

**Next-Generation AI Human Resource Development Program
(Students in the Doctoral Program)
Application Guideline [AY2026]**

Our university has been selected for 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), a national research and development agency. From the academic year 2024, we will provide financial support in the form of grants (living expenses and research expenses, hereinafter referred to as "research incentive funds, etc.") to outstanding doctoral program students who are committed to engaging in research and development contributing to the next-generation AI field. The overview of this project is as follows, and this document outlines the necessary details for the adoption of this project for the academic year 2026.

■ **Purpose of the Project**

- Supporting PhD students to devote themselves to unrestricted, challenging and interdisciplinary research projects
- By providing funds equivalent to living expenses, we aim to create an environment where students can fully dedicate themselves to their research, thereby nurturing researchers with advanced expertise and research capabilities in the next-generation AI field.
- Assisting 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**

<Project Title >

「学際的次世代 AI イノベーション人材育成プロジェクト」

Interdisciplinary Next-Generation AI Innovation Human Resource Development Project

- Project Officer
Suzuki Kenji – Professor, Institute of Systems and Information Engineering

■ **Project Period**

From AY2024 to AY2028*

1. Applicants, number of hires, application period:

(1-1) Application Class A

Course	Target	Number of Students Recruited	Support Period
Doctoral Program (区 分制の博士後期課程)	2026/4 1st year enrollees	12 students	From AY2026 to AY2028 (3 years)
3 rd year of PhD course (3年制博士課程)	2026/4 1st year enrollees		
Enrolled in the Doctoral Course 一貫 制博士課程 (Excluding the Doctoral Program in Medical Sciences)	2026/4 3 rd year admitted/transferred students Or Students who have passed the mid-term exams etc., and who have 3 years left in their period of study.		

* To continue this program, 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 program period will not change. However, for leaves of absence due to life events such as childbirth or childcare, the support period may be suspended or extended depending on individual circumstances. (The maximum duration for the Research Incentive Fund is three years.)

* 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.

* This AY2026 recruitment is not open to students in the Doctoral Program in Medical Sciences.

(1-2) Application Class B

Course	Target	Number of Students Recruited	Support Period
Doctoral Program (区 分制の博士後期課程)	Students who have 2 years left in their period of study.	A few people	From AY2025 to AY2026 (2 years)
3 rd year of PhD course (3年制博士課程)			
Enrolled in the Doctoral Course 一貫 制博士課程 (Excluding the Doctoral Program in Medical Sciences)	Students who have passed the mid-term exams etc., and who 2 years left in their period of study.		

* To continue this program, 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 program period will not change. However, for leaves of absence due to life events such as childbirth or childcare, the support period may be suspended or extended depending on individual circumstances. (The maximum duration for the Research Incentive Fund is three years.

* 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.

* This AY2026 recruitment is not open to students in the Doctoral Program in Medical Sciences.

(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 Documents based on the JSPS Research Fellow (DC) Application Form: Designated Format

* Please complete the sections on "Research Plan," "Protection of Human Rights and Compliance with Laws and Regulations," and "Self-analysis of Research Performance" using a format based on the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Research Fellow (DC) Application Form.

2. Students who are not Eligible (no matter the class)

Those who apply to the following conditions are NOT ELIGIBLE to apply for this project in 2026:

- ① The research fellows of the program "Research Fellowship for Young Scientists" (JSPS)
- ② The recipients of MEXT Scholarship
- ③ The recipients of the scholarship granted by the government of their home countries
- ④ Those who have received a sufficient level of scholarship (more than 2.4 million yen/year) related to living expenses.
- ⑤ Those who work for a company and receive a sufficient and stable level of income for living expenses (more than 2.4 million yen/year)
* Compensation for TA/RA activities is not included in stable or fixed income.
- ⑥ Those who are on "Leave of Absence" as of April 2026

3. Application Requirements

- Students conducting research contributing to the field of AI and emerging/converging areas within the AI field (next-generation AI field)
- Highly motivated students who are keen on developing their career path
- To actively engage in innovative and interdisciplinary educational research by conducting studies that contribute to the achievement of SDGs and the creation of scientific and technological innovations.

- Those who will try to interact with companies or making chances to work in various fields by:
 - Participating in long term internship / Working as research staff
 - Participating in social events such as company networking events, or gatherings for PhD students
 - Having some experience abroad such as through study-abroad or other experience

4. Fellowship Amount

3.9 million yen (2.4 million yen for living (Research Incentive Fund), 1.5 million yen for research)

[Note]

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

5. Where / How to Submit

Submit your application during the submission period below, through "u-Rad a management system for internal grants" after logging in using the university's unified authentication ID.

【筑波大学】2026 年度春季 博士後期課程学生支援プロジェクト SPRING (区分1、2) & BOOST

<AY 2026 Spring> SPRING (Category1,2 & BOOST)

https://u-rad.sec.tsukuba.ac.jp/login/index.php?support_id=TwB%2F6eO2neM3%2FISR72j7Gg%3D%3D

* Applications are being accepted simultaneously for Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING), but you cannot be selected for both.

Submit the application form as a PDF data (the file name: BOOST, student ID number, name, degree program name"). (Example: BOOST_202699999_Taro Tsukuba_PolicyandPlanningSciences)

However, if you are applying to both BOOST and SPRING, please follow the instructions in the SPRING application guidelines.

6. Submission Period

May 12 (Tue), 2026 to May 18 (Mon), 2026 5PM *Late applications cannot be accepted.

7. Awardee Tasks

(1) Mandatory Tasks

- To take the online course "APRIN research ethics e-learning program (eAPRIN)" (Selected students will be notified separately on how to attend)
- To submit the reports: "Research Progress Report" and "Final Reports" on a quarterly basis
- To participate in the research presentation hosted by the program
- To actively utilize the dual-mentor system promoted by this program (Students who already have a dual mentor do not need to take any further action.)
- To engage in research activities with a sense of self-awareness and responsibility as a BOOST Research Fellow

- To submit the pledge to agree with sharing your email address with the JST
- To continue to cooperate with follow-up surveys conducted by the university
The University is expected to report follow-up of the awardees' career for more than 10 years.
- To register on the matching system for Job-type research internships
- To register for "PhD x FUTURE.", a matching system for young researchers
- To acquire more than one credit in the Graduate General Education Courses Program

(2) Tasks to be implemented as far as possible

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

- 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 (tentative; cooperative study and exchange meetings involving overnight stay)
- To engage in long term internship / working as research staff
- To participate in social gatherings of awardees conducted by JST
- To participate actively in events / activities offered by the Project Officer of the university

8. Revocation of Fellowship

If the Project Officer determines that the awardee has met any of the conditions described below, the awardee will be given guidance on improvement. If the awardee does not show improvement, this fellowship will be terminated.

- Not accomplish the assigned tasks
- Not proceeding research as planned

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

9. Others

- (1) The selection results (the recipient of fellowship) will be disclosed on the University website.
- (2) Research Incentive Fund (equivalent to living expenses) as of a part of the fellowship, will be considered miscellaneous income. Therefore, it will be necessary to declare it 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

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
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