

Kyushu University Program to Cultivate Innovative PhDs for a Better Future (K²-SPRING) Application Guidelines

[1. Purpose]

In Japan, the number of students advancing from master's programs to doctoral programs and the rate of advancement to doctoral programs are on a downward trend due to financial insecurity and uncertainty about career paths. The most important issue is to encourage students to advance to doctoral programs. In order to solve this problem, it is essential to expand financial support for students, clarify career paths, and establish a support system for career development.

The Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) launched the "Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation" (SPRING) in FY2021 to provide financial support to outstanding students who have the will and ability to be directly involved in the creation of science, technology, and innovation in Japan after completing their doctoral programs, in order to enable them to devote themselves to free, challenging, and fusion research that is not bound by existing frameworks, and to lead them to become doctoral candidates who can work in a variety of career paths.

Our university was selected for SPRING in FY2021, and has previously been implemented as K-SPRING, but this time it has been selected for the new SPRING project, which is integrated with the "University Fellowship Creation Project for Creating Science, Technology and Innovation." Starting this year, we will be recruiting students for the "Kyushu University Program to Cultivate Innovative PhDs for a Better Future" (hereinafter referred to as "K²-SPRING").

K²-SPRING consists of four units (① Interdisciplinary Unit, ② Q-Energy Innovator Unit, ③ Quantum Science Unit, ④ Material Unit*), and program students will belong to one of the units.

*Note: For the Material Unit, there are no applications from doctoral students, as this is an integrated program that spans the five years of the master's and doctoral programs.

① Interdisciplinary Unit

In this unit, the MIRAI-SDGs platform will be set up as an open platform, and unit students will position their own research themes as SDG-related 17 issues that address environmental and social problems. Unit students then select the SDG issues most relevant to them and participate in the platform. In the platform, unit students' own research topics and drafts of joint and fusion research currently being considered are communicated to students, faculty members, and corporate members (members of the corporate consortium). Through the free and vigorous exchange of opinions among students, faculty members, and members of the corporate consortium, a "place of emergence" is created where challenging and fusion research can be generated. In addition, we are expanding various career path development supports based on this platform.

Through learning in this unit, we aim to nurture outstanding doctoral human resources who possess a rich creativity that flexibly generates new ways of thinking that go beyond existing values

from a cross-disciplinary, bird's-eye view, and who will contribute to solving Japan's social issues, developing science and technology, and creating innovations.

② Q-Energy Innovator Unit

This unit provides an environment where you can concentrate on research on decarbonization systems such as advanced energy such as hydrogen, geothermal energy, wind power, and CO₂ capture, mobility, and a decarbonized society, which are our university's strengths. We expand students' horizons through custom-made remote lectures in the arts and sciences, as well as opportunities to collaborate with industry, domestic and international organizations, and report on research results. This unit also strategically nurture "GX doctoral human resource " who can envision, realize, and create a future decarbonized society based on their research and bird's eye view of energy, and who will lead the Green Transformation (GX).

③ Quantum Science Unit

In this unit, the "Science and Quantum Science Consortium", which is made up of faculty members, industry personnel, etc., will constantly and integrally promote "cross-disciplinary education" centered on the quantum field. We aim to develop diverse doctoral human resources who can contribute to basic science, in which our university has accumulated many achievements, and the creation of innovations that meet the needs of society, and to contribute to improving the quality and quantity of doctoral human resources in Japan.

④ Material Unit

In order to develop researchers with unique research idea generation methods, this unit brings together university researchers in multiple fields and companies covering a wide range of fields, and provides integrated and constant financial support and career support. We will create a new support model for young researchers. However, since this is a 5-year program, we will accept applications at the end of the 4th year of undergraduate (before entering the master's program) (Capacity: 4 people).

【2. Application Eligibility】

Applicants for K²-SPRING must meet all of the following requirements from 1 to 5.

- 1 Those who have the will and ability to directly engage in the creation of science, technology and innovation in Japan even after completing their doctoral program, and who can follow this path in their career path after completing their doctoral program.
- 2 Those who are enrolled in the graduate school of Kyushu University as of April 1, 2024 and fall under any of the following categories.

