The JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists: A program ideal for students aiming to become a research/development leader in the future

1. What the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists Is:

The “Research Fellowship for Young Scientists” is one of the researcher-fostering programs run by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS). From among **doctoral course students (DC) and postdoctoral fellows (PD)**, this program **adopts “JSPS Fellows”**, who possess excellent research capabilities and **wish to dedicate themselves to conducting research** at universities or other **research institutes** and **provides them with supplies research-encouragement funding.**

In addition to research-encouragement funding (Stipends), those adopted under this program can **receive a Grant-in-Aid for JSPS Fellows (research grant)**, thereby being able to **stably conduct their research activities**.

By providing gifted young researchers with an opportunity to focus on a freely chosen research topic based on their own innovative ideas, this program ultimately aims to contribute to the fostering and securing of creative researchers who can forge the future of academic research in Japan.

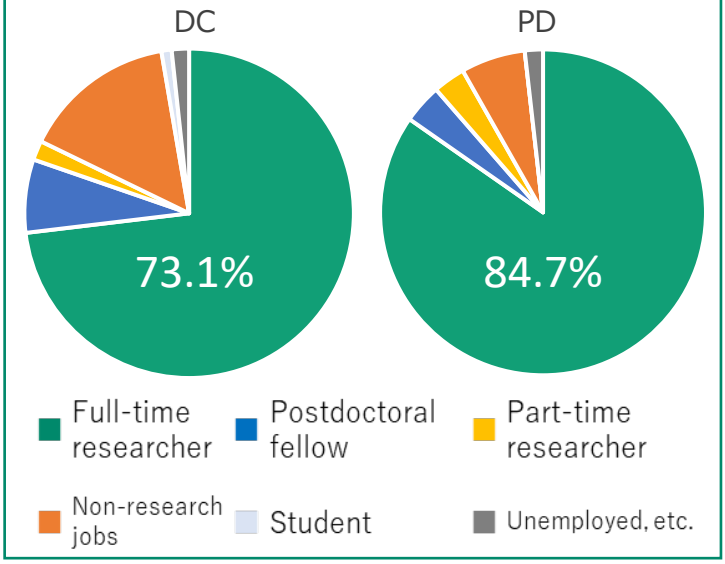
Therefore, it is **a national investment in distinguished human resources for the future, rather than just providing grants for research themes**.

Accordingly, the program **allows researchers to hold an extremely high status,** since simply being adopted as JSPS Fellows indicates that they were recognized as being worthy of a national investment and they can state their statuses as such on their curriculum vitae in the search for employment.

In fact, as shown in the pie chart on the right, of all JSPS Fellows, DCs and PDs who were later employed as full-time researchers account for as many as about 73% and 85%, respectively. Indeed, it is not too much to say that they are the **chosen young researchers**.

Results of Investigation into the Employment Situation of JSPS Fellows

Employment Situation 5 Years after the Completion of JSPS Fellowship
(Research by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, as of April 1, 2024)



Tenure, Stipend, and Research Grant

Category	Tenure	Stipend (Monthly FY2025 Amount)	Research Grant (Total Amount During Tenure)
DC1	3 Yrs.	200,000 yen	Up to 4.5 million yen
DC2	2 Yrs.		Up to 3.0 million yen
PD	3 Yrs.	362,000 yen *	Up to 4.5 million yen **
RPD	3 Yrs.	362,000 yen *	Up to 4.5 million yen **

* JSPS implements the “Support Program for Employment of Young Researchers to Improve the Research Environment“. Under this program, PD and RPD employed by research institutes registered "Employment System Introduction Institution“ will receive a salary equivalent to or greater than the above stipend from institutes.
** 30% of indirect expenses are also separately provided.

<Definition of each category>
DC1・・・Doctoral course students with three more years to complete the course
DC2・・・Doctoral course students with up to two more years to complete the course
PD ・・・Postdoctoral fellows with less than five years having elapsed since receipt of the doctoral degree
RPD・・・Postdoctoral fellows who resumed research suspended due to child-bearing and/or infant-nursing

2. Supports Available to You If Selected as a JSPS Fellow

In addition to the offering of stipend and Grant-in-Aid for JSPS Fellows, the following supports, which form the attraction of the program, will be available to you if adopted as a JSPS Fellow.

(1) Overseas travels during the JSPS Fellowship period

If so required by your research, you may conduct it temporarily at overseas research institute(s). This fellowship program allows you to **undertake international travels for a maximum and total of two-thirds of your fellowship period** by using the research grants, etc., thereby building up research experience abroad over a long period of time.

