

Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING)
- Doctoral Student Support Project -
Application Guideline [Fall AY2024]

The University of Tsukuba has been selected by JST (Japan Science and Technology Agency) as one of the universities / colleges that leads promising students through their project “Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING).” Through this project, the University provides financial support (living & research allowance, hereinafter referred to as research fellowship) to our promising doctoral students in the form of grants. The overview of the JST project “SPRING” and our application requirements are described below.

■ **Purpose of the Project**

- To support Ph.D. students to devote themselves to unrestricted, challenging and interdisciplinary research projects
- To support the students to devote themselves to their own research by covering their living expenses.
- To assist promising students to become doctorate degree holders who are ready for a variety of diverse and important careers

■ **The University’s Commitment to the Project “SPRING”**

- The Project Run by the University of Tsukuba;

<Project Title >

「学問分野の壁を超えて多様な人材と共創できるトランスボーダー型価値創造人材育成プロジェクト」

～予測不能な社会変容にも対応して世界を変える力を備えた、多様なキャリアパスで活躍できる博士人材育成～

Transborder Human Capital Development Project: Fostering Agile Doctoral Students in a VUCA World

- Project Officer

KATO Mitsuyasu - Vice President and Executive Director for Education

■ **Project Period**

From AY2021 to AY2026*

*In case of the Ph.D. students in Medical Sciences; AY2027

1. Applicants, number of hires, application period:

(1-1) Application Category A

Course	Target	Number of hires needed	Employment period
Doctoral Program (区分制の博士後期課程)	2024/10 1st year enrollees	About 8 students	From October AY2024 to September AY2027 (3 years)
3 rd year of Ph.D. course (3年制博士課程)	2024/10 1st year enrollees		
Enrolled in the Doctoral Course (一貫制博士課程) (Medical Sciences not included)	2024/10 3 rd year admitted/transferred students Or Students who have passed the mid-term exams etc., and who have 3 years left in the standard academic years.		

* To continue this project, a new application will be reviewed each year. Even if the student's period of study is extended due to a leave absence, etc., the project period will not change.

Foreign students, who are not able to come in Japan yet, can apply as well. However, if after being selected, you are not in Japan by the time the payments start, your application will be cancelled.

* As Category A, students in 4-year graduate medical programs will not be eligible to apply for the SPRING in the fall of 2024.

(1-2) Application Category C

As of October 2024, the following students are enrolled.

Course	Target	Number of hires needed	Employment period
Doctoral Program (区分制の博士後期課程)	Students who have 6 months remaining until the standard academic years until graduation	About 15 students	From October 2024 to March 2025 (6 months)
3 rd year of Ph.D. course (3年制博士課程)			

Enrolled in the Doctoral Course 一貫制博士課程 (Medical Sciences not included)	Students who have passed the mid-term exams etc., and who have 6 months left in the standard academic years.		
Medical Sciences	Students who have 6 months left in the standard academic years.		

* The student's period of study is extended due to a leave absence, etc., the project period will not change.

(1-3) Required Documents

① Research Plan for Students Eligible for Research Incentive Funds

[Note]

When you write a plan, please include either of the following:

- (a) How can your research theme contribute to the SDGs (*United Nations Development Program)
- (b) How can your research theme contribute to future society in the next 30 or 50 years.

② For students who were enrolled in the University with the Special Selection of Working Individuals, students who were employed at the time of admission, and students who are in "the early completion program for working people", please attach some form of documentation showing the income earned during the previous year such as the tax withholding slip (源泉徴収票) etc.

2. Students who are not eligible (no matter the category)

Those who apply to the following conditions are NOT ELIGIBLE to apply for this project in 2024:

- ① The research fellows of the program "Research Fellowship for Young Scientists" (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science)
- ② The recipients of MEXT Scholarship
- ③ The recipients of the scholarship granted by the government of their home countries
- ④ The recipient of the support granted by WISE Program (Doctoral Program for World-leading Innovative & Smart Education)
- ⑤ Students who have received a sufficient level of scholarship (more than 2.4 million yen/year) related to living expenses.
- ⑥ Students who work for a company (TA, RA, part-time jobs excluded) and receive a sufficient and stable level of income for living expenses (more than 2.4 million yen/year)
- ⑦ Awardees of Broadening Opportunities for Outstanding young researchers and doctoral students

in Strategic areas (BOOST) Next-Generation AI Human Resource Development Program (Students in the Doctoral Program) by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST).