- (1) Those who are in the first year of a doctoral program as regular students with a standard course length of 3 or 4 years.
- (2) Those who are in the third year of the five-year integrated doctoral program as regular students.
- 3 Those who understand the purpose of this program and actively take the curriculum (career development/training content) provided in this program to enhance their own abilities and potential. In addition, those who have the desire to use the skills they have cultivated to **open up the future of science, technology, and innovation in Japan** after completing the program.
- 4 Those who do not fall under any of the following categories as of April 1, 2024
 - (1) Students enrolled in the Graduate Program of Mathematics for Innovation.
 - (2) Those appointed as research fellows of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)
 - (3) Those receiving Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho:MEXT) Scholarships for international students
 - (4) International students receiving scholarships or other support from their home countries.
 - (5) Those who are recognized as having a stable income of over 2.4 million yen in salary and executive remuneration from the University, companies, etc., or by starting their own business.
(Note: Includes cases where there is a system that allows the recipients to receive more than 2.4 million yen per year from the company to which they belong)
 - (6) Those who are receiving financial aid from other educational programs at Kyushu University and have not obtained approval from the relevant program director to apply for this program.
(Note: It is possible to receive the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) scholarship and Research Aids at the same time. Please note, however, that if you are selected for this program, you will not be able to be recommended for the Type 1 scholarship "Refund exemption system based on particularly outstanding achievements".)
 - (7) Those who are on a leave of absence
- 5 Those who are expected to complete their doctoral program within the standard years of study.

【3. Period of payment】

Within the standard period of study

Until the expiration date written on the front of the student ID card distributed at the time of admission to the doctoral program, advancement, or transfer. (e.g., if a student is in the first year of a three-year doctoral course as of April 2024, the maximum period of payment is three years.)

(Note) The period of payment may be shortened in case of suspension or cancellation of the research aids.

(Note) Even in the case of course extension system, the payment period will not be extended.

【4. Amount of Research Aids】

Research Aid: 200,000 yen per month

(Note) Includes 20,000 yen as a support for improving language skills.

Research expenses: 350,000 yen per year

(Note) This research expenses is allocated to support the applicant's own free, challenging, and interdisciplinary research activities in this program.

(Note) Additional research expenses may be allocated based on applications and selection for the Integrated Research Projects [Elective subject:7. Refer to the curriculum].

(Note) Half of the tuition will be exempted.

【5. Application procedures and selection】

(1) Consultation with academic advisor

- Before applying, please consult with your academic advisor and **be sure to obtain his or her approval.** Then, ask your academic advisor to create and submit an "Evaluation Report"
- Academic advisors should carefully read these application guidelines and judge the applicant's suitability.
- Academic advisors should also keep the following points in mind and please nominate those who can assure us of their willingness to contribute to Japan after completing the program.

“Doctoral students are responsible for the future of Japan's science, technology, and innovation, but (omission) we should (1) strengthen financial support for talented and aspiring doctoral students who will lead the future of Japan's science, technology, and innovation, and (2) We are running out of time to develop diverse career paths that are not bound by traditional frameworks so that doctoral personnel can play an active role in a wide range of fields. (omission) In order to overcome this situation, the SPRING project is aimed at universities that have the ability and desire to independently carry out (1) and (2) above. , we will appoint a new project manager who will select excellent doctoral course students beyond the existing framework of university graduate schools and laboratories, and under his leadership, we will provide various support to these doctoral course students. The government supports the efforts of universities to implement and expand their efforts.”

(Excerpt from JST SPRING Application Guidelines page 7)

“When supporting international students, please fully explain how they will contribute to ‘Japan's science, technology, and innovation,’ such as creating innovation and contributing to strengthening Japan's international competitiveness.” (Excerpt from JST SPRING Application Guidelines P2-3)

“It is assumed that selected students have the will and ability to directly engage in the creation of science, technology, and innovation in our country even after graduation, and their future plans after graduation will also be subject to interim and post-evaluation.”
(Excerpt from FY2024 JST SPRING Application Guidelines Q&A p.11)

(2) Documents to be prepared and submitted by students

- ① Application Form *The file name should be "Student ID number_ Student Name_ Application"*

Please obtain the application form from the URL below and prepare the required documents. Please refer to the YES/NO chart in Appendix 1 and enter the necessary information exactly.

