

JSPS RONPAKU (DISSERTATION PhD) PROGRAM APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR FY 2015

April, 2014

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science



1. Outline of JSPS RONPAKU Program

The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) has been carrying out the RONPAKU (Dissertation PhD) Program since 1978. The aim of this program has been to provide tutorial and financial support for promising researchers in countries of Asia and Africa or other specified countries who wish to obtain their PhD degrees from Japanese universities through the submission of a dissertation without matriculating a doctoral course.

Grantees under the program (RONPAKU fellows) are required to conduct their dissertation research under the joint supervision of a Japanese advisor and an advisor in their home country, and are expected to obtain their PhD degrees within a maximum period of three years. RONPAKU fellows are allowed to visit a Japanese university to conduct research under the direct supervision of their Japanese advisor. The Japanese advisor may visit the RONPAKU fellow's home university or research institution when deemed necessary to supervise the fellow's research together with his/her home advisor.

2. Eligible Fields

All fields within the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences are included.

3. Applicable Countries

Candidates must be a researcher whose university/institution is in one of the following countries:

ASIA (including Middle East countries)

Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, South Korea, Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, the Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syria, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkey, UAE, Vietnam and Yemen

AFRICA

Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe

JSPS also treats Taiwan and Palestine in this manner.

EUROPE (specified countries)

Azerbaijan, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz, Georgia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan

4. Eligibility of Japanese Advisor

The candidate's Japanese advisor must be a full-time professor or associate professor who, as of 1 April 2015, is engaged in implementing a doctoral course at the Japanese university to which the prospective RONPAKU fellow will submit his/her PhD thesis.

5. Eligibility of RONPAKU Fellow

The candidate must be a researcher

- (1) Who has not obtained a PhD degree from a university
- (2) Who wishes to obtain a PhD degree from a Japanese university through the submission of a dissertation
- (3) Who has already achieved substantial research results and is likely through dissertation research under the program to successfully obtain a PhD degree
- (4) Who has nationality in an applicable country (listed in section 3)
- (5) Who is employed full time at a university or research institution in his/her home country or will be appointed to such a position by April 1, 2015
- (6) Who is 45 years of age or younger as of April 1, 2015

6. Number of Fellowships to be Awarded

Approximately 30

7. Fellowship Tenure

Maximum of 3 years from 1 April 2015

8. JSPS Financial Support

- (1) Total funding provided to Japanese host university
Maximum of 3.6 million yen (Up to 1.2 million yen per fiscal year)
- (2) The following expenses can be covered by the above funding:
Travel expenses between Japan and RONPAKU fellow's home country, and within Japan by the fellow and his/her Japanese advisors; expenses incurred in conducting research in Japan and fellow's home country; and other expenses related to the fellow's dissertation submission (based on Japanese host university's regulations), etc.

※Each fiscal year, at least 70% of total funding must be used for travel expenses.

- (3) Details
JSPS will contract the Japanese host universities, conclude a contract with them to commission the RONPAKU program operation, and provide them with funding of up to 1.2 million yen per fiscal year. RONPAKU fellows will receive travel expenses and other necessary expenses through the Japanese host universities based on its regulations.
As this program is administered based on the annual budget for each Japanese fiscal year (from 1 April to 31 March), JSPS cannot carry over the remittance of any allowances or other payments to the following fiscal year.

Notes: These terms are subject to change.

9. Application Procedure and Deadline

Prospective Japanese advisors will be required to use JSPS's online application system to apply for the program. For detailed procedures, please refer to the online application system guide at <http://www.shinsei.jps.go.jp/> (in Japanese).

RONPAKU candidates are to prepare Forms 2 and 3 and send them to their prospective Japanese advisor. Then, the advisor is to fill out Form 1 and submit it with all the other forms to JSPS through his/her university.

(1) Forms

Form No.	Form Name	Person who prepares the form (How to prepare)
Form 1	Application Form 1	Prospective Japanese Advisor (Pages 1 to 4 are to be printed out from online application system; the format for other pages can be downloaded from the program website.)
Form 2	Application Form 2	RONPAKU candidate
Form 3	Letter of Recommendation 1	RONPAKU candidate's home advisor and the president of his/her affiliated university/research institution

(2) Steps to apply

Step 1: Eligible researchers wishing to receive a RONPAKU fellowship must contact a prospective Japanese advisor and discuss applying for the program with him/her.

Step 2: RONPAKU candidates must fill in Form 2.

