made, the applicant will receive the expert statements on their application, indicating the names of the persons acting as evaluators, at request.

As a concerned party, the applicant has the right to obtain information about the content of a non-public document. As a basic requirement for the fulfilment of this right, the document may influence or may have influenced the consideration of the matter in question.

Application documents and evaluation statements must be handled and stored carefully and confidentially, and all requests concerning them must always be forwarded to Luke's registry office.

Johanna Buchert
President and CEO

Ilkka P. Laurila
Senior Vice President, Administrative Affairs