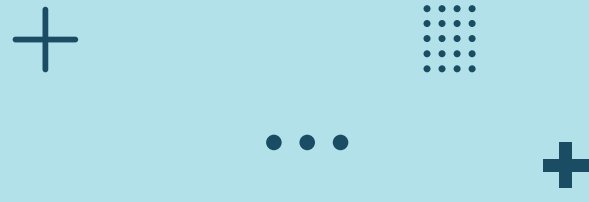




Active TEK member





## How could you be an active member of TEK?

Active members who show the association what direction to move in are at the heart of an effective TEK. Every member of TEK is warmly welcome to get involved!

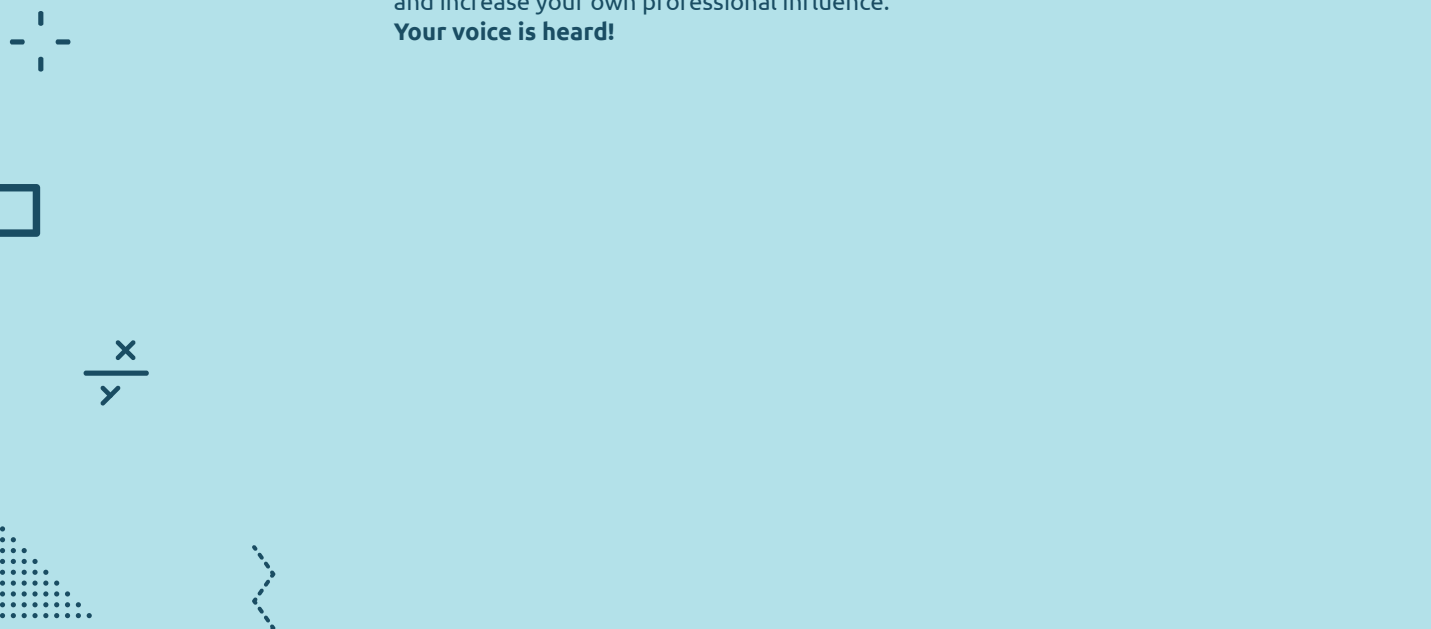
You can be active as a member in the way that suits you best. In TEK, you can join our regional associations or committees, or stand for election to the TEK general council. Being an active TEK member in the workplace could mean serving as the workplace's shop steward or occupational safety representative.