Step 3: RONPAKU candidates must have Form 3 filled out by their home institution. After completing Form 2, they are to submit the application package (Forms 2 and 3) to their prospective Japanese advisor. PDF files are accepted when sending Form 2 and Form 3.

Step 4: Japanese advisors submit Form 1 via their university to JSPS along with the package of documents received from the RONPAKU candidate. Concurrently they take the necessary steps for application submission using JSPS's online application system.

Note: Applications submitted directly by candidates to JSPS will not be accepted.

Application Deadline

August 21, 2014 – August 27, 2014 (JSPS will accept applications through the Japanese advisors' universities by August 27, 2014.)

Notes:

- a. The date stipulated above is the submission deadline for the Japanese advisor's university.
- b. Candidates must send their application documents to their prospective Japanese advisor well in advance of this deadline. (As some universities have their own deadline, candidates should consult their prospective Japanese advisor with regard to the time frame.)

10. Additional Point regarding Application Form 1

When preparing their applications, prospective Japanese advisors who are currently involved in a JSPS international exchange activities or project or who have been within the past 5 years are required to describe the results or anticipated results of that activity and any connection it has with making this nomination under the RONPAKU Program.

11. Selection and Notification of Results

(1) Selection process

Screening is conducted by JSPS's selection committee based on the three criteria listed below.

Selection Criteria

- (i) Based on their record of scientific results (e.g., publication of international journals, record of awards), candidates must be seen as "mature" researchers.
- (ii) The candidate's research proposal should be suited to pursuing a PhD degree through submission of a dissertation without matriculating a doctoral course. The feasibility should be very high that the candidate will obtain a PhD degree within a maximum of 3 years.
- (iii) The Japanese advisor must be suitable for supervising the candidate's research; sufficient advance communication must have been carried out between the advisor and the candidate; the research supervision plan must be well-prepared and specific.

* Research plans that require approval processing within the affiliated institution

Judgments regarding handling are required when the implementation of a research plan includes such aspects as the need for a counterpart's consent or collaboration, for handling personal information, for taking bio-ethics or safety measures, or other researcher aspects that require processing based on laws or regulations. Specific examples of such research would be questionnaire or interview surveys that include private information, surveys of cultural properties either in or outside Japan, the use of donated specimens, analyses of the human genome, genetic recombination experiments, and animal experiments. That is, surveys, research or experiments that require approval by an information-protection committee or ethics committee in or outside the host institution.

(2) Notification of selection results

- a. Notification of the selection results will be made in writing through the head of the applying institution to RONPAKU candidates by the end of January 2015.
- b. Regarding unsuccessful candidates, their Japanese advisors will receive a notice of their approximate ranking among all the applicants.

Non-selected applicants will be ranked in the following three tiers.

Non-selected A (upper tier)

Non-selected B (middle tier)

Non-selected C (lower tier)

All notifications will be made via sealed letter.

12. Supervision of Research

- (1) Over the period of their tenure (up to three years), RONPAKU fellows will visit a Japanese university to conduct research under the supervision of a Japanese advisor based on a visit plan approved by JSPS. No maximum is set on the number of times or length of periods of their stays within the limits of total funding for each fiscal year. However, the funding may not be used for travel to third countries.

- (2) When deemed necessary, the Japanese advisor may visit the RONPAKU fellow's home university or research institution to supervise his/her research based on a visit plan approved by JSPS. No maximum is set on the number of times or length of periods of their stays within the limits of total funding for each fiscal year. However, the funding may not be used for travel to third countries.
- (3) Travel plans should be made so that the combined days of visits by the fellow and his/her advisor is at least 30days during a fiscal year.
- (4) At the end of each fiscal year, JSPS evaluates each fellow's research progress based on a report submitted by their Japanese advisors, and notifies the fellow of its decision on whether to continue the fellowship in the following fiscal year.
- (5) When considered necessary to advance the fellow's research, the Japanese advisor may, with JSPS's approval, appoint Japanese co-advisor(s), who is to be a full-time researcher at the university (or equivalently qualified person). The co-advisor(s) is to cooperate in supervising the dissertation research of the fellow and may, when deemed necessary, visit the fellow's home institution in place of the Japanese advisor.

13. Obligations of the RONPAKU Fellow

RONPAKU fellows should bear the following three points in mind. After selection, they will be expected to observe the regulations and procedures stipulated in the "PROCEDURES AND PROVISIONS FOR RONPAKU FELLOWS UNDER THE JSPS RONPAKU (DISSERTATION PhD) PROGRAM." If the RONPAKU fellow should fail to do so, the fellowship may be withdrawn and already-paid allowances reclaimed.

