

MARGISTAR TRAINING SCHOOL



JOIN US!

Pinching policymakers for
revitalising European
mountainous regions

- ✔ Learn how science-policy-practice interactions work in theory and practice.
- ✔ Play collaborative games and do co-creative group work to understand policy impact.
- ✔ Engage in elaborating new concept of pinching policymakers.

APPLY NOW

Accepting applications
until January 18, 2026

March 17–19, 2026

University of Oulu

Finland

GPS coordinates: 65.05 N, 25.46 W

DAY 1

March 17, 09:00 – 17:00

DAY 2

March 18, 9:00 – 17:00

DAY 3

March 19, 9:00 – 16:00

TRAINING SCHOOL: DETAILS & OVERVIEW

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Training school applicants should be postgraduate students, postdoctoral fellows, or early-stage researchers (less than 5 years after PhD) and be employed in any COST country research institution or accepted NNC institution.

COST rules and the MARGISTAR selection committee will determine the participants' eligibility. Consult the COST Vademecum and the MARGISTAR homepage to determine whether or not you can be reimbursed for your travel and accommodation expenses.

VENUE

- The School will begin at Tellus Stage, University of Oulu, Finland.
- GPS coordinates: 65°05 N; 25°46 W.

LOGISTICS

The Training School will be held in English, so good working language knowledge is expected from trainees. Training begins on Tuesday, March 17, at 9:00 and concludes on Thursday, March 19, at 16:00. Participants will receive more information about accommodation options at a later stage.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Selected participants can be reimbursed for long-distance travel expenses according to the eligibility rules specified in Vademecum Section 5 (Meetings – Financial Support). Following the Training School, participants will also receive a daily allowance (€213) to cover the incurred accommodation, food, and local travel expenses..

APPLICATION PROCEDURE & ELIGIBILITY

Interested candidates must submit their CV, motivation letter, and a short description of their scientific ambition by January 18, 2026 to the Training School coordinators:

- Simo Sarkki (simo.sarkki@oulu.fi)
- Mikko Jokinen (mikko.jokinen@luke.fi)
- Antonio T. Monteiro (monteiroantonio@edu.ulisboa.pt)

Deadline: January 18, 2026.

The MARGISTAR Selection Committee will select up to 16 applicants based on the quality of applications, suitability of the trainees, and COST's principles. Early-career researchers and applicants from ITC countries are especially encouraged to apply. For eligible participants to receive financial support, they should create an e-COST profile at <https://e-services.cost.eu/> (and include their bank details) before accepting their e-COST invitation. For more information, please get in touch with us.

TRAINING SCHOOL: SCHEDULE

Background

Pinching policymakers is a concept under development within MARGISTAR. It implies the need to create safe yet challenging spaces for interacting with policymakers by deliberating on the practical outcomes of existing policies and agendas, to communicate potentially transformative initiatives, and to enhance virtuousness in decision-making.

Day 1

Pinching Policymakers Seminar

Participants will learn about science-policy-practice relations and solutions for revitalising remote and rural regions. While focusing on remote rural regions, the seminar encourages discussions on both EU-level influence on diverse localities, especially in northern Finland, and bottom-up engagement aiming to influence local, national, and EU-level policymakers.



Day 2

Learning about pinching policymakers through games and collaboration

Participants will learn about the pinching policymakers concept as it is understood within MARGISTAR. The day also includes group work and experimental games to learn about science-policy relations through play. Small groups will deliberate, identify, and present key messages related to rural revitalisation targeted towards chosen policy actors.



Day 3

Doing the co-creative pinching process

Participants will learn that developing key messages for policymakers is only one dimension of science-policy-practice interfaces. The process also includes knowledge co-production, identifying policy actors' knowledge needs, presenting messages, and designing long-term iterative processes to influence policy. Participants will design pinching processes in small groups and present them to the trainers, who will wear policymakers' hats. We will close by discussing next steps and the possibility of writing joint outputs.

Trainer Bios

Prof. Eeva Furman has taken part in several science-policy processes in Finland, the EU, and the UN. She has long directed research on environmental governance and spent the last years working as Chief Specialist on Sustainable Development at the Finnish prime minister's office.

Professor Juha Hiedanpää is a research professor on natural resources and environmental policy and governance at the Natural Resources Institute Finland. He coordinates the Horizon Europe project COEVOLVERS (2022–2026) and the MARGISTAR COST Action (2022–2026), and leads the Strategic Research Council Programme 'Environmental and Social Links to Biodiversity Loss' (BIOD, 2021–2027) by the Research Council of Finland.

Researcher Simo Sarkki has focused on northern land use issues for the past two decades, and has explored environmental science-policy interfaces especially from a conceptual point of view. Speaker from the European Commission TBC.