In addition, JSPS also provides overseas travel support for JSPS Fellows in cooperation with corresponding overseas institutions.

(2) Suspension and extension of fellowship for child-bearing and/or infant-nursing

As an effort to promote environment where not only female researchers but also young researchers can work comfortably, **the fellowship may be suspended and extended** in cases where child-bearing and/or infant-nursing would make it difficult for either female or male Fellows to focus on research.

(3) Receipt of other research funds than Grant-in-Aid for JSPS Fellows

A JSPS Fellow may receive a donation from a host research institution, financial assistance equivalent to living expenses from an alumni association, scholarships and grants from local governments and private companies, etc. within the scope of the research-only obligation during your JSPS Fellowship period. If your research topic chosen in your capacity as a JSPS Fellow is expected to develop beyond its initial scope, you will be able to receive other research funds than Grant-in-Aid for JSPS Fellows to pursue such research.

(4) (PD, RPD only) Employment at research institutions

When PD and RPD selects a research institution registered as an "Employment System Introduction Institution“ under the “Support Program for Employment of Young Researchers to Improve the Research Environment“ implemented by JSPS as a host institution, **he/she will be employed at the research institution in a full-time equivalent position**. Tohoku University is registered as one of these institutes and provides support for young researchers by adding 82,000 yen/month to the salary of PD and RPD, combining the support provided by this program with the University's own support.

TU website

TU Research Promotion Division website

3. Preparations Toward Your Application If You Have Become Interested

You now understand from Items 1 and 2 how captivating and important the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists is to those aiming to become researchers. At the same time, however, the chances of being adopted are not high at all. For this reason, you must **start collecting relevant information and making other preparations of your own toward filing an application early enough, e.g., during your fourth year of the undergraduate school or first year of master’s course.**

Selection of JSPS Fellows for FY2025
The numbers of applicants and adopters by research area and selection ratio by category

(Research by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, as of July 1, 2025)

Category		Humanities	Social Sciences	Mathematical and Physical Sciences	Chemistry	Engineering Sciences	Informatics	Biological Sciences	Agricultural/ Environmental Sciences	Medical, Dental and Pharmaceutical Sciences	Selection Ratio
DC1	Applicants	438	487	755	484	834	398	482	442	639	14.3%
	Adopters	62	66	109	68	120	57	70	64	92	
DC2	Applicants	718	778	928	665	1,416	630	592	743	974	14.7%
	Adopters	106	115	140	99	202	86	91	111	142	
PD	Applicants	284	224	324	45	88	45	175	137	197	23.9%
	Adopters	74	56	69	14	12	10	45	30	53	

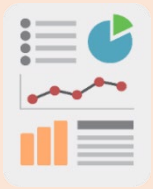
Prep.1: Produce as many research achievements as possible on your strengths up until the filing of your application

In the screening process for JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists, the following criteria will be evaluated: (1) "conception and originality of the research plan" and (2) "qualifications as a researcher. For this reason, the application form is divided into two main sections: "Research plan" and "Self-analysis of research execution ability. In the **"Self-analysis of research execution" section, which will be used to judge whether or not you are qualified as a researcher to carry out the research plan**, you need to describe your "strengths in research (e.g., independence in research, ability to think and solve problems)" and " what you consider to be the factors necessary for further development as a researcher in the future". In order to make these statements convincing, it is essential that they be based on evidence. **The most important evidence is the research achievements you have made up to that point.**

Therefore, if you want to be JSPS Fellow, **you should consult with your academic advisor as soon as possible** about what theme you would like to research as a JSPS Fellow and make your research achievements that you can show that as much as possible before the application. In doing so, particularly important elements include; **writing papers as a lead author**, **writing peer-reviewed papers, rather than non-peer-reviewed ones**; and **providing presentations at international conferences (taking the podium as a lead author)**.

Examples of Research Achievements:

- **Papers published in academic journals, etc.**
- **Presentations at international conferences**
- **Presentations at domestic conferences, symposiums, etc.**
- **An excellent history of awards received**



Prep. 2: Start early on preparations for application-writing

In preparing an application, it is essential to **elaborate a research plan independently** and **seek advice from and discuss with your academic advisor and seniors in your laboratory**. As a matter of special importance, you must **formulate in your own words** the cores of your application: "**Positioning of the Research**", **"Research objectives, methods, and description**", "**Research plan (what you aim to establish, and to what extent during the JSPS Fellowship period)**", and "**distinctive and creative features**", have them reviewed by your academic adviser and seniors in your laboratory; and **hone them over and over again**.