<https://archive.iii.kyushu-u.ac.jp/public/tqY6A9sJsAJXmkY91DdFgZpb5BpuTuBa68xScAdwEF5j>

- ② Transcript (undergraduate and master program) *The file name should be "Student ID number_ Student Name_ Transcript (Bachelor/Master)"*

Please convert ① Application Form, ② Transcript, ③ Thesis to PDF and submit them from the application submission URL below.

[Submission period] From Wednesday, April 24th to Friday May 10th, 2024 at NOON

[Application submission URL] <https://forms.office.com/r/DgEfXEfK4H>

No documents will be submitted or modified after the application period.

(3) Submission of evaluation report by academic advisor

Academic Advisors should obtain the evaluation report from the following URL and create an evaluation form.

<https://archive.iii.kyushu-u.ac.jp/public/tqY6A9sJsAJXmkY91DdFgZpb5BpuTuBa68xScAdwEF5j>

When preparing the evaluation report, please pay particular attention to the "aptitude" and "contribution to Japan" mentioned in (1).

The (3) Evaluation Report must be submitted **by the academic advisor himself/herself** using the form below after converting it to PDF format. *The file name should be "Student ID number_ Student Name_ Evaluation"*

[Submission period] From Wednesday, April 24th to Friday, May 10th, 2024 at NOON

[Evaluation report Submission URL] <https://forms.office.com/r/0EJBSGW7JZ>

No documents will be submitted or modified after the application period.

【6. Selection Perspectives and Process】

The selection of "outstanding and ambitious doctoral students who will directly pioneer the future of science, technology, and innovation in Japan" to be supported by this program will be made

based on the " Selection Perspectives " described below.

[Selection Perspectives]

- (1) Even after completing the doctoral program, those who have the will and ability to be directly involved in the creation of science, technology, and innovation in Japan are assumed, and the career path after completion of the program is also compatible with this. Also, must have a concrete vision for his/her own career plan, future plans, and how he/she will be directly involved in science, technology, and innovation in Japan. (This includes relevant language skills (Japanese and English)).
- (2) In the application form, the background and research purpose leading to the setting of the theme for the doctoral dissertation research must be stated in a manner that is understandable to researchers outside the field of specialty, and the research idea must be excellent. Applicants should demonstrate originality in the research methodology and indicate future prospects for the research topic.
- (3) Based on a self-analysis of your own ability to conduct research (strengths, factors considered necessary for your future development as a researcher), you must have a concrete concept for your original research (based on your own ideas, not the theme given by your academic advisor) that you plan to carry out using the K²-SPRING research aids. It is even better if the idea is about interdisciplinary fusion research with different fields.
- (4) The Applicant must have the prospect of being able to complete both the preparation of their doctoral dissertation based on their own research plan and research guidance and the coursework required by this program within the standard period of study (within the support period).

[Selection Process]

- (1) An initial screening will be conducted based on the submission documents, and applicants who passed the initial screening, those who failed the initial screening, and those eligible for the secondary screening (interview screening) will be notified.
- (2) An oral examination based on the application documents will be conducted for those who are subject to the secondary screening, and those who will pass the secondary screening will be determined.

Note: A secondary screening will not be required for those who have passed the initial screening.

- (3) Both those who pass the initial screening and those who pass the secondary screening will be selected as K²-SPRING students.
- (4) The unit of affiliation will be determined from among all the K²-SPRING students based on the results of the screening.

【7. Selection Schedule (Note)】

Friday, May 10th: Application, Evaluation and Transcript Documents Submission Deadline

Monday, May 13th to Tuesday, June 18th: Conducting the Initial Screening

Wednesday, June 19th: Initial Screening Results Notification

Friday, June 21st: Conducting the Secondary Screening

Friday, June 28th: Announcement of Acceptance

(Note) The dates are tentative and subject to change.

