

University of Helsinki continues collaboration with institutions complicit in the Gaza genocide. Updated "guidelines", published on 08.04.2026, allow research collaboration to continue to the benefit of institutions upholding genocidal Israel's apartheid system.

As a student, You are central to building power from the bottom up. Join the campaign to exclude complicit institutions and cut their access to our shared resources. Collaboration with complicit institutions funds genocide.

The Palestinian Campaign for the Cultural and Academic Boycott of Israel calls for these institutions to be boycotted until they:

1. **Recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people as enshrined in international law** (including the three basic rights outlined in the 2005 BDS Call) and
2. **End all forms of complicity in violating Palestinian rights as stipulated in international law.** This complicity includes discriminatory policies and practices as well as diverse roles in planning, implementing and/or justifying Israel's human rights abuses and violations of international law.

The last concrete steps towards implementing the academic boycott were taken in 2024 when the University of Helsinki suspended student exchange programs with Tel Aviv University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The suspension of the exchange programs was won through a 6-week long encampment outside Porthania, when students and the wider Palestine-movement in Helsinki mobilized and took direct action. No material changes to the University of Helsinki's collaboration with institutions complicit in the Gaza genocide have been made since.

The so-called guidelines, published by University of Helsinki leadership on 08.04. present no measures to terminate current collaborations or ban new research projects with Israeli institutions. The university board has the legal mandate to make binding decisions on this matter. However, they choose to evade their responsibility, shifting it instead onto deans, academic units, and individual researchers. As long as this avoidance of responsibility continues, each one of us in the university community will fail to live up to our ethical and moral obligations.

However, YOU as a student have a say in this failure - YOU and your fellow students have the power to unite in the campaign to end our collaboration with institutions complicit in genocide.

What about academic freedom?

Academic freedom is more than a narrowly defined absolute right of individual researchers to choose their collaboration partners. Academic freedom carries with it a responsibility. Namely, the obligation to respect the academic freedom of other members of the academic community in accordance with ethical and professional standards. Centering the rights of individual researchers to choose to collaborate with institutions actively, systematically, and purposefully denying the rights of Palestinians living under an illegal apartheid regime is contrary to our understanding of our responsibilities as an academic community. Further, the focus on individual liberties over collective responsibility is emblematic of the tapestry of complicity which enables Israel to carry out a live streamed genocide. You, a student at the University of Helsinki, are woven into this tapestry. But you, together and organized with your fellow students, are enough to make a difference! Together, you can end the complicity!

University leadership claims there is no university level cooperation with complicit institutions.

The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel identifies Israel's inclusion in the Horizon Europe research funding framework as one of the clearest examples of institutional academic complicity supported by governments. University leadership claims that the University of Helsinki does not currently conduct university level, institutional collaboration with Israeli partners, even though it **currently participates in 11 research projects including Israeli institutions under the EU Horizon framework**. The project specific agreements are signed by faculties and other units on behalf of the university. The partner universities gain both money through overheads from the projects as well as institutional prestige by publicly marketing these projects as part of the university. As mentioned, both PACBI and UN experts identify Horizon projects as a prime example of institutional collaboration with complicit Israeli institutions. You can raise your voice as part of the student body to demand an end to our complicity.

As a member of our academic community, **you have a part to play in ending our complicity**. This spring, Students for Palestine has put forth faculty initiatives in all 11 faculties of UoH calling for the termination of research agreements with complicit israeli institutions. Student, researcher, staff member, Sign on to the open letter supporting these initiatives (link below)! In addition, get organized with SFP. Students for Palestine is organized in all 5 campuses and on a national level in 6 universities. We know from experience that making material progress towards ending our complicity requires a multitude of approaches. The last material progress towards the academic boycott at the University of Helsinki required the combined effort of direct dialogue with leadership, engaging the student union and associations, and a 6 week long encampment in the central campus.

NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT! The global movement to end the genocide is facing a growing amount of repression from both state and non-state actors. This shows that the moral argument has been won. Now is the time to push and follow the the call from BDS to escalate campaigning for the academic boycott! Answer this call together with your fellow students. Your power is in numbers!

Get organized with SFP. Your skills, energy, and commitment are needed. Add your power to the campaign for a genocide free university:

1. By joining your campus group to work on campus specific initiatives
2. By joining a working group to support the campus level and national work

First step to join a working group or campus group is to fill our sign up form. You can find it here <https://studentsforpalestine.fi/contact-us/> <https://cryptpad.fr/form/#/3/form/view/32e6274961dbd0fda56817d78e05ecf8/>