



## Folklore Fellows on the Threshold of a New Era

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The Folklore Fellows network was established in 1907 by Kaarle Krohn, Axel Olrik and the young Carl von Sydow. Publication was an integrated aim of the FF, but they lacked a publisher. Krohn was extremely active in the academic community and in 1908 he was one of the founders of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters. He got the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters to agree to publish an international series of the Folklore Fellows already in 1908, of which the first numbers appeared in 1910. The FF was never registered as an NGO. It had stopped collecting membership fees and this was not resumed after the Second World War, while the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters became an NGO and was responsible for all of the finances connected to FF Communications. When the Rules of the FF were updated in 1990, formally extending its concerns to researcher training and establishing the FF Summer School, the FF formally came “under the auspices of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters”. This NGO had the legal status and infrastructure to manage the relevant finances and had already been forming contractual agreements as a publisher with the Editor-in-Chief of FFC, who at that time was also Chairman of the FF. Suddenly, in the year 2019, the board of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters decided to terminate the publication of all its current scholarly series – FFC, *Humaniora* and *Mathematica* – which were given one year to find a new publisher. FFC found a new home with the Kalevala Society (<https://kalevalaseura.fi/en/>), a foundation promoting art and research related to the *Kalevala* and cultural heritage, and whose annual publication series has been a major venue for folklore research in Finnish.

As a consequence of these changes, the practical reasons for being under the auspices of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters have ended. The Executive Committee has considered that it is no longer relevant for the FF to remain subordinate to the board of the Finnish Academy. This relationship was terminated following the establishment of a relationship with the Kalevala Society as the publisher of FFC in 2020, but the extent of that relationship remained under discussion. Beginning from 2022, the Folklore Fellows is an independent informal network operating in cooperation with the Kalevala Society in the sphere of publications.

These changes have prompted the Executive Committee to revise and update the rules of the FF, a process that is ongoing. The revisions include the removal of all ties to the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, as we no longer have anything in common with that organization. Whereas appointments to the Advisory Committee and Editorial Board were previously life-long, changes to the rules include making these fixed-term. The new rules will be approved at the next annual meeting of the Executive Committee in February 2023, after which they will be published generally. In practice, the reform of the rules will not change much in the activities of the FF. Its publications – FF Communications and *FF Network* – will continue as they have. Other activities of the FF – first and foremost the FF Summer School – lay on the shoulders of the Executive Committee in cooperation with the international community of folklorists. However, we also hope that these changes will stimulate activity in the FF.