【8. Number of students】

Approximately 150 students

【9. Curriculum (Career Development and Training Content)】

K²-SPRING will provide a curriculum as shown in Appendix 2.

【10. Obligations】

Those selected by K²-SPRING must fulfill all of the following obligations from 1 to 8.

- 1 Students must take **three compulsory subjects and one elective subject** in the career development and training content offered in this program to cultivate not only research skills, but also a bird's eye view, interdisciplinary and international mindset, and a wide range of advanced transferable skills.
- 2 Students must devote themselves to study and research **based on their own K²-SPRING research plan** determined in advance.
- 3 Students must submit a yearly report to the Project Director on the progress of the course work and research, including a description of research expenses. When requested by the Project Director, students must report as required on matters such as the progress of the research and the use of research expenses.
- 4 When conducting research, students must comply with the rules and regulations established by the University and strive to carry out research activities that meet the trust and expectations of society, in accordance with their own conscience and decency. Furthermore, students must fully recognize that the source of research funds is public funds, comply with relevant laws and regulations, and strive to carry out research efficiently.
- 5 Students must attend research ethics education and compliance education classes as designated by the University.
- 6 When presenting the research results obtained through the Project, students must indicate that the research was subsidized under the Project.

(Note) Examples of acknowledgments in the treatise (Grant No. is JPMJSP2136).

【Example】This work was supported by JST SPRING, Grant Number JPMJSP2136.

7 In order to verify the training effect of the curriculum, students must cooperate with the career tracking survey conducted by JST (the University acts on behalf of JST) for approximately 10 years after the completion of this program.

8 Students must register for a job-based research internship.

【11. Cooperation and Contribution of Academic Advisors and Faculty Members】

In this program, the following cooperation and contributions are requested from academic advisors and faculty members of the school (major) to which the program students belong.

1 The academic advisor understands and agrees with the purpose of the program, and supports the students' coursework and activities, including budget management.

2 The academic advisor and the faculty members of the school to which the program students belong actively attend online discussion and meetings in the Fusion-of-Intelligence A subject, activate the exchange of opinions of program students and promote interdisciplinary research. Also, each faculty member plays the role of a mentor for the students.

3 The academic advisor is required to guarantee the portability (Change of affiliation) of program students required in this program.

4 Research proposals (compulsory subject) must be conducted at the school to which the program students belong, and training and tutoring must be provided for the students. The implementation procedure of the research proposals will be announced separately from the school to which the students belong.

5 The research aids supported by SPRING to program students are provided to program students for their free, challenging, and interdisciplinary research (proposals) (JST SPRING Application Guidelines p. 14*). Please understand that we do not intend to support academic advisors' research or doctoral dissertation research based on their suggestions.

* JST SPRING Application Guidelines:

<https://www.jst.go.jp/jisedai/dl/application-guideline-2024SPRING.pdf>

6 Responsible for supervising the "contribution to Japan after completion of the doctoral program" as confirmed at the time of application and providing support as necessary.

【12. Continuation Screening as program students】

1 At the end of each fiscal year, a continuation screening will be conducted to determine whether or not the student can continue the program for the following year.

2 Continuation will be determined based on subject acquisition status, annual report, and other fact.

3 The status of submission of various documents will also be considered in the screening process.

[Criteria]

1st year screening: Must have completed 1 compulsory subject (Fusion-of-intelligence A)

2nd year screening: Must have completed 2 compulsory subjects and 1 elective subject

3rd year screening (completion judgment): Must have completed 3 compulsory subjects and 1 elective subject

However, this does not preclude students from taking more than the standard number of subjects in each year. For example, it is acceptable to take all the subjects required for completion in the first year.

(Note) Research proposals will be offered by your academic department, so please follow the instructions from your department.

(Note) If you do not meet the above screening criteria, **your support will be discontinued from the following year** unless there are special circumstances.

[Supplementary Criteria]

At the time of 2nd year screening (assuming the end of D2), Japanese students must obtain a TOEIC L&R score equivalent to 700 or higher, and international students must obtain Japanese Language Proficiency Test N2 or higher.

(Note) The research aid is based on 180,000 yen per month. However, in D1 and D2, 20,000 yen per month will be paid to program students for the purpose of self-study such as language skills and examination expenses.

