

GUIDELINES FOR PEER REVIEWERS

The Finnish Literature Society (SKS) is a learned society and a publisher of open science, built on long-standing tradition. Our primary fields of publication are Finnish culture, tradition, history, literature, and the Finnish language. However, our works are often multidisciplinary. [Publication Forum](#) has classified SKS as a publisher on the top level, level 2. We are committed to the [Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) by the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity.

All works published in the SKS scholarly series are published both in print and as open access e-books at <https://oa.finlit.fi>.

This document outlines the principles of our scholarly publishing and our peer review process and provides guidance for writing peer review reports.

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PEER REVIEW GUARANTEES SCHOLARLY QUALITY

All scholarly works published by the SKS undergo peer review, and each work is given the SKS “peer reviewed scholarly volume” label, as well as the peer review label of the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies.

All book proposals for our Finnish-language scholarly series are received by the SKS publications coordinator who then takes them to the Publishing Committee responsible for peer review. The Publishing Committee appoints two external, anonymous expert reviewers who provide an evaluation of the manuscript. The purpose of expert reviews is to support the Publishing Committee in determining whether the manuscript is suitable for publication in our scholarly series.

Book proposals for our English-language Studia Fennica series are handled by the editor-in-chief of each sub-series. They also appoint the reviewers. The editorial board members are listed [here](#).

All final publication decisions are made by the distinguished Publishing Committee appointed by the SKS Board of Directors. The Publishing Committee evaluates the manuscript and the peer review reports. The members of the Publishing Committee are listed [here](#).

SKS scholarly series

We publish monographs and edited volumes in four Finnish-language series, two of which are published in cooperation with the Finnish Historical Society. Additionally, we publish the Kalevala Society Yearbook and the English-language series *Studia Fennica*, which disseminates Finnish research worldwide. The final publishing decisions in all series are made by the SKS Publishing Committee.

Our scholarly series include (with the Publication Forum classification and the peer review body):

- Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Toimituksia (JuFo level 2, SKS Publishing Committee)
- Tietolipas (JuFo level 2, SKS Publishing Committee)
- *Studia Fennica* and its sub-series *Anthropologica*, *Ethnologica*, *Folkloristica*, *Historica*, *Linguistica* and *Litteraria* (JuFo level 2, subseries editors-in-chief)
- *Historiallisia Tutkimuksia* (JuFo level 2, Finnish Historical Society Publishing Committee)
- *Historiallinen Arkisto* (JuFo level 1, Finnish Historical Society Publishing Committee)
- Kalevala Society Yearbook (JuFo level 1, Kalevala Society).

Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Toimituksia (SKST)

Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seuran Toimituksia (“Editions by the Finnish Literature Society”) is an ambitious humanities series that aims at high quality and significant scholarly contributions to the study of Finnish culture and cultural heritage, particularly in the fields of linguistics, literature and folkloristics.

The editions published in the series are monographs and edited volumes, often approaching their topics from an interdisciplinary perspective. They offer new viewpoints to current issues in the field and contribute substantially to the cultivation of theories and methodologies.

This prestigious series has been in publication since 1834 and has included works such as *Kalevala* and *Seitsemän veljestä* (*Seven Brothers*). Today, the series is solely focused on academic research, and it has been classified on Publication Forum level 2, placing it among the leading national publications. The SKS Publishing Committee handles the peer review process of manuscripts submitted for this series.

Tietolipas

Tietolipas is a series of university-level textbooks, academically solid general works, or monographs and edited volumes that place international topics and trends in the Finnish con-

text. This series offers readers pleasurable reading, multi-faceted viewpoints and new forms of academic writing.

In publications since 1945, this series is classified at Publication Forum level 1. The SKS Publishing Committee handles the peer review process of manuscripts submitted for this series.

Studia Fennica

The English-language Studia Fennica series takes Finnish research in the human sciences to the global stage. Its monographs and edited volumes represent the latest trends in linguistics as well as cultural and historical studies both within Finland and in the international research community.

The series is divided into six subseries of different fields: Anthropologica, Ethnologica, Folkloristica, Historica, Linguistica and Litteraria. Each subseries has its own editor-in-chief that handles the proposals and appoints the peer reviewers.

This series, in publication since 1933, is classified on Publication Forum level 2.

Studia Fennica Anthropologica is a contribution to international scholarly knowledge in the field of social and cultural anthropology. It seeks to present novel theoretical arguments and to ground them in sufficient ethnographic materials to reflect the diversity of the contemporary world.

The sub-series has served as a publishing venue for internationally renowned scholars as well as emerging talented academics. It consists of high-quality monographs and edited volumes in an extensive range of research areas. Proposals from any of the sub-fields of social and cultural anthropology are welcome.

