

Personal Details

- Surname: Saarela
- First names: Aleksi Mikael
- ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6636-2317>

Degrees

- Title of Docent in Discrete Mathematics, University of Turku, Finland (29.9.2015)
- Doctor of Philosophy, University of Turku, Finland (31.5.2012)
 - Major subject mathematics, dissertation accepted with honours
- Licentiate of Philosophy, University of Turku, Finland (16.4.2009)
 - Major subject mathematics, minor subject computer science, licentiate thesis accepted with honours
- Master of Science, University of Turku, Finland (13.12.2007)
 - Major subject mathematics, minor subject computer science, master's thesis accepted with the highest grade (laudatur)

Language Skills

- Finnish (native), English (excellent), Swedish (fair)

Current Employment

- Academy Research Fellow (akatemiattutkija), University of Turku, Department of Mathematics and Statistics (1.9.2021–31.8.2026)
 - Main responsibilities: independent research, leading a research project, supervision of graduate and undergraduate students, administrative duties

Previous Work Experience

- University Lecturer (yliopistonlehtori), University of Turku (1.1.2021–31.8.2021)
- Postdoctoral Researcher (tutkijatohtori), University of Turku (1.1.2016–31.12.2020)
- Senior Researcher (erikoistutkija), University of Turku (1.7.2012–1.2.2015, 1.5.–30.6.2015, 1.11.–31.12.2015)

- Grantee, University of Turku (1.7.–31.10.2015)
- Research Fellow, University of Kiel (2.2.–30.4.2015)
- Doctoral Candidate (tohtorikoulutettava), University of Turku (1.11.2007–30.6.2012)
- Research Assistant (tutkimusapulainen), Helsinki University of Technology (1.6.–31.8.2007)

Research Funding and Grants

- Academy Research Fellow funding for research costs, Research Council of Finland, 159006 euros (for 2 years in 2024–2026)
- Academy Research Fellow funding for research costs, Research Council of Finland, 240000 euros (for 3 years in 2021–2024)
- Academy Research Fellow salary grant, Research Council of Finland, 447650 euros (for 5 years in 2021–2026)
- Postdoctoral grant, Vilho, Yrjö and Kalle Väisälä Foundation, 13000 euros (for 7 months in 2015)
- Young researcher’s grant, Turku University Foundation, 18300 euros (for 12 months in 2009–2010)
- Several smaller grants

Research Output

- 41 peer-reviewed scientific articles, 6 non-reviewed articles, 3 edited proceedings, 3 theses

Supervision and Leadership Experience

- Principal supervisor of a doctoral researcher (currently)
- Principal supervisor of 3 master’s theses (completed)
- Leader of an Academy Research Fellow project

Teaching Merits

- Lecturer on the courses “Algebraic Structures in Cryptography” (6 times), “Combinatorics on Words” (once), “Cryptography II” (once), “Matematiikan peruskurssi 3” (3 times), responsible teacher on the self-study course “Selected Topics in Cryptography” (4 times), course assistant on 6 courses (University of Turku, Finland)

- Writer of lecture notes on combinatorics on words, writer/editor of lecture notes on discrete mathematics for students of engineering (for the use of several Finnish universities)

Awards and Honours

- Award for best paper in WORDS 2023 and in ICALP 2018 track B (with Dirk Nowotka)
- Dissertation selected as one of the four best dissertations of all areas in the University of Turku during the academic year 2011–2012 by Turun Suomalainen Yliopistoseura

Other Key Academic Merits

- Member of the Ph.D. committee of a graduate student (University of Liege)
- Reviewer of a funding application for the Czech Science Foundation
- Member of the program committee of the conferences MATCOS 2025, WORDS 2025, Journées Montoises d'Informatique Théorique 2022, RuFiDiM 2021, WORDS 2021, DLT 2017
- Reviewer of about two hundred articles in scientific journals and conferences, scientific proofreader of two monographs
- Invited speaker in TPSS@CAV 2021, WORDS 2019 and RuFiDiM 2017, speaker in dozens of conferences
- Nominated member of the Academy Club for Young Scientists in the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters (2013–2014)
- Member of the organizing committee of the conferences RuFiDiM 2021, RuFiDiM 2017, Finnish Mathematical Days 2016 and ROMFIN 2009