

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science

BRIDGE Fellowship Program

FY2023 Application Guidelines

1. Purpose

The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) provides opportunities for overseas researchers who have conducted research activities under JSPS International Fellowships for Research in Japan or other JSPS programs to re-visit Japan to create, sustain and/or strengthen research collaborations with Japanese colleagues. The objective is to build strong networks among researchers in Japan and other countries through a variety of activities. These include former JSPS fellows visiting their past host institutions in Japan, or coming to Japan to plan or implement joint research projects and seminars, to offer training or lectures for young researchers, or to prepare or attend scientific conferences and research meetings.

Researchers invited to Japan under this fellowship program are called “BRIDGE Fellows.”

Based on applications by individual researchers, candidates are recommended to JSPS Head Office by JSPS alumni associations and JSPS overseas offices or the JSPS-designated official in the Japanese Embassy for countries without a JSPS overseas office. Hereinafter a JSPS overseas office or a JSPS-designated official in a Japanese Embassy will be commonly referred to as a “JSPS office,” and the alumni association and JSPS office as “alumni association/JSPS office.”

2. Applicable Fields

All fields of the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences are included under this program.

3. BRIDGE Fellow Eligibility

To be eligible, a researcher must meet the following requirements.

- (1) Be a researcher who has experienced research in Japan under a JSPS program and who is currently a regular member of one of the officially recognized 20 JSPS alumni associations.
- (2) Be a researcher who is employed as an active researcher working at a university or a research institute.
- (3) Agreement by host researcher to all seven items of support stipulated in Form B (Agreement by Host Researcher).

* Upon receiving a recommendation from an alumni association/JSPS office, JSPS contacts the proposed host researcher in Japan. If a proposed host says that he/she cannot provide the support stipulated in Form B or cannot host the fellow, JSPS will not be able to accept the recommendation. Therefore, candidates should communicate fully with their proposed hosts before applying.

* Researchers who have already been supported under the BRIDGE Fellowship Program within the last 5 years (FY2018-FY2022) are ineligible for this award.

* Each alumni association/JSPS office has its own screening criteria as provided in “PROVISION b), Screening Criteria.” Applicants should check it before applying.

4. Host Researcher Eligibility

In principle, researchers who are employed full time or classified as such at one of the Japanese research institutions listed below are eligible to host a BRIDGE Fellow.

- (1) Universities and interuniversity research institutes
- (2) MEXT-affiliated institutions engaged in research
- (3) Colleges of technology
- (4) Institutions designated by the Minister of MEXT

* Eligible institutions under (1)-(4) are listed at:

<https://www.kokusai.jsps.go.jp/jsps1/kikanList.do> (Posted only in Japanese)

* Definition of “full-time employment” is according to the regulations of the host institution.

* There are cases when researchers not employed in a full-time position may be eligible. Such persons must be eligible to apply for Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (KAKENHI) and their affiliated institution must judge them able to implement the project and must provide an appropriate research environment (e.g., laboratory, equipment, personnel) for it.

5. Number of Fellowships Awarded

Total of 52 for FY 2023. Quotas will be announced to alumni associations/JSPS office.

* The number of quotas allocated to alumni associations may change based on the extent of the collaborative relationships they have created, sustained and/or strengthened with Japanese researchers/institutions. The results of each BRIDGE visit are to be recorded in reports prepared by both the Fellow/host researcher and the nominating committee of each alumni association/JSPS office. These reports are used to evaluate the visits along with the collaborative relations created, sustained or strengthened through them.

6. Visit Period and Dates

- (1) A period from 14 to 30 consecutive days
- (2) Under this recruitment, revisits are to start during the following period:
1 July 2023 through 31 March 2024

Please note the following points.

*All offices in Japan are officially closed during the period between 29 December 2023 and 3 January 2024 (6 days). As researchers may not be able to carry out their activities at Japanese universities/research institutions during this period, it should not be included in your BRIDGE tenure.

7. Terms of Award

- (1) A round-trip air ticket (based on JSPS regulations)

*JSPS cannot reimburse BRIDGE Fellows for a ticket that they have purchased by themselves.

- (2) Daily maintenance allowance of JPY 13,000
- (3) Research support allowance of up to JPY 100,000
- (4) Overseas travel insurance coverage

*When the applicant would like to use the research support allowance, the host researcher will need to apply for it through his/her host institution. Please see the rules for the research support allowance in the Program Guidelines issued upon your selection and in additional notices to be issued.

8. Application Procedure for the Program

Applications are recruited and screened by alumni associations in coordination with their affiliated JSPS offices, which recommend candidates to JSPS Head Office. Applications by researchers are to be submitted to the place and by the deadline specified by each alumni association/JSPS office. To ensure effective screening, researchers should include all required documents with their applications.