The most important criterion for getting involved is your own motivation and interest — no prior experience or skills are required, as we will help and train you for the duties. As an active member, you get to be part of a knowledgeable technological community, gain a broad perspective on events in the technological sector, and make an impact on issues that matter to you. All member activism is united by the goal of making a positive impact on TEK members' position in society and the labour market, as well as more broadly strengthening the role of technology in society to benefit people and the environment.

This guide provides more detailed information about various duties and roles. You can ask TEK, your workplace or members who are already involved for more information.

When you get involved, you will see that your opinion matters: you get to make an impact on what TEK does and increase your own professional influence.

**Your voice is heard!**





(x<sup>+</sup>)

## Table of contents

<b>1. Participation in TEK activities.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1. General council membership.....	5
1.2. Standing in TEK elections.....	5
1.3. General council group membership.....	5
1.4. Committee membership .....	6
1.5. Panel of Working Architects.....	7
1.6. Student engagement.....	7
<b>2. Involvement in local TEK operations.....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1. Regional clubs .....	7
2.2. Clubs.....	7
2.3. Student activities.....	7
<b>3. Involvement in your workplace's activities .....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1. Shop steward.....	7
3.2. Occupational safety representative .....	8
3.3. Workplace associations .....	8
3.3.1. University associations.....	8
3.3.2. Local activities at universities.....	10
3.3.3. Company associations .....	10
3.3.4 Municipal and state employees' local associations.....	10
3.3.5 Setting up your own local association.....	10





# 1. Participation in TEK activities

The highest decision-making body in TEK is the general council, which consists of representatives elected by members. The committees, the Panel of Working Architects and student representatives are also actively involved in what TEK does. A presentation of these bodies and the various roles related to them follows.

## 1.1. General council membership

Serving as a member of the general council provides unique insight into TEK as a trade union and more broadly the technological sector as a profession.

General council members make many important principled decisions, such as:

- electing the TEK board, which cooperates closely with the TEK office's specialists and is closer to the day-to-day running of TEK than the general council.
- deciding how to advocate on TEK members' behalf, what kinds of member services they are offered, and how the profession makes an impact on society.
- deciding on financial matters such as membership subscriptions.

The general council's term of office is three years. During their term, general council members attend general council meetings, as well as being active and maintaining contact with their own general council groups. General council members are always part of the general council group that they stood for election with at the TEK elections. During elections, the groups are called electoral alliances. More information about standing as a candidate is in section 1.2. Standing in TEK elections.

The general council meets twice a year, in the spring and in the autumn, when it discusses regular matters pursuant to the Associations Act as well as current developments, results of research, new motions, and feedback received from members. General council meetings are an important discussion forum for the technological sector and an opportunity to exchange ideas with other representatives. Seminars on current societal topics are often held in conjunction with the meetings.

Members and deputy members of the general council are elected at TEK elections every three years. If you have a passion for getting involved in TEK decision making, stand for election next time around!

## 1.2. Standing in TEK elections

TEK members elect members and deputy members of the general council every three years. All full members of TEK may stand for election. Student members have

their own channels for engagement with the general council. Read more [here](#).

Typically, candidates stand for election through an existing electoral alliance. Outside elections, electoral alliances are called general council groups. You can learn about the current general council groups [here](#).

A group of members may establish a new electoral alliance if they feel there is no suitable one for them. Only electoral alliances can put forward candidates. After an election, the electoral alliances whose candidates were elected to the general council become general council groups.

Elections are held every three years. Candidates for TEK elections are registered in January and February of an election year. We inform members about the start of candidate registration in our member newsletters, the TEK magazine and our social media channels — so keep an eye on them if you're interested in standing!

Read more about TEK elections: [www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/paatoksenteko/tekin-vaalit](http://www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/paatoksenteko/tekin-vaalit)

Get to know the current general council and general council groups: [www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/paatoksenteko/valtuusto](http://www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/paatoksenteko/valtuusto)

## 1.3. General council group membership

Every member of the TEK general council belongs to a council group. The groups may invite people who are not elected general council members to be involved in their activities.