Studia Fennica Ethnologica focuses on European ethnology and related disciplines that analyse issues such as tradition, heritage, community and everyday life. We welcome ethnological analyses of past, present and future phenomena based on theoretical and methodological discussions.

Studia Fennica Folkloristica is an international forum for folklore studies. It publishes monographs and edited volumes welcoming both theoretical analyses and empirical studies on the expressive cultures around the world. We are interested in themes related to the current and past forms of vernacular or non-institutional expressions, as well as practices that take place in between the dominant and the subordinate.

Studia Fennica Historica publishes high-quality historical studies on Finnish and European history, covering all historical periods up to contemporary times, preferably with a comparative or transnational perspective. Both monographs and edited volumes can be considered for publication. Doctoral dissertations are accepted only exceptionally, usually after substantial rewriting.

Studia Fennica Linguistica offers high-quality works on a wide range of topics within different fields of linguistics. The series is a venue to publish original research of international interest, and it includes monographs as well as thematic collections of articles. The

series embraces all fields of linguistics, and it highlights work on the languages of Finland, and on Finnish and its cognate languages.

Studia Fennica Litteraria offers an international publication venue for studies on Finnish literature. The vision of the series is comparative: the volumes aim at creating dialogue between the study on Finnish and other literatures and at spreading Finnish literature research abroad. The series is also positioned to communicate multidisciplinary contributions focusing on literature.

Historiallisia Tutkimuksia

The Historiallisia Tutkimuksia (“Historical Studies”) series publishes internationally relevant historical research of a high standard in Finnish. The works place the phenomena they study within both Finnish and international academic context, offer new perspectives and interpretations, and are methodologically and theoretically ambitious.

In publication since 1918, the series has been classified at Publication Forum level 2, placing it among leading national publications. Peer review of manuscripts submitted for this series is managed by the Finnish Historical Society Publishing Committee.

Historiallinen Arkisto

The Historiallinen Arkisto (“Historical Archive”) series publishes historical research of a high standard. New empirical data, application of historical research methodology, and engaging with current Finnish research is required of the works.

Founded in 1866, the series is classified at Publication Forum level 1. Peer review of manuscripts submitted for this series is managed by the Finnish Historical Society Publishing Committee.

Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja

The Yearbook of the Kalevala Society is a forum for peer-reviewed articles in the field of folklore and cultural studies. Each year features a different theme. The articles address oral tradition, folk poetry, and the Kalevala and its roots and use, but also wider themes within the field of cultural studies.

The Kalevala Society Board of Directors serves as the Yearbook publishing board, issues the call for articles, and handles the peer review of the submitted manuscripts. First published in 1921, the Yearbook is classified at Publication Forum level 1.

EXPERT EVALUATION HELPS BOTH THE PUBLISHER AND THE AUTHOR

We always hold a high standard for our publications, and the importance of the work carried out by peer reviewers is invaluable. The purpose of expert evaluations is to help the Publication Committee in determining whether the proposed manuscripts are suitable for publication and for our scholarly series. The reviews also help the authors in refining their manuscripts.

Peer review practices

The publications coordinator for the Finnish-language series, and the editor-in-chief for each sub-series of the English-language *Studia Fennica* series, will indicate in the review request which series is considered for the manuscript. The publications coordinator or the editor-in-chief and the reviewer will decide on a **deadline** for the review. This is typically set at eight weeks, though the schedule is always negotiated individually. You will receive the manuscript via email or, if preferred, in print by post.

In selecting reviewers, we aim to ensure there are no **conflicts of interest**. A reviewer will not be selected if they:

- Are a close relative of the author(s), or
- Act as the author(s) supervisor, subordinate, or research advisor, or
- Have co-published with the author(s) within the previous three years.

The review is double-anonymous, unless otherwise agreed. As an expert reviewer, you will receive an anonymised manuscript, and no information on the reviewers is shared with the authors or third parties. However, the limited size of the Finnish scholarly and linguistic community presents certain challenges for anonymity. If you believe you recognise the author, please inform the publications coordinator or series editor-in-chief when delivering the review. If you notice a conflict of interest with the content of the manuscript or the presumed author, or if you are otherwise involved, please notify the publications coordinator or series editor-in-chief *immediately*.

Both the manuscripts and the reviews are **confidential**. They are not to be discussed with or shown to third parties, unless explicitly agreed with the publisher. The content of an unpublished manuscript is not to be used for personal gain, and the reviewer must respect the authors' rights related to for example, ideas, research material, and conclusions.