- (1) Documents to be submitted to the alumni association/JSPS office

The application and documents submitted by the applicant are screened by the alumni association/JSPS office, which sends them along with the required documents (sub-paragraphs 1) and 2) below) to JSPS Head Office via email. Please use the email address in Section 12 “Contacts.”

All papers used in applications should be A4 size. The format prescribed by JSPS is to be used in writing recommendations. The size and format of the forms should NOT be altered by the applicants.

- 1) Application documents prepared by the applicants (and submitted to the alumni association/JSPS office)

- (a) Application for JSPS BRIDGE Fellowship (Form A)
- (b) Agreement by Host Researcher (Form B)

*Applicants should provide the alumni association/JSPS office with any other documents they wish to be submitted.

- 2) Recommendation documents prepared by the applicant’s alumni association in coordination with the JSPS office

- (a) List of Recommendees from BRIDGE Nominating Committee (Form C)
- (b) Letter of Recommendation from BRIDGE Nominating Committee (Form D)
- (c) PROVISIONS
 - a) Recruitment Policy
 - b) Screening Criteria
 - c) Rules for Nominating Committee Members
 - d) List of Nominating Committee Members

- (2) Recommendation deadline

Alumni associations are, in coordination with JSPS offices, to submit recommendations for BRIDGE Fellow candidates to JSPS Head Office no later than 14 February 2023.

*The above deadline is for alumni association/JSPS office to submit its recommendation documents to JSPS Head Office. The time frame for applicants to submit their applications to alumni association/JSPS office should be earlier.

*Applicants should not submit documents directly to JSPS Head Office.

9. Selection Process and Notification

(1) Screening is carried out using criteria devised by the alumni association in coordination with the JSPS office and approved by JSPS Head Office.

Examples of screening criteria

- The visit will contribute to creating, sustaining and/or strengthening scientific network(s) between the applicant's home country and Japan.
- The visit is expected to advance research and to spawn new scientific collaborations.
- Good pre-visit communication is carried out between the applicant and proposed host researcher in establishing a concrete activity plan.
- The plan shows how the visit will contribute to creating, sustaining and/or strengthening the scientific network(s) between the applicant's home country and Japan.
- The plan articulates ways in which the visit will strengthen academic collaboration in the future.
- The applicant and host researcher in Japan had discussed in detail the applicant's proposed visit plan prior to the application being filed. The plan is clearly defined and the host is interested in carrying it out.
- The applicant is actively involved in alumni activities.

(2) Notification of Selection Results by JSPS Head Office

- 1) An award letter from JSPS president and accompanying documents will be sent to the successful candidates. Notification date: Mid-April
- 2) Unsuccessful candidates are not notified of their selection results.
- 3) JSPS cannot respond to individual requests regarding selection results.

10. Roles of Alumni Associations

- (1) Widely disseminate fellowship recruitment information to their members.
- (2) Establish a recruitment policy, screening criteria, rules for nominating committee members, and a list of nominating committee members in the form of PROVISION a) through d), and submit them to JSPS Head Office for prior approval. When amending the approved PROVISIONS, changes to the recruitment policy PROVISION a) must be approved by JSPS Head Office prior to issuing a call for applications, and changes to the screening criteria PROVISION b) and the rules for nominating committee members PROVISION c) must be approved before starting the screening process. Minor changes such as to the recruitment period or nominating committee members PROVISION d) do not require approval.
- (3) Prepare application guidelines, specifying the deadline and place to submit applications. When doing so, the screening criteria should be included in the application guidelines to ensure fairness.
- (4) Specify the name and address of the person(s) responsible for this fellowship program at alumni association/JSPS office in the application guidelines.

- (5) Verify that applicants have sufficiently communicated with their proposed host researchers in Japan and that all the conditions for hosting the Fellow's visit are met. Recommend candidates selected using the approved screening criteria to JSPS Head Office by the deadline stipulated in Section 8.
- (6) Submit Form D to JSPS Head Office describing the reason for each recommendation.
- (7) Prepare "Report on BRIDGE Fellowship Activities by BRIDGE Nominating Committee" (Form E) as an annual report and submit it to JSPS by 25 June 2024.
- (8) For alumni associations in countries/region with a JSPS overseas office, carry out the above functions in coordination with the JSPS overseas office.