The groups often take a stand on matters to be decided and make an impact on TEK activities in many different ways. Between general council meetings, the general council groups meet as they see fit, typically before the general council meeting and whenever there is some shared matter to be decided on which the groups' views have been requested. Because members live all over the country, such meetings are often held virtually. If it wishes, a general council group may decide to open its meetings to all candidates in its electoral alliance and other interested people, not just general council members and deputy members.

Discussions in and between general council groups give members background information and support for decision making in the general council. In addition, motions to the general council are often prepared in the groups, either within a single group or in cooperation between several groups. A group may also propose its own candidates for TEK committees at the start of the general council term, and the TEK board nominates committee members on the basis of these proposals.

You can see the current groups and members of the general council [here](#). If you would like more information about the activities of a particular group, do not hesitate to contact the members of the group or TEK staff.

## 1.4. Committee membership

TEK has several different committees which contribute in their own thematic areas to TEK decision making to assist the board. They also function as preparatory bodies for their areas of operation, and their role includes forming opinions to support decision making. This is because the aim is for the respective preparatory body to discuss matters put before the board in advance. In addition, committee members provide ideas and views on what TEK does.

Serving on committees increases committee members' expertise in the topics discussed by the committees and provides an opportunity to network with fellow professionals and engaged TEK members.

The general council groups propose their own candidates for the committees at the start of the general council term. To be appointed to a committee, a person does not have to stand for election or win at a general council election; instead, any active and motivated member may be nominated to a committee by a general council group. The board of TEK appoints committee members based on the groups' proposals.

The committees' term of office is the same three years as that of the general council and board. Student representatives' term of office is a calendar year. The committees meet approximately 8–10 times a year.

The committees are divided into labour-market committees and advocacy committees. The four labour-market committees focus on labour market themes and advocacy in their own sectors. For example, they decide on TEK's view on commitment to collective agreements and industrial action in their sectors. The task of the six advocacy committees is to act as channels of influence in each committee's sector.

### TEK labour-market committees:

- **University Committee**  
The remit of the University Committee is a broad range of issues from matters concerning individual members to collective agreements. It is concerned with both universities and universities of applied sciences.
- **Municipal Committee**  
The task of the Municipal Committee is to support promotion of interests and local activities of members employed in the municipal sector, as well as to provide expertise on labour market matters in the municipal sector.
- **State Committee**  
The State Committee participates in promoting interests and labour-market activities for members employed in the state sector.

- **Private Sector Committee**

The Private Sector Committee's task is to coordinate and develop the promotion of labour interests of members employed in the private sector, as well as to influence private-sector labour legislation and the development of employment-based social security.

### TEK advocacy committees:

- **Member and Organization Committee**  
The Member and Organization Committee focuses on developing TEK as a community of communities, enhancing member services, and building and maintaining member relations. The Committee's other tasks include evaluating communications aimed at members and regional member activities.
- **Education Committee**  
The largest committee in TEK, it deals with issues such as the association's educational policy advocacy, supporting members' professional development, and playing its part in monitoring and developing the quality of educative and research at STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) universities.
- **Youth Committee**  
The youth committee serves as the youth voice and engine of change within TEK. The Youth Committee consists of representatives from STEM student societies and young TEK members selected via an open application.
- **Technology Committee**  
The role of the Technology Committee is to monitor national and regional business and economic policy, as well as science, technology and environmental legislation, and to make an impact on how they are implemented. An important task of the Committee is to underscore the societal impacts and significance of technology.
- **Career Committee**  
The Career Committee discusses questions of TEK members' career development, such as employment counselling and evaluating career coaching.
- **Entrepreneurship Committee**  
The task of the Entrepreneurship Committee is to investigate questions specific to self-employed members and to influence and monitor the development of enterprise policy and legislation in Finland. The Committee promotes the growth and support of Finnish entrepreneurship and, for example, aims to advance technological subject students' entrepreneurial activity.

