

Religion, Meaning and Masculinities: Research Team

The research team comprises 10 members: the principal researcher, three funded post-doctoral researchers and six additional researchers, as well as an advisory board comprising of leading international scholars in the field. The research team is interdisciplinary, combining the academic disciplines of Church and Social Studies, Practical Theology, Religious Education, Education, Psychology, Sociology and Comparative Religion. The team is highly competent and has conducted a wide range of research that will provide a firm basis for conducting this project.

PI Professor Kati Tervo-Niemelä is the leading expert on generational change, and youth and religion in Finland. She is a co-leader of Templeton-funded project *The Transmission of Religion across Generations* (2019–2023). She has extensive experience of various international and national research projects, including *The role of religion in the public sphere* (NOREL); *Church and Religion in an Enlarged Europe*; *International Research on Confirmation Work and Non-religion in a complex future*. These projects offer in-depth understanding of religious change and will therefore support the implementation of the current project. The PI has conducted extensive research related to religious change, generational change, youth and religion, congregations, etc. which will provide an excellent starting point for conducting this study. The PI has a broad international research network and broad experience of working with major international data sets (including EVS/WVS, ISSP), which will be very beneficial to this project. She has an extensive track record in publishing, as well as exceptionally broad methodological competence, which offers exceptional opportunities for application and innovations in co-research. In addition to the overall responsibility of the project, PI will be a WP leader in WP1 and WP3.

Post-doctoral researcher Jenni Spännäri (PhD, title of Docent in Church and Social Studies) specialises in questions of meaning, religion and spirituality, ageing and life course. She has worked in several high profile national and international research projects exploring these themes, including a large-scale international project on Religious Transmission, and leading work packages in the CoCo, CoCare and CoPassion projects. Her expertise includes qualitative methods, especially computer-assisted qualitative analysis, management of large mixed methods data sets, and the application of co-creative and participatory research with multiple stakeholders. Spännäri will be a leader in WP2 and contribute to that WP2 with her research on aging men. Spännäri also contributes to WP4.

Post-doctoral researcher Marjukka Laiho (PhD, sociology of religion 2024; M.Soc.Sc., political science) is rooted in the critical sociology of religion, politics and theology. She has expertise in studying 'lived religion', which she approaches through phenomenology, relationality, and sociology of knowledge. Laiho has strong expertise in collaborative methods and is active in the Finnish Co-Research Network. She has contributed to the first Finnish peer-reviewed book on co-research methodologies, published by Tampere University Press (2023). She also hosts a Game Changer think thank on the future of co-research in The European Network for Qualitative Inquiry (ENQI) (2024). Laiho will be responsible for incorporating the co-research approach in the whole study, and with her own research, she will contribute to WP3 and WP4.

Postdoctoral researcher Johanna Vilja-Mantere (PhD, practical theology, M.A. in Art Education) has expertise in arts-based methods, both as a part of research methodology and as a means of encountering young people and adults in various life transitions. Vilja-Mantere is especially interested in cross-disciplinary research themes, such as how people make meaning in life transitions, how they express their existential questions and what roles do spirituality and creative expression play in these situations. She has previously worked on an international research project Youth in the Margins (YOMA), focusing on young people who are at risk of marginalization. Vilja-

Mantere will contribute to WP2 with her research on young men in life transitions.

Anna Sofia Salonen (PhD, title of Docent in Church and Social Studies), is a theologian and sociologist of religion with a highly interdisciplinary and international research profile. She is a senior lecturer in Practical Theology, UEF. She has studied intersections of (non-)religion, food, social inequality, well-being and consumer culture with a focus on giving voice to people in vulnerable social and economic positions. She currently leads a research project *Breadline Utopias* (Kone Foundation 2023-2025) and works with an international research project “Nonreligion in a Complex future” (NCF). She has previously worked as an Academy of Finland postdoctoral research fellow at Tampere University and as a visiting researcher at the universities of Toronto and Ottawa. Salonen leads the WP4.

Pietari Hannikainen (PhD in Practical Theology) is a senior lecturer in Practical Theology and Religious Education at the University of Helsinki. He is specialised in research of Christian communities and their members in the context of late modern changes in values and religious participation. He also has methodological expertise in quantitative methods. He will contribute to WP3 where his competence and expertise related to Christian communities will be especially meaningful.

Pekka Metso is a Professor of Practical Theology, University of Eastern Finland, and holds the title of Docent in Practical Theology (2019) at the University of Helsinki, Finland. He has recently focused on themes of lived religion and lived theology among the Finnish Orthodox population. His expertise and contacts related to Orthodox Christianity will be very valuable for carrying out WP3 among Orthodox men.

Teemu Pauha (PhD, Study of Religions; Title of Docent in the Study of Religion; M.A., Psychology) is a psychologist and religious scholar with expertise in the study of religious identity and Islam in Finland, and religion and sports. Pauha works as a university lecturer in Islamic Theology at the University of Helsinki. Pauha has extensive connections with Islamic organisations in Finland, especially youth and LGBTQI+ organisations and his expertise will be highly beneficial to carrying out WP3 in Muslim communities. In addition, Pauha also contributes to WP4 with his expertise on sports and (non)religion.

Kimmo Ketola (Title of Docent, University of Helsinki; PhD in Comparative Religion) is a researcher at the Church Institute for Research and Advanced Education. He has published extensively on religious change and religious groups in Finland and has used both qualitative and quantitative methods in his research. Ketola has been involved in several international research projects, such as the NOREL project and its sequel CBSR. He was the program director in the 5th wave of European Values Study data collection in Finland, 2017–2019. With his wide knowledge related to religious change, Ketola will contribute to WP1. His competence related to religious communities will also be very beneficial for WP3.

Jouko Porkka, ThD, Senior Researcher, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences

Noora Palmi, Doctoral researcher, University of Eastern Finland