Note: Regarding paragraph (2) below, please see the separate document "About the Proper Use of Competitive and Other Funds."

- (1) During their tenures, RONPAKU fellows 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.
- (2) RONPAKU fellows are not to misuse competitive or other funds or to commit any act of misconduct with regard to their research and educational activities, including fabrication, falsification or plagiarism. With regard to these activities, they are to follow the rules prescribed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, (MEXT), JSPS, their Japanese advisor's affiliated institution, and the university scheduled to award their dissertation PhD degree.
- (3) RONPAKU fellows must submit research reports using the separately prescribed format.

14. Role of Japanese Advisor (including Japanese co-advisors) and Host University

Japanese advisors and host universities should bear the following seven points in mind. Once the RONPAKU fellowship is awarded, they will be expected to observe the regulations and procedures stipulated in the "PROCEDURES AND PROVISIONS FOR RONPAKU FELLOWS UNDER THE JSPS RONPAKU (DISSERTATION PhD) PROGRAM." If either the adviser or university should fail to do so, the fellowship may be withdrawn and already-paid allowances reclaimed.

Note: Regarding paragraphs (4), (6) and (7) below, please see the separate document “About the Proper Use of Competitive and Other Funds.”

- (1) So as to ensure the smooth progress of the fellow’s research in Japan, before submitting an application, the Japanese advisor shall fully inform the candidate of conditions at the host institution, including his/her status under the fellowship, and ascertain the candidate’s acceptance of those conditions.
- (2) The host researcher will, in cooperation with the administration office of the host institution, provide a suitable environment for the fellow to pursue his/her joint research. The host will also assist the fellow, 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 fellow’s tenure, the Japanese advisor shall not, either in or outside the host institution, infringe in any way on the fellow’s human rights, including racial or gender discrimination or other forms of abuse.
- (4) To ensure that no misuse of funds or research/education misconduct occurs, Japanese advisors shall conduct RONPAKU-related research in conformance with the rules prescribed by MEXT, JSPS, their affiliated institutions, and the university scheduled to award the dissertation PhD degree.
- (5) Japanese advisor must submit research reports using the separately prescribed format.
- (6) To ensure that no misuse of funds or research/education misconduct is committed by the RONPAKU advisor or fellow, the advisor’s affiliated institution and the university scheduled to award the PhD degree shall promulgate and strictly enforce the rules (includes penalties for misuse and misconduct) prescribed by MEXT, JSPS and their own institutions.
- (7) Japanese advisors, their affiliated institutions and the universities scheduled to award the PhD degree are to take ultimate responsibility for the RONPAKU fellows. As such, they are to take proactive measures to prevent misuse and misconduct and to resolve any problems that may arise.

15. Handling of Personal Information

With regard to personal information contained in application materials, it shall be strictly controlled in accordance with laws to protect personal information held by administrative institutions and JSPS’s rule of protect personal information.

Using personal information in implementing the JSPS Program, including the provision of such information to private companies commissioned to conduct data processing management, JSPS shall observe these laws and regulations.

If selected for a RONPAKU fellowship, the fellow should note that his/her name, research theme, host institution, name and title of host researcher, and research reports will be given public access, including on JSPS’s homepage. Fellows will be asked to participate in surveys aimed at improving the fellowship program.

16. Notes

- (1) JSPS does not support any research project related to military affairs.

- (2) Candidates are to ascertain in advance the requirements for PhD certification in their own country before submitting an application.
- (3) With regard to Paragraph 14 (3) above, should a host researcher be found guilty by the host institution of violating a candidate's or RONPAKU fellow's human rights, s/he shall be disqualified for a period of five years from hosting RONPAKU fellows under this program, JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship for Overseas Researchers (Standard and Pathway to University Positions in JAPAN), JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship for North American and European Researchers (Short-term), and JSPS Invitation Fellowship for Overseas Researchers (Long-term, Short-term and Short-term S)..
- (4) In the following cases, JSPS may cancel a RONPAKU fellowship:
 1. When a fellow is found to have submitted false information in his/her application
 2. When it is determined that it would be difficult for a fellow to obtain his/her PhD degree within the approved fellowship tenure
 3. When a fellow withdraws from his/her position as a full-time researcher at the home institution
 4. When a fellow violates a Japanese law or is so indicted
 5. When a fellow does not follow JSPS's instruction or causes harm to JSPS.
- (5) You can see the application guidelines and download the application forms from the following website:
<http://www.jsps.go.jp/j-ronpaku/>
<http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-ronpaku/>

17. Contact

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Regarding the Proper Use of Competitive Funds

Based on the “Guidelines for the Management and Audit of Public Research Funds at Research Institutions (Implementation Standards),” released by MEXT on 15 February 2007, openly recruited programs in JSPS’s International Program Department (IPD) are to be implemented in the following manner.