Read more about the committees: [www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/paatoksenteko/valiokunnat](http://www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/paatoksenteko/valiokunnat)

## 1.5. Panel of Working Architects

The Panel of Working Architects unites TEK member architects for discussion and to make proposals on architects' employment issues. The TEK labour-market committees and boards consult the Panel when making labour-market decisions which concern architects.

The Panel is guided by a management team which meets 3–4 times a year and which is formed from a broad group of architects operating in different societal fields. The management team is appointed for a period of three years.

If you want to get involved, register for the election meeting. For more information and exact dates, contact the Panel's management team.

Read more: [www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/maatoksenteke/tyoelaman-arkkitehtiraati-tar](http://www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/maatoksenteke/tyoelaman-arkkitehtiraati-tar)

## 1.6. Student engagement

Of TEK members, over 20,000 are students. Their voices are heard loud and clear everywhere: student members have fully fledged representatives at all levels of TEK decision making, from the general council to the board and the committees.

Student representatives are chosen using dedicated procedures, generally for a year at a time. For example, the cities in which third-level STEM institutes are located nominate their own representatives to the general council.

Read more: [www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/maatoksenteke/opiskelijavaikuttaminen](http://www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/maatoksenteke/opiskelijavaikuttaminen)

# 2. Involvement in local TEK activities

TEK members organize vibrant local activities in the frameworks of regional tech clubs. A presentation of the various forms of local activities follows.

## 2.1. Regional clubs

Regional tech clubs operate all over Finland. The tech clubs organize several events for their members annually, such as visits to companies, technology presentations, and other interesting activities. Events are arranged both online and in person, depending on the tech club.

All TEK members are welcome to get involved in the tech clubs' activities, and, if they wish, to organize events in their area.

Different tech clubs have different membership practices. For more information, see the club websites.

For a list of all clubs, go to: [www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/jasenten-yhteiso/aluseurat](http://www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/jasenten-yhteiso/aluseurat)

## 2.2. Clubs

TEK members share interests and network in dozens of clubs all over Finland. The clubs organize a range of events and offer a great opportunity to meet new people.

The clubs are open to all TEK members.

For clubs' contact information and any membership instructions, see the clubs' websites. If you cannot find a club that suits your interests, consider setting one up!

Read more: [www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/jasenten-yhteiso/kerhot](http://www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/jasenten-yhteiso/kerhot)

## 2.3. Student activities

Student activities form one of the pillars of how TEK operates and attracts new members. Crucially, they attract active and motivated student members to participate as local actors at STEM campuses around Finland. These student contact persons are also bridge builders between the student community and TEK.

Another essential part of TEK student activities are student society contact persons, who communicate information about TEK among student societies.

If you are a student and interested in getting involved, contact your local student contact person or student-member liaison officer.

Read more about student activities at: [www.tek.fi/fi/palvelut-ja-edut/opiskelija](http://www.tek.fi/fi/palvelut-ja-edut/opiskelija)

# 3. Involvement in your workplace's activities

You can also be an active TEK member in your workplace and make an impact on issues there. TEK offers you support and advice on all matters relating to making an influence in the workplace.

## 3.1. Shop steward

As a shop steward, you can help develop the entire employee community. A shop steward has the important role of liaising and communicating between HR, management and employees. Shop stewards negotiate on matters which affect the staff, such as staff benefits and the application of pay rises under collective agreements.

A shop steward also supports his or her colleagues in challenging situations and seeks solutions in cooperation with the employer, TEK and Federation of Professional and Managerial Staff YTN (in the private sector)

or JUKO, the Negotiation Organization for Public Sector Professionals (in the public sector).

Shop stewards discharge their duties on work time and receive training to ensure the person chosen has enough information about issues such as employment legislation and employment terms. YTN and JOKU train shop stewards; in addition, TEK offers shop stewards training and counselling.

As a shop steward, you become part of a diverse set of networks (such as the European Works Council or shop steward network) and gain access to seminars in which you can connect with other employee representatives and stay informed. Seminar participants discuss current legislation and issues such as legal cases on employment terms.