11. Others

- (1) A researcher may not be awarded a fellowship under both this program and another JSPS program at the same time.
- (2) A researcher may not be awarded a BRIDGE Fellowship and a fellowship from another funding organization for a purpose of visiting Japan at the same time.
- (3) Applicants are to describe the results they obtained in other JSPS program(s) and their relevance to this BRIDGE fellowship program.
- (4) There is a limit of one application per person under each recruitment. This should be confirmed by the alumni association/JSPS office when an applicant belongs to two or more alumni associations.

12. Contacts

Applicants should contact the place designated by their alumni association/JSPS office. They should not submit documents directly to JSPS Head Office. Only documents forwarded to JSPS Head Office by alumni association/JSPS office will be processed.

The alumni association/JSPS office are to submit recommendation documents to the following address:

International Policy Planning Division
International Policy Planning Department
Headquarters for International Affairs
Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)
5-3-1 Kojimachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0083 JAPAN
Tel: +81-(0)3-3263-1869

NOTICE

※As the situation with the novel coronavirus changes, we may consider applying flexibility in our handling of some items in the Application Guidelines.

※Due to the suspension of new entries into Japan from abroad as a result of border-control enforcement measures against the novel coronavirus, it has been difficult for people awarded JSPS International Fellowships during the period from FY 2019 through FY 2021 to enter Japan. There have been frequent cases when Fellows were unable to come to Japan as planned at the time of their application. Please be aware that it may be similarly difficult for Fellows awarded FY2023 JSPS International Fellowships to come to Japan as planned.

1. False information etc., in the application form

Should JSPS determine any information in an application to be falsified, plagiarized or otherwise flawed, including the forged signature, the application will be rejected or, if already awarded, the fellowship withdrawn.

2. Response to acts of research misconduct and funding misuse

JSPS will take appropriate measures (e.g. terminate project, require reimbursement of part or all of allocated funds) in cases of misuse of research funds, specific research misconduct (e.g. fabrication, falsification, plagiarism), unjustifiable acts (e.g. discrimination, harassment), or violation of laws.

Please refer to the following websites for “Rules for Responding to Misconduct and Misuse of Funds in Research Activities”, with regard to measures taken against misuse of research funds.

<https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-plaza/bridge/program.html>

3. System for implementing the “Guidelines for Responding to Research Misconduct”

When making proposals to JSPS and conducting research activities, research institutions are to follow the “Guidelines for Responding to Misconduct in Research” (adopted by MEXT on 26 August 2014).” If MEXT judges via the results of an inspection that a research institution’s system is inadequate or defective, it or an independent administrative institution under MEXT’s jurisdiction may cut or reduce the indirect budget allocation of the institution’s competitive funding.

Guidelines for Responding to Misconduct in Research

https://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/jinzai/fusei/1359618.htm

4. Research ethics education coursework

To promote the proper conduct of research activities and prevent misconduct in advance, it is first necessary to raise the level of researcher ethics within research institutions. Host institutions (host researcher’s institutions) are therefore to establish educational courses for candidates (BRIDGE Fellows) to take in research ethics.

(References) Learning materials on avoiding misconduct in research activities

- *For the Sound Development of Science - The Attitude of a Conscientious Scientist* by Editing Committee of Japan Society for the Promotion of Science
<https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-kousei/ethics.html>
- e-Learning Course on Research Ethics [eL CoRE]
https://elcore.jsps.go.jp/top.aspx_
- APRIN e-learning program (eAPRIN)
- Research ethics courses conducted by Institutions based on the “Guidelines for responding to Misconduct in Research” (Adopted by MEXT on 26 August 2014)

5. Handling of personal information

Personal information contained in application materials is to be strictly controlled in accordance with the “Law to Protect Personal Information Held by Independent Administrative Institutions” and JSPS’s own regulations for protecting personal information. JSPS will use such information exclusively for the purpose of implementing its programs. (This may involve the provision of personal information to external companies commissioned to electronically process and/or manage program-related data.) If selected for a fellowship, candidates (BRIDGE Fellows) should note that their name,

nationality, title and affiliated organization, research theme, fellowship tenure, host institution, host researcher's name and title, and research reports may be given public access. Reports submitted by alumni associations may also be given public access on the Internet.

For researchers located within the European Economic Area which embodies the EU, their agreement is to be obtained to comply with the above-stated "handing of personal information" in line with the "General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)."

6. Research conducted for military purposes

JSPS does not support any research related to military affairs.

7. Security Trade Control

Much research on cutting-edge technology is being conducted in Japan's research institutions. Along with Japan's advancing internationalization, there has been an increase in the number of foreign students and overseas researchers residing in Japan. This has increased the risk of advanced technologies and research materials and equipment leaking out and for them to be used in the development and production of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Research institutions are to take systematic measure to keep research results and products that can be diverted to military use out of the hands of WMD developers, terrorist groups, and other persons whose activities are suspect.

