

National research programme develops Finnish nuclear waste management expertise

Press release January 29, 2019

The Finnish research programme on Nuclear Waste Management, KYT2018, is at the end of its four-year term. The final seminar on 29 January 2019 at Finlandia Hall in Helsinki presents the achievements of the programme and considers how national nuclear waste research best supports the safe use of nuclear energy in Finland.

The projects of the KYT2018 programme, launched by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (MEAE) from the beginning of 2015, primarily focuses on maintaining and developing Finnish nuclear waste management expertise. The programme is coordinated by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland. The programme's steering group and support groups include authorities such as the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority (STUK), MEAE and Finnish nuclear waste operators. The research is performed by VTT, six universities, Geological Survey of Finland and Numerola Oy.

The research programme coordinator, Principal Scientist **Kari Rasilainen** from VTT emphasizes the importance of an impartial research programme. According to Rasilainen the research programme produces not only nuclear waste management expertise, but also research independent of license holders, which can be utilized by the authorities especially in assessing the long-term safety of nuclear waste disposal.

KYT2018 produce knowledge and experts

The KYT2018 research programme and its predecessors have had a significant educational impact not only on research institutes and authorities but also on license holders. VTT, STUK and the nuclear power companies employ a number of people who have been trained to experts in the use and control of nuclear energy in publicly funded research programmes.

“It is important for Finland to be able to maintain and develop its expertise and research in the nuclear waste sector,” says Kari Rasilainen.

The research in the KYT2018 research programme is designed to ensure that the authorities have such sufficient and comprehensive nuclear engineering expertise and facilities at their disposal that are needed for comparisons of the various ways and methods of carrying out nuclear waste management.

The programme includes three main topics: Technologies in nuclear waste management, Long-term safety of nuclear waste management, and Nuclear waste management and society. Since 2016, the KYT2018 has also contributed to financing the implementation of the VTT Centre for Nuclear Safety (CNS). In addition to nuclear safety, the CNS promotes national nuclear waste research.

The topics of the research programme focus on the key issues of Finnish nuclear waste management, in particular the final disposal of spent nuclear fuel. The final disposal project for spent nuclear fuel in Finland has progressed in accordance with the schedule set by the Government in 1983, and it raises ongoing international interest.

The total funding for the KYT2018 research programme from the State Nuclear Waste Management Fund in 2015–2018 has been approximately EUR 11.6 million. During this period, the research institutes participating in the research programme have also used their own funding of about EUR 5 million. The total

scope of the research programme has been around 104 person-years, with about 30 research projects annually.

The seminar in the Finlandia Hall will bring together about 100 nuclear waste experts and researchers. The most important achievements and scientific results of the research programme will be presented during the seminar.

Further information:

KYT2018 website <http://kyt2018.vtt.fi>

KYT2018 Programme Coordinator Kari Rasilainen
VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland Ltd
tel. +358 40 503 5246, kari.rasilainen@vtt.fi

Senior Inspector Jarkko Kyllönen
Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority
tel. +358 (09) 759 88 728

Senior Specialist Linda Kumpula
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment
tel. +358 29 506 0125