(Note) If the above supplementary criteria are not met, the research aid for the following year will be reduced from 200,000 yen per month to 180,000 yen per month.

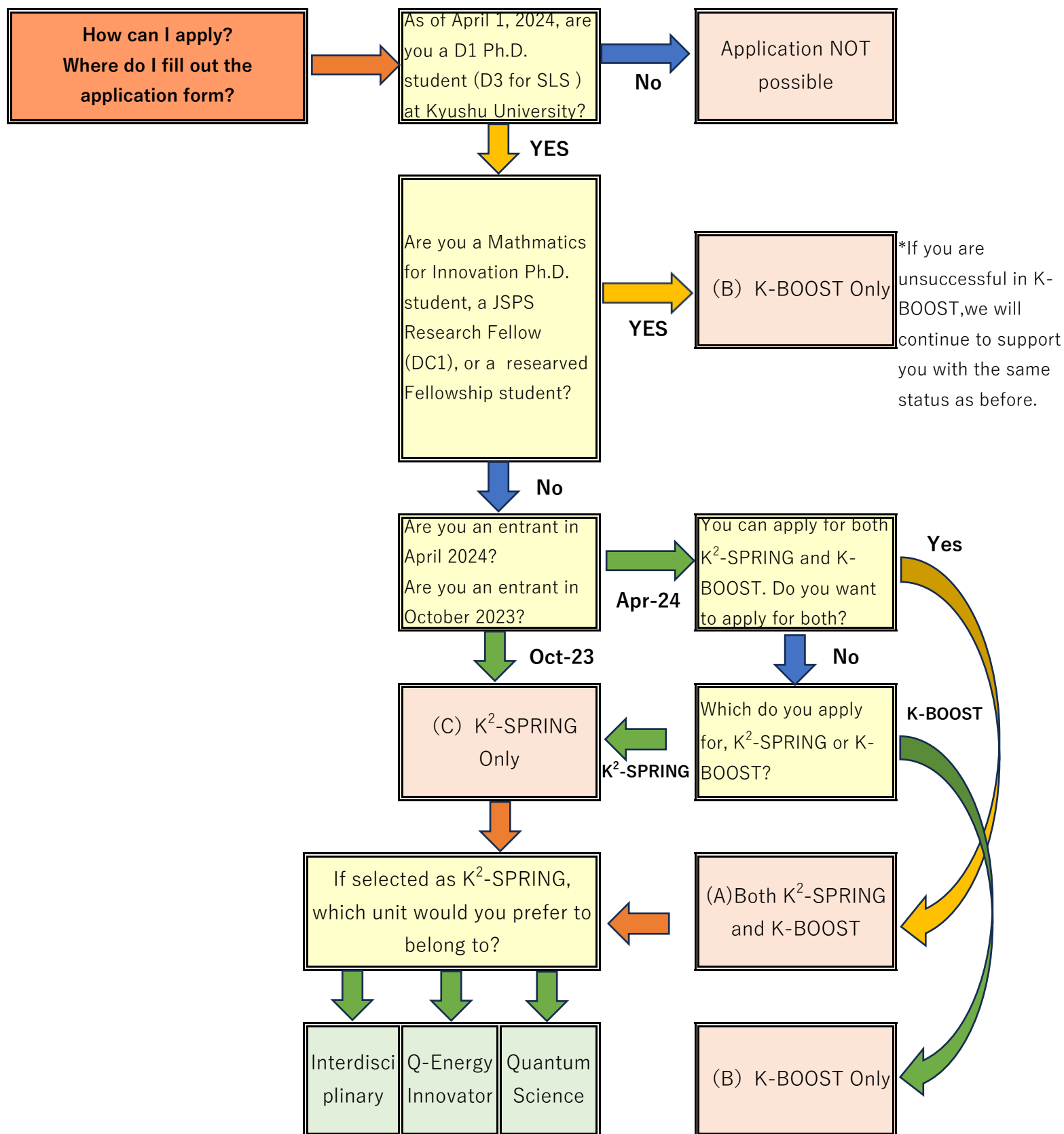
(Note) If you meet the supplementary criteria above, you will continue to receive a stipend of 200,000 yen per month, so please use the 20,000 yen per month as an expense for further self-improvement.