In Japan, export controls (*) are carried out under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act (Act No. 228 of 1949) (hereinafter referred to as "Foreign Exchange Law"). Therefore, in principle, in order to export (provide) cargo and technology regulated by the Foreign Exchange Law, it is necessary to obtain permission of the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry.

Starting with the Foreign Exchange Law, candidates (BRIDGE Fellows) must follow all of Japan's pertinent laws and ordinances, guidelines, and directives. If research is conducted in violation of these laws and ordinances, measures and penalties prescribed in them may be enforced along with the termination of the candidate's research funding or his/her scheduled allocation of research funding.

(*) Export controls

Japan's Security Export Control System established on the basis of international agreements mainly consists of (1) "List rules" which require permission of the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry in principle when exporting cargo or providing technologies that carry specifications and/or functions higher than certain levels, such as carbon fiber and numerically controlled machine tools etc., and (2) "Catch-all regulation" which requires permission of the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry when exporting cargo or providing technologies that are not subject to regulation under the List rules but do fall under certain regulatory requirements (application requirements, consumer requirements and/or informed requirements).

Not only export of cargo but also provision of technology is subject to regulation under the Foreign Exchange Law. When providing a "List rules" technology to nonresidents (including residents in Specific Categories on and after 1 May 2022) or providing it within a foreign country, prior permission for the provision is required. "Provision of technology" includes not only providing technical information such as design drawings, specifications, manuals, samples, and prototypes via storage media such as paper, mail, CD, USB memory, but also providing work knowledge and technical assistance at seminars via technical instruction, skill training etc. Researchers should be aware that there may be cases in which technologies subject to regulation by the Foreign Exchange

Law are involved when mentoring foreign students and/or conducting joint research activities with overseas groups.

Information about the Security Export Control is posted on the website of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. Please see the following website.

<https://www.meti.go.jp/policy/anpo/englishpage.html>

8. Approximate Number of Fellowship Awarded and Terms of Award

The approximate number of fellowship awarded and amounts of the awards are subject to change for budgetary reasons.

9. Obligations and procedures after being provisionally selected

Candidates (BRIDGE Fellows), host researchers and host institutions should read the “Program Guidelines” enclosed with the award letter for information on their obligations under the program, procedures to be carried out, and rules to be followed (e.g. conditions for taking temporary leaves of absence, for using the Research Support Allowance). You may refer to the past Program Guidelines posted below.

<https://www.jspss.go.jp/english/e-plaza/bridge/program.html>

10. FAQ

FAQ on this program are provided on the following websites. Please refer to them if there is something unclear to you with regard to making an application or procedures to follow after you are selected.

<p style="text-align: center;">OBLIGATION OF THE CANDIDATE AND HOST RESEARCHER (INCLUDING MEASURES AGAINST MISCONDUCT AND MISUSE OF FUNDS)</p>

The host researchers, candidates (BRIDGE Fellows) and host institutions should bear the following eleven points in mind when applying for the program, and should observe them if selected for a fellowship. After selection, they will be expected to observe the regulations and procedures stipulated in the Program Guidelines for the JSPS BRIDGE Fellowship. If either the candidate (BRIDGE Fellows) or host researcher should fail to do so, the fellowship may be withdrawn, allowances (including airfares) stopped, and already-paid allowances (including research support allowance) reclaimed.

- (1) So as to allow the smooth progress of the candidate’s research in Japan, before submitting an application, the host researcher is to fully inform the candidate of conditions at the host laboratory, including his/her status under the fellowship, and ascertain the candidate’s agreement to accept those conditions.
- (2) The host researcher will, in cooperation with the administration office of the host institution, provide a suitable arrangement for the candidate to pursue his/her joint research and other research activities. The host researcher will also assist the candidate, when needed, with immigration processing (including applying for a “certificate of eligibility”), securing domicile and other matters related to his/her stay in Japan.