You can check past adopted research topics at **List of adopters***.
* https://www.jsps.go.jp/j-pd/pd_saiyoichiran.html (in Japanese only)

The content of the application form is reviewed slightly each year. **It is essential to obtain the latest application form from the JSPS website as soon as the application form for the year in which you are applying is released,** analyze what kind of information is required, and respond to it.

Tohoku University holds in-campus **explanatory sessions concerning the call for applications, etc. regarding the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists** and **individual consultations** where you can directly talk with and seek advice from current JSPS Fellows regarding your application and other relevant matters. You are strongly encouraged to actively participate in such events and gather useful information.

List of supports offered by the Tohoku University

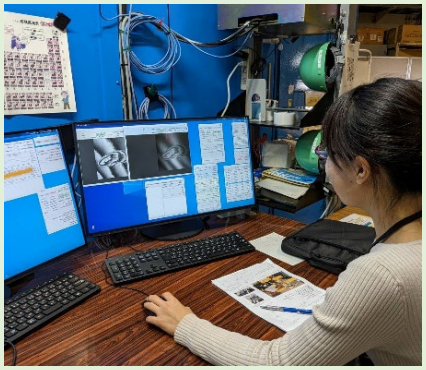
- **Explanatory sessions concerning the call for applications, etc. regarding the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists (You Tube, distributed around March)**
- **Individual consultations (Zoom, around March)**
- **Distribution of Tips to Considerably Boost Your Chance of Becoming a Fellow under the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists (around March)**
- **Distribution of checkpoint and checklist for Preparing Application Forms for Research Fellowship for Young Scientists (around March)**

4. Voices of adopters for the JSPS Fellowship

Communicating Research Significance Beyond My Field

JSPS Fellow under DC1 category for FY2025
Mone Kimura, Graduate School of Medicine
Research Topic：Elucidating the development of venous thrombosis and its diagnostic application using multi-scale pathological information by fluorescence and X-ray imaging

The reason I applied for a JSPS Research Fellowship was to secure an environment where I could devote myself fully to research throughout my doctoral course. JSPS fellows receive living expenses for three years as well as research expenses. Furthermore, JSPS fellows can receive a tuition waiver for Tohoku university's support system. The research expenses can be used not only for conference presentations but also for traveling to distance laboratory facilities, which has been a great advantage in advancing my work.



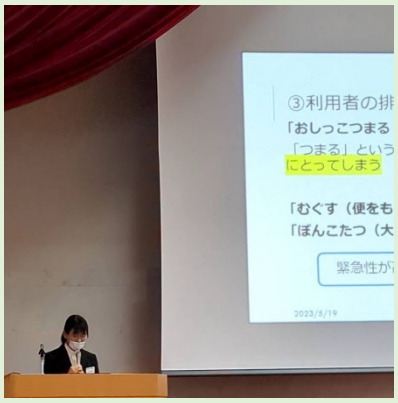
Using a phase-contrast X-Ray CT system with synchrotron radiation for measurement

I began preparing my application around February. Since the application is reviewed by a broad range of experts, I made a conscious effort to explain the originality and novelty of my research in clear and accessible language. In particular, I repeatedly refined the section of "positioning of the research", and I also asked colleagues outside my field and provide feedback. Through this process, I was able to clarify the significance of my research and future challenges, making the preparation itself a valuable learning experience. The JSPS Research Fellowship provides an excellent opportunity to expand your research environment, and I strongly encourage you to take on the challenge.

Preparation for Applying for the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists and Benefits After Selection

JSPS Fellow under DC2 category for FY2025
Haruka Yamada, Graduate School of Literature
Research topic ：Developing a Model for Creating Dialect Support Tools for Nursing Care Personnel

I was interested in applying for the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists when I saw my senior colleague in the same laboratory being hired as it. I started to prepare to apply, because I heard that living expenses and research expenses would be provided and that hiring as the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists would be beneficial for my career. When I started to prepare, I learned how to make application forms by attending the events held in Tohoku University and saw the seniors' application forms at first. After that, I got my draft corrected by my supervisor many times while I revised it. I had read my family my final draft and paid attention to detail to become application form without typos or omissions.



Presentation at the Dialectological Circle of Japan

After being selected, I believe one of the major advantages is being able to focus on research without worrying about living expenses. Also, my research needs travel expenses and honorarium, so providing research expenses is helping me promoting my research smoothly.

I wish you all the best in your endeavors.

For more details, visit the websites of the JSPS and the Tohoku University.

JSPS http://www.jsps.go.jp/j-pd/

Research Promotion Division, Tohoku University https://c.bureau.tohoku.ac.jp/kensui-top/3jsps/

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