【Inquiries about recruitment】

Student Affairs Department SPRING program office

E-mail: jisecho@jimu.kyushu-u.ac.jp

(Note) We will not be able to respond to inquiries regarding the selection process, screening results, or evaluations.



(NOTE) If the number of students exceeds the capacity in Q-Energy and Quantum Science unit, we will accept students in the Interdisciplinary unit.

K²-SPRING · K-BOOST Standard Curriculum

Columns marked with ○ are subject to acquisition.

compulsory	Subject No.	Subject Name	Summary	Recommended period for taking subject	Interdisciplinary	Q-Energy Innovator	Quantum Science	K-BOOST
compulsory /Elective	[1]	Fusion-of-intelligence A	Create a research information page (research outline, A4 summary, 3 min video, and description of the relevant SDGs) on the MIRAI-SDGs platform built on the web (in principle, all information should be created in Japanese and English). Then, explore each research information page and conduct a spontaneous exchange of opinions on each channel on Slack, with a view to joint research.	First year	○	○	○	○
compulsory	[2]	Research Rproposals	This is conducted in each graduate school and department. Summarize the current status of research fields that are not an extension of your doctoral research theme (different specialties) or adjacent research fields related to your doctoral research theme, raise important unresolved issues, formulate a research proposal to resolve the issues, and prepare and present materials on the expected (predicted) results from the execution of the research. Then, produce a more polished product after an oral examination.	Although the timing of implementation differs for each school and department, basically, it is recommended up to the second year.	○	Unit Original *See table below for details	Unit Original *See table below for details	BOOST Original Subject Name: AI Research Proposals *See table below for details
compulsory	[3]	Career Development	Seminars and panel discussions will be held by the heads of research institutes and managers of companies on themes such as "What is expected of Ph.D. graduates". Participate in this seminar or other lectures related to career development held in each unit and submit a report.	Up to the second year	○ *Participation in each unit original curriculum is also approved.	○ *Participation in each unit original curriculum is also approved.	Unit Original *See table below for details	○
Elective	[4]	Fusion-of-intelligence B (After FY2025)	In order to raise the awareness and momentum of doctoral students to contribute to solving social issues through their own research, we ask consortium members (companies and government agencies) to introduce unsolved issues, and have students prepare solution proposals and submit them as a report.	Up to the second year	○ Can be certified as an elective	○ Can be certified as an elective	Optional	Optional
Elective	[5]	Fusion-of-intelligence C (Fusion-of-intelligence Internship) (After FY2025)	Among the proposals submitted for "Fusion-of-intelligence B" those that are recognized as excellent after review will be sent for internships to actually work on-site at companies, etc. Submit a report after completing the internship.	Second or third year *Must have already obtained an Fusion-of-intelligence B.	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	Optional
Elective	[6]	AI Co-Pilot Boundary Crossing (After FY2025)	Ph.D.students for today are required to conduct interdisciplinary collaborative research. On the other hand, it is very difficult to break out of one's own field of expertise and carry out interdisciplinary collaborative research. Therefore, this subject is designed to serve as a bridge to subjects such as "Integrated Reserach Project" (an elective subject for K ² -SPRING students) and "AI Research Proposal" (a required subject for K-BOOST students). Students will also refer to the results of AI analysis of research information (keywords, interests, etc.) to meet potential collaborators and discover and develop interdisciplinary research projects of academic and social significance.It is highly expected that this subject will function as a "resonance place" where students from the two doctoral support programs, K ² -SPRING and K-BOOST, can meet.	Second or third year *Must have already obtained an Fusion-of-intelligence A.	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	○ Compulsory for BOOST
Elective	[7]	Integrated Reseach Project	Propose an interdisciplinary and creative joint research that will be generated through Fusion-of-intelligence A andAI Co-Pilot Boundary Crossing. After reviewing the proposals, research funds will be provided for the adopted research proposals.	Second or third year *Must have already obtained an Fusion-of-intelligence A.	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	Optional
Elective	[8]	Graduate School KIKAN Education	Take one course from the group of KIKAN Education courses that sophisticated and universal set of knowledge, skills and mindsets (high-end literacy).	Up to the second year	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	Optional
Elective	[9]	Entrepreneurship Training	Take one course from the Entrepreneurship Education group.	Up to the second year	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	Optional