Shop stewards and other employee representatives are chosen by vote. Votes are held at workplaces, usually every two years. You can ask TEK for advice on holding a shop steward election.

There are a lot of stereotypes about shop stewardship. Some people may wonder if acting as a shop steward closes doors. Won't I be branded as anti-employer? And what will people at work think?

It is true that the role of shop steward may lead to tough negotiations in which you have to defend your position. However, this kind of service opens rather than closes doors in day-to-day work. When you work well and genuinely listen to people and their views with a solution-focused attitude, the result is true cooperation. At its best, this cooperation encompasses anticipatory common activities between employers and employees that both sides benefit from. It is also daily dialogue that helps the whole workplace develop.

If you are interested in developing your workplace and want to be involved, shop stewardship is a genuinely influential way to do so. You can ask TEK, YTN or JUKO for more information about serving as a shop steward.

Read more about what shop stewards do:

[YTN](#) [JUKO](#) [omaluottamusmies.fi](http://omaluottamusmies.fi)

## 3.2. Occupational safety representative

Occupational health and safety at work are best achieved through cooperation. The law provides a framework, and the authorities regulate compliance with occupational safety regulations, but true occupational safety action is based on cooperation grounded in each workplace's circumstances and the resulting occupational safety culture.

An occupational safety representative's task is to create and maintain a safe working environment and thus shape the work culture. The occupational safety representative is in the best position to see how the challenges and opportunities of the work are manifested specifically in his or her workplace. Thanks to this

understanding and operating in different networks, the representative is in prime position to listen, hear and bring forward ideas for improving the working environment. Part of the occupational safety representative's role is also to actively keep safety to the fore and prevent threats to occupational safety and health.

The employees in the workplace elect the occupational safety representative. The term of office is usually two years.

You can ask TEK for more information about the role of occupational safety representative.

## 3.3. Workplace associations

Workplace associations are local, workplace-specific associations that promote the interests of the employees in that workplace. The associations can also arrange recreational activities for their members. If there is not yet such an association at your workplace, we at TEK can advise you on setting one up.

### 3.3.1. University associations

These are local TEK associations that operate in third-level institutions, that is, universities and universities of applied sciences (UAS). University associations' activities include advocacy, such as taking part in local shop stewardship and cooperation with other local student associations. The members of university associations are often actively involved in representing TEK member employees in bodies that make decisions affecting third-level institutions. In addition, the associations arrange open discussion and information sessions on current topics as well as less formal get-togethers.

The university associations maintain contact with the management of the university or UAS, the TEK office and local TEK members. The university association is often involved when matters concerning a TEK member are directed concern either the TEK office or the university or UAS, as in that case both the TEK specialists' expertise and the knowledge of the local situation can be drawn upon.

TEK members who work at third-level institutions are welcome to get involved with their institution's association. You can get the best information about events by joining the association and following the association's bulletins.

Attending events or joining an association does not come with any obligations. If you wish, you can also join the board of a university association.

Read more: [www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/jasenten-yhteiso/korkeakouluyhdistykset](http://www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/jasenten-yhteiso/korkeakouluyhdistykset)





### 3.3.2. Local activities at universities

The administrative structure of universities provide exceptionally varied opportunities for staff and students to partake in decision making. There are numerous and varied councils, committees, consistories, management teams and steering groups. The universities have handbooks about their activities and administrative bodies are frequently presented online and in orientation materials. Many bodies' agendas and minutes are also found on universities' intranets.

By serving on various bodies, for example as a deputy member, you can become familiar with materials and operations in slightly more depth. As a full member, you can also be involved in decision making. You can also affect decision making by proposing matters for preparation and inclusion on agendas, such as by contacting the relevant chairperson, secretary, or staff or student representative. Shop stewards are another channel for discussing and thus communicating views on issues which are being deliberated or which ought to be debated.