- (3) During the fellowship tenures, the host researcher is advised not to commit such acts equivalent to human rights violations (e.g. discrimination, gender discrimination, sexual harassment, academic harassment, power harassment, abuse of authority, neglect) and should be particularly careful not to say or do anything that could be interpreted as committing such acts. If a researcher should commit such an unethical act and be punished via measures imposed by the host institution, s/he will be restricted from applying for the JSPS International Fellowships Program for a period of five years starting from the day that the punishment is administered.
- (4) During fellowship tenures, candidates shall not, either in or outside the host institution, infringe in any way on the human rights of others, including racial or gender discrimination or other forms of abuse.
- (4) As a rule, fellows are to stay in Japan continuously during the tenure of their fellowships and concentrate on their research at the host institution. Fellows may not engage in other work, neither paid nor unpaid, during their tenures.
- (6) The host researchers and candidates shall follow the rules established by the host institution and JSPS prohibiting acts of research misconduct, (e.g., fabricating or falsifying research results) and the misuse of research funds.
- (7) The candidate and host researcher must submit a post-visit report, using the “Research Report” (Form 7), to JSPS Head Office and the alumni association/JSPS office within three months after the end of their visits.
- (8) When presenting or publishing the content or results of research conducted under the fellowship, the JSPS BRIDGE Fellowship should be acknowledged.
- (9) The host institution shall inform both the host researcher and the candidate of the rules that it and JSPS have established to prevent research misconduct (e.g., fabricating or falsifying research results) and misuse of research funds (e.g. personal use of funds, use of funds for other purposes) and of the penalties for violations. It shall take action to see that these rules are obeyed.
- (10) Candidates must not carry out research with military objectives. Applicants (host researchers) and host institutions are ascertain the understanding and agreement of Fellows and Hosts that JSPS does not support research with military objective.
- (11) The host institution is to take first responsibility for the candidate’s actions, so must be proactive in preventing any human rights violations, research misconduct or misuse of research funds on the part of the candidate during his/her tenure. If any such problems should occur, the host institution will endeavor to resolve them. If requested by JSPS, it is to report such problems.

OTHER RELEVANT ISSUES

1) Cooperation in carrying out site surveys and questionnaires

Site surveys are carried out on host institutions for the purpose of verifying the program’s implementation system and the management, execution and auditing of program funding. Host

researchers and candidates are asked to cooperate in these surveys. Also, questionnaires are carried out for the purpose of improving JSPS programs. Host researchers, candidates and host institutions are asked to fill out these questionnaires.

2) Promotion of “Open Access” to the research papers supported by JSPS International

Fellowships for Research in Japan

JSPS endorses general policy of promotion of open access of publications of research results funded by public grants including KAKENHI grants. Note that open access is not mandatory if there are justifiable reasons for deferral such as copyright-related issues or insufficient repository infrastructure at the research institution. The open access implementation policy of JSPS is described on the following webpage:

URL: https://www.jsps.go.jp/data/Open_access.pdf

(1) Reference 1: What is “Open Access”

Open access refers to the basic idea that research papers published in peer-reviewed journals should be made freely accessible by anyone.

(2) Reference 2: Different Routes to Open Access

There are 3 main ways of open access implementation:

- 1) Opening access to articles published in conventional subscription fee type academic journals after a certain period of time (Embargo) (* 1) (for example 6 months later) by opening the final manuscript to an Institutional Repository (* 2) established by the research institution to which the author belongs, or by opening the final manuscript to the website etc. established by the researchers (self-archiving) (* 3).
- 2) Opening access by posting the article on the Web established by the research community or public institution.
- 3) Opening access to articles immediately by paying the publication fee (APC: Article Processing Charge) by the author of the article.

***1: “Embargo”**

The predetermined period from the time an article is published in an academic journal to the time it is released so that it can be posted on an online open-access archiving system (repository).

***2: “Institutional Repository”**

An online archiving system created by university or research institution for storage and dissemination of the intellectual products. Institutional repositories play important roles in the reform of academic information distribution by enabling the researchers to register their own articles. They also allow the transmission of research and education achievements of the research institution, PR for both the research institution and the researcher, guaranteeing the accountability of research and education activities towards society, and the long-term conservation of intellectual products.

***3: “Self-archiving”**

“Self-archiving” refers to online posting of articles published in academic journals, dissertations, or data by those other than the publisher, (the researcher or research institution) generally on their institutional repositories.

3) Registration of the Researcher Information in researchmap

“researchmap” (<http://researchmap.jp/>) is, as a general guide to Japanese researchers, Japan’s largest researcher information database. Registered information on research results can be openly disseminated over the Internet using researchmap. As research map is linked to e-Rad and many university faculty databases, it allows registered information to be accessed by other systems. Furthermore, the Japanese Government plans to further utilize researchmap, so please register your researcher information on the researchmap site.

4) Registration on JSPS-Net

JSPS-Net is a social networking service that facilitates new collaborations within a worldwide researcher community. It is mainly aimed at Japanese and overseas researchers residing in Japan or abroad, overseas researchers scheduled to come to Japan, and the international programs staff of universities and other institutions.

As JSPS-Net makes extensive use of social networking service (SNS) functions in supporting the establishment of researcher communities, it’s hope that you will take good advantage of its support when expanding your own circle of colleagues.