Elective	[10]	Data Science	Obtain one of the data science practical courses for beginners, aimed at students who need or want to learn the basics of data analysis and AI. You can take either "Introduction to Data Science I & II " or "Data Science Practice I ~IV".	Up to the second year	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	Optional
Elective	[11]	Resilience Training	Resilience is the ability to quickly rise up from adversity and setbacks and to grow, and is a human ability that is the source of the ability to take on challenges without fear of failure or the unknown. The concept of resilience is broad, and lectures on the concept and acquisition of resilience will be given by lecturers from outside the university. Attendance at lectures and reports will be required for course approval.	Up to the second year	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	Optional
Elective	[12]	Internship	Approved upon participation in an internship and submission of a report. Required to report the internship they plan to participate in to the office in advance. Depending on the content of the internship, it may not be approved.	Up to the second year	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	Optional
Elective	[13]	International Network A	Short-term study abroad, overseas training, and presentations at international conferences will be approved upon submission of reports. Required to report the participation schedule to the office in advance. Depending on the content of the internship, it may not be approved.	Second or third year	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	Optional
Elective	[14]	International Network B (After FY2025)	K ² -SPRING original overseas training program	Second or third year	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	Optional
Elective	[15]	International Network C	Approved with an entry to the Kyushu U 3MT Competition, an English presentation competition sponsored by Kyushu University.	Up to the second year	○ Can be approved as an elective	○ Can be approved as an elective	Optional	Optional

Q-Energy Innovator Unit, Quantum Unit and K-BOOST original curriculum

K-BOOST	AI Research Proposal	The AI research proposal is basically discussed by a group of both fundamental AI student and applied AI student, and they propose a joint research topic. Through this open approach across disciplines, the latest fundamental technologies will be transmitted to applied fields, and at the same time, the latest application needs will be transmitted to fundamental fields.
Q-Energy Innovator	Research Proposals (Compulsory)	In the Q-Energy Innovator Unit's "Research Proposals," students are asked to propose a path to connect their own research seeds to social needs through the experience of presenting and discussing in a joint seminar.
	Extracurricular Activities (Highly recommended)	As a "Career Development," the Q-Energy Innovator Unit will hold summer camps and company visits (factory tours) as "Extracurricular Activities".
	Special Remarks: Possibility of unit original additional financial support.	Eligible for award nominations from the Decarbonization Society in Kyushu.
Quantum Science	Research Proposals (Compulsory)	In the Quantum Science Unit's "Research Proposals," the research concept will be presented at the Quantum Unit meeting in the first year and discussed with participants.
	Career Development (Compulsory)	As a "Career Development," at the Quantum Science Unit, students participate in seminars and symposiums held by the Unit as a "Career Development Course" and submit reports.
	Original Subject (Elective)	As a Original Subject, students will take an intensive lecture [1 credit] on quantum information science.

Procedures required for receiving a research aid after being selected for K²-SPRING/K-BOOST

Research aid (200,000 yen per month for K²-SPRING and 3.9M yen per year for K-BOOST) are treated as miscellaneous income subject to taxation. Therefore, program students themselves must complete the following procedures; (1) Tax Return, (2) National Health Insurance, and (3) National Pension Insurance.

It should also be noted that, the amount of payment for (1) - (3) above is related to the amount of income from the previous year (January 1 to December 31). In this program, the total amount of income received in the second year is higher than the one in the first year, so the amount paid in the second year tends to be higher. Therefore, the amount you must pay in the first year is different from the one in the second and subsequent years of the program.

1 Tax Return and other taxes

(Tax Return)

Since the research aid* **taxable** as miscellaneous income, course students are required to file their own tax returns.

*Since it is not a "scholarship," it is not tax-exempt income.

(Note) Tuition and other research expenses are deductible as necessary expenses.