1. Eliminating unjustifiable duplication and over-concentration of competitive funding

(1) Measures to prevent unjustifiable duplication

In cases when a researcher is receiving or has been selected to receive competitive funding from either the Japanese government or an independent administrative institution for essentially the same research content that s/he is applying or has been selected for under a JSPS IPD program, his/her application may be removed from the screening process; if already selected, the selection may be cancelled; or the amount of the grant or funding may be reduced.

Whereas a researcher may apply for competitive funding under another system while in the process of applying for a JSPS IPD program, if selected for the other funding s/he must inform JSPS of such right away. If s/he neglects to do so, the selection decision may be cancelled or other action taken.

(2) Measures to prevent over-concentration of competitive funding

The selection decision may be cancelled or other action taken in cases when a researcher applying for a JSPS IPD program also uses other competitive funds, even for different research content, is judged not to be making efficient or effective use of all his/her allocated funding.

To verify this, if a researcher changes the content of his/her application (such as the status regarding application/selection for other funding) after submitting it to a JSPS IPD program, s/he must inform JSPS of such right away. If s/he neglects to do so, the selection decision may be cancelled or other action taken.

2. Measures against misconduct in research activities and misuse (etc.) of competitive funds

JSPS Regulation Number 4 (2013), “Measures against misconduct in research activities and misuse (etc.) of competitive funds” stipulates measures to assure impartiality in research activities, the proper management and execution of competitive funds, and the prevention of improper use of funding. It also provides disciplinary measures to be taken if a researcher funded under an openly recruited program of

JSPS's IPD engages in misconduct in his/her research activities or misuses (etc.) his/her competitive funds.

(1) Here, "misconduct" includes the fabrication, falsification or plagiarization of data used in research results, survey findings, or research papers. "Misuse" includes the use of competitive funds, either purposefully or due to gross negligence, for purposes other than conducting the approved project or in a way that violates the terms or conditions of their allocation. "Misuse, etc." includes the improper receipt of competitive funds based on intended misuse or falsified application filing. (Article 2)

(2) The objects of measures against misconduct and misuse (etc.) are as follows. (Article 15)

1) Objects of measures against misconduct

- Researchers determined to have committed misconduct
- Authors determined to have responsibility for the content of research papers (etc.) related to research judged to involve misconduct, even if the persons are not themselves determined to have committed the misconduct.

2) Objects of measures against misuse

- Researchers and their accomplices who engage in the misuse of funds
- Researchers and their accomplices who received competitive funding based on falsified application filing or other improper means
- Researchers who violate their obligation to properly manage their funds, even if they do not directly misuse them.

Disciplinary measures

- (1) In addition to cancelling the disbursement of the subject competitive funds, in the case of already-disbursed funds either part or all of the funds may be recalled. In determining the amount of the funds to be returned, consideration is given to severity of misuse, the degree of maliciousness, and the effect on the overall research project.
- (2) Projects will not be selected for funding if their application lists a researcher whom these measures are taken against as the principle investigator. Projects listing the researcher as a co-investigator will not be selected unless his/her name is removed.
- (3) Researchers whom these measures are taken against will not be allocated any competitive funding for all programs under JSPS's jurisdiction for a set period of time.

When determining the disciplinary measures to be taken, the name of the subject

researcher(s), his/her affiliation, the content of the measures, the name of the subject competitive funding system, the amount of allocated research funding, the content of the misconduct or misuse, and a report on the results of the investigation made by the research institution are to be expeditiously released to the public.

In addition, JSPS will not allocate competitive or other funds during the specified period of disciplinary measures taken by government agencies or other independent administrative institutions to researchers whose project application or participation eligibility has been restricted.

3. Handling of violations of related laws or regulations

When the content of a grant application is falsified or a project is carried out in violation of pertinent laws, regulations or guidelines, JSPS may not allocate grants or funds and may cancel the selection of the project.

March 2013
International Program Department
Japan Society for the Promotion of Science

Notes:

This “Regarding the Proper Use of Competitive Funds” is an English translation of the official document in Japanese. If there should be any differences between the original document in Japanese and its translation into English, the original Japanese text is valid.