### 3.3.3. Company associations

The company associations of YTN, the Federation of Professional and Managerial Staff, are responsible for local promotion of interests in the private sector. The company associations represent all clerical staff who are members of YTN's member unions (such as TEK) who are members of the company associations.

Though the associations, it is possible to discuss matters being negotiated at the workplace, secure better contracts and achieve comprehensive advocacy. The associations also support and spar shop stewards and organize interesting events and sessions for their membership. Company associations may be on the unit, company or group level, and there are over 100 of them around Finland. YTN supports the company associations financially.

All senior clerical staff employed in the company who are members of an Akava trade union may join the company association, such as supervisors, specialists and those employed in specialized roles. TEK and YTN help with establishing a company association if none yet exists.

Read more: [ytn.fi/ytn/yritisyhdistykset/](http://ytn.fi/ytn/yritisyhdistykset/)

### 3.3.4. Municipal and state employees' local associations

State agencies generally have JUKO associations which promote the interests of employees in that specific agency. Only some agencies have a TEK association. In the municipal sector, there is Kuntatekniikan akateemiset ry (Kunta-TEK, "municipal technology academics"), which helps support the local activities of TEK members employed in municipalities and counties throughout Finland.

You can get more information about a local association and its activities from an agency's or municipality's (head) shop steward. You can also ask TEK for more information.

The chairperson and regional contact person of Kunta-TEK can provide further information about that association. Read more: [kunta.tek.fi/](http://kunta.tek.fi/)

Read about associations operating in state and municipal workplaces: [www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/jasenten-yhteiso/julkisen-sektorin-paikallisyhdistykset](http://www.tek.fi/fi/tietoa-tekista/jasenten-yhteiso/julkisen-sektorin-paikallisyhdistykset)

### 3.3.5. Setting up your own local association

Vem som helst kan bilda en lokalförening på sin arbetsplats. TEK hjälper i varje steg av processen och svarar för kostnaderna, till exempel registreringsavgifter.

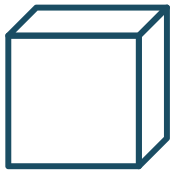
Varför lönar det sig att bilda en arbetsplatspecifik lokalförening? Lokalföreningar ger TEK:s medlemmar åtminstone dessa fördelar:

Anyone can set up a local association in his or her own workplace. TEK helps every step of the way and covers costs such as registration fees.

Why is setting up a workplace-specific local association worthwhile? Here are some of the benefits a local association provides for the TEK membership:

1. Opportunity for a shop steward — a local association can put forward a candidate for the shop steward election and support him or her in the election. A candidate put forward by an association has a better chance of being elected and succeeding in the role with the association's support.
2. Negotiation connection with employer — a local association communicates the workplace's TEK members' needs to the management.
3. An association gets information about current issues and promotion of interests from TEK — so it can make an impact in a planned, timely fashion.
4. An association gets support and training from TEK — its operations have a strong backbone, so it does not need to act alone or know everything.
5. An association gets financial support from TEK for activities that benefit the local association and TEK members — this opens up a broad range of opportunities for activities.

In general, advocacy for a representation of employees through local associations becomes more planned and clearly organized. This helps ensure the employees' voice is heard when decisions are made about the workplace.



### Sample steps in establishing an association:

- A member contacts TEK and says she wants to set up a local association in her workplace.
- When requested, TEK writes to TEK members employed by the employer in question. The letter explains the process by which a local association could be established:
  1. Talk in advance to your colleagues who you know are TEK members.
  2. Contact the TEK office, which will send you all instructions for the stages of establishing an association and guide lines about the support TEK can provide a new local association.
  3. Call a founding meeting.
  4. Found the association:
    - A. Elect a board
    - B. Elect a chairperson
    - C. Elect a secretary
    - D. Elect a treasurer
    - E. Decide on the rules of the association
    - F. Decide on an operating plan
    - G. Decide on advocacy measures and programme
  5. Register your association with the Patent and Registration Office
  6. Spread information about joining the local association to your colleagues, but particularly TEK members. TEK will help you with communicating this.





*Powering your career*