- ⑧ Students who are on "Leave of Absence" as of October 2024
- ⑨ Students who are enrolled beyond the standard academic years

3. Application Requirements

- Highly motivated students who are keen on developing their career path
- Students who aim to work hard and productively in unique and interdisciplinary research studies that can contribute SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals)
- Students who will make efforts to interact with companies etc., or create opportunities to work in various fields by:
 - Participating in long term internship / Working as research staff
 - Participating in social events such as networking events with company representatives etc. for Ph.D. students
 - Putting themselves in a research environment overseas

4. Fellowship Amount

Class 1. Particularly promising students (aprx.25% out of recipients): 1,450,000 yen in AY2024 *
(1,200,000 yen equivalent to living expenses, 250,000 yen for research expenses)

Class 2. Promising students (aprx.75% out of recipients) : 1,360,000 yen in FY2024 *
(1,110,000 yen equivalent to living expenses, 250,000 yen for research expenses)

[Note]

*1 This support in AY2024 is half of the annual amount (Class 1: 2,900,000 yen, Class 2: 2,720,000 yen) since the support will be provided for six months.

*2 The amount of the Research Fellowship is subject to change depending on JST's budget availability.

*3 The classification level will be determined by the project committee.

5. Where / How to Submit

To Submit through "u-Rad a management system for internal grants" after logging in using the university's unified authentication ID.

<https://u-rad.sec.tsukuba.ac.jp>

【筑波大学】2024 年度秋 次世代研究者挑戦的研究プログラム Autumn AY 2024.Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING)

https://u-rad.sec.tsukuba.ac.jp/login/index.php?support_id=9sZm4IPw9U10wFCMEMSCyA%3D%3D

To submit the application form in PDF data (FILE NAME: application category A or C, student ID number, your name, degree program name)

6. Application Deadline

5:00 p.m. (17:00), October 21 (Mon.), 2024 *Late applications cannot be accepted.

7. Recipient Tasks

(1) Mandatory Tasks

- To take the online course "APRIN research ethics e-learning program (CITI Japan)"(Selected students will be notified separately on how to attend)
- To submit the reports: "Research Progress Report" in the end of each month and "Final Reports" in the end of March
- To participate in the research presentation hosted by the project
- To agree to provide your email address to JST from the University of Tsukuba
The purpose is for JST to follow up directly with the selected students.
- To register with "JGRAD"
MEXT requests our university to report follow-up of the awardees for more than 10 years.
- To register for the matching system for Job-type research internship
- To register for "PhD x FUTURE.", a matching system for young researchers
- To acquire more than one credit in the Graduate General Education Courses

(2) Tasks to be implemented as far as possible

To develop your career path proactively, please implement the following tasks as far as possible:

- To study abroad (or some overseas experiences equivalent to studying abroad)
- To participate in the mutual exchange activities between Japanese students and international students through the campus mini-camp
- To engage in long-term internship at a company or work as a research staff at a company, etc.
- To participate in the doctoral student exchange meetings across universities organized by JST
- To participate in other activities as instructed by the Project Officer actively

8. Withdrawal of Fellowship

If the Project Officer judges that the awardee meets one of the conditions described below, Project Officer will provide guidance for improvement. However, improvement will not be expected, the research fellowship will be terminated.

- Not to accomplish the assigned tasks
- Not to proceed / work as planned

In cases such as a false application or research misconduct, the approval will be revoked and the awardee will have to return the whole amount of the research fellowship already paid.

9. Others

- (1) All awardees have the duty of giving their recent reports. The University is expected to report follow-up of the awardees for more than 10 years.

- (2) The selection results (the awardees of fellowship) will be disclosed on the University website.
- (3) The grant for living expenses, a part of the fellowship, will be considered miscellaneous income. Therefore, awardee is necessary to pay tax through final tax return in the following year.

[References]

(1) Income Tax (Allowance for Dependents)

A tax allowance per each dependent is granted to the taxpayer who has dependent family. If the dependent member's income (January to December) exceeds JPY 480 000, the tax allowance cannot be taken in the following year. In addition, the residence tax of the following year will be calculated according to the income of the year

(2) Health Insurance – Family Membership

The annual income of a dependent family member must be less than JPY 1.3 million. Since the living allowance is considered income, the recipients will need to join the National Health Insurance (国民健康保険) themselves.

(3) Tuition Fee Exemption

Application to general tuition fee exemption is available at the same time as applying for this project. The major factors of selection are usually finance and the applicants' family structure. Depending on the applicant's incomes (including the fellowships), the waiver may not be granted.

10. Contact information

Division of Student Welfare, Department of Student Affairs, University of Tsukuba

E-mail: gk.jst-spring@un.tsukuba.ac.jp