We archive all manuscripts submitted for review, as well as the review reports and author details. By delivering your review, you consent to its archiving in the SKS closed archive, which is accessible by special permit only. Such a permit may be granted, for example, to a representative of the National Board of Research Integrity or the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies.

Please note that the expert body that appointed you as a reviewer may come to a different conclusion than you in its own evaluation. If at any point you wish to discuss the role of your review in the evaluation process, please contact the publishing director.

By agreeing to review the manuscript, you confirm your understanding of the principles outlined in this guideline, and your commitment to them. No payment is provided for the review, but acting as an expert reviewer is considered a scholarly merit. You may mention your role as reviewer for SKS scholarly series in your curriculum vitae.

Content, structure, and evaluation scale of the review

The review should begin with **general observations** about the book project. It's best to note the review **comments chapter by chapter**. We recommend structuring the review by the manuscript chapters, stating separately for each chapter how it is evaluated according to the scale below, and whether any amendments are suggested. This is particularly important for

edited volumes, where the quality of individual texts may vary. Additionally, it is helpful to conclude the review with an **evaluation of the manuscript as a whole**.

A good review provides a reasoned assessment of the merits and shortcomings of the manuscript regarding content, structure, any illustrations, and other relevant aspects. We hope that you use the following scale in your evaluation:

- 1: The manuscript is suitable for publication as is.
- 2: The manuscript is suitable for publication, provided that revisions and corrections are made.
- 3: The manuscript is not yet suitable for publication, but it is worth improving on. A new manuscript requires a new round of review.
- 4: The manuscript is not suitable for publication in the Finnish Literature Society's scholarly series and is recommended for rejection.

A typical review report is 2 to 6 pages in length. The more detailed and reasoned the review, the more it helps us in our decision-making and the author in refining the manuscript. A review will significantly help an author if it includes concrete suggestions on how to improve the manuscript. The authors will receive an anonymised review.

Expert reviews should be constructive, encouraging and as thoroughly reasoned as possible, taking into account that each author has a unique style and that polyvocality is an integral part of scholarship. Differing interpretations are not shortcomings or errors. Feedback given to the author can be direct, but it must always be factual and well-justified.

If a manuscript or article is rated as 2 or 3 on the aforementioned scale, authors are usually requested to revise the manuscript according to the review and submit a revision report detailing how the feedback has been addressed. The revised manuscript and the revision report are usually sent to one of the original reviewers for further evaluation. The second round of review should focus primarily on the revisions made, rather than the content of the manuscript as a whole. The publications coordinator will contact those reviewers whose opinion on the revised version of the manuscript is sought.

What to focus on in the review?

The purpose of the expert review is to help the SKS Publication Committee to determine whether the submitted manuscript is suitable for publication and for the SKS scholarly series.

We publish both monographs and edited volumes. We expect *monographs* to be interesting, reasoned and cohesive works with their argumentation holding from beginning to end. An *edited volume* should also form a cohesive whole with each part (introduction and individual articles) supporting each other. A well-edited volume includes a comprehensive introduction that contextualises the research and presents the volume's contents and objectives to the reader. The concluding chapter is the counterpart of the introduction: it summarises the key findings of the work. Individual articles by different authors should serve as chapters of the volume. The merits and possible shortcomings of individual articles should be mentioned.

Please also consider how the manuscript relates to previous Finnish and international research. Is the author familiar with the sources and literature of the subject area, and are they used sufficiently? If you find the manuscript's sources lacking, please help the author by identifying essential literature that should be included. Are any key sources missing from the manuscript?

Please note in your review if the manuscript significantly overlaps with previously published material. Suspected plagiarism and inadequate referencing should also be flagged.

As a reviewer, you are not expected to proofread the manuscript, but you may still comment on its language and its merits and any shortcomings.

In addition, the following questions may be of help with the review.

Scholarly level and target audience

- Is the manuscript suitable for the SKS scholarly series in terms of its subject, approach and scholarly level? Is the work interesting?
- Is the manuscript understandable primarily to experts in the field, or also to a broader academic audience?

Theory, methods, and conclusions

- Is the author familiar with the sources and literature in their field, and are they used adequately?
- Does the manuscript offer relevant new information, or is it of interest from a theoretical or methodological perspective?
- Is the theoretical, methodological or conceptual framework effectively linked to empirical examples?
- Are the material and methods used presented sufficiently?
- Does the work deliver what was promised in the introduction? Is there a clear research question, and is it answered?

Structure

- Is the manuscript structure clear and easy to follow?
- How well do any illustrations relate to the text? Are the illustrations informative and useful?
- Is the structure of the manuscript well-balanced?