(Note) In order to file a tax return, it is necessary to keep records of income and expenditures, receipts and other evidence.

For more information on filing tax returns, refer to the IRS website.

(Inhabitant Tax)

The taxpayer is obliged to pay "inhabitant tax " to the municipality in which he/she resides according to the taxable amount. The system of inhabitant tax is a levy tax system in which local governments calculate the tax amount and notify the taxpayer.

(Tax Treaty)

For international students, tax treatment may differ depending on the tax treaty between Japan and the student's home country. After the selection, the relevant students will be contacted individually.

2 National Health Insurance

If a course student is enrolled in his/her family's health insurance, etc. as a dependent, and if he/she receives research aid and starts earning a constant income of 1.3 million yen or more per year, he/she will no longer be a dependent of his/her family's health insurance, etc. and will be required to enroll in the National Health Insurance.

(Note) Tell the person who support you as a dependent (parent, etc.) to check with his/her workplace about his/her handling of dependent care benefits, etc. At that time, be sure to inform them that research aid is "miscellaneous income" subject to taxation.

(Note) The enrollment procedures and the amount of National Health Insurance premiums varies depending on the municipality, so please check with the National Health Insurance office at the city (ward) office or town hall where you reside.

3 National Pension Insurance

In principle, all people between the ages of 20 and 60 who live in Japan are insured under the National Pension Plan and are required to pay National Pension Plan premiums. Students are allowed to defer payment of the premiums if their income for the previous year is below a certain level* under the "Special Student Payment System".

If the student is no longer eligible for the deferment under the "Special Student Payment System" due to receiving research aid, the student will be obliged to pay the National Pension Insurance premiums.

* The income of the person for the previous year is below a certain level.

Approximate amount: 1,280,000 yen + number of dependents x 380,000 yen + deduction for social insurance premiums, etc.

(Note) For specific National Pension Insurance procedures, please contact the National Pension Office at the city (ward) office or town hall where you reside.

For details on procedures related to taxes, insurance, and pensions, please consult with a specialized contact. The SPRING office is unable to provide accurate information.

Application FAQ (for both K²-SPRING and K-BOOST)

2024/04/24

	Question matters	Answer
1	Are there any restrictions on working students (including experienced working adults) and age?	In this project, there are no restrictions as long as the income exceeds 2.4 million yen per year. It is not possible for those earning stable payments such as salary and executive compensation exceeding 2.4 million yen per year.
2	If a working student does not receive a sufficient amount of living expenses (2.4 million yen/year) despite the company has a salary system that pay equivalent amount of salary, can he/she apply?	The purpose of this project is to create an environment for students to be able to concentrate on their research, and this is done by paying the research aid. So if working students can receive living expenses from the companies, they are not eligible to apply for this program.
3	I was not selected for the K-SPRING program in October 2023. Can I apply for this K ² -SPRING recruitment?	Yes, you can apply if you meet the eligibility requirements for this application. Please note that the application form has changed.
4	Can I apply if I am receiving a scholarship provided by a foundation, or if I am receiving a salary from a company with an annual income of 2.4 million yen or less?	Scholarship recipients of the foundation should confirm whether the foundation allows the scholarship recipients to receive the research aids from the university in parallel. If the foundation does not allow the combined payment, the recipients of the foundation are not eligible for the application. This project sets 2.4 million yen per year as a standard living expense. You may apply in the following cases. -Income is less than 2.4 million yen per year. -Income exceeds 2.4 million yen per year, but the total income is only from part-time jobs.
5	Is it necessary to submit a certificate of income at the time of application?	You do not need to submit a certificate of income at the time of application. However, please indicate your income status on the application form. After becoming a program student, if there is any false information in the application form, or if you become a working student with stable income of more than 2.4 million yen a year, you will lose your qualification as a program student. In case you start to earn more than 2.4 million yen a year, please notify us immediately.
6	What exactly is a stable income in excess of 2.4 million yen per year?	Stable income is defined as stable, fixed income such as salaries and executive compensation. Part-time job and TA/RA salaries are not included in stable income. Paid internships and students starting their own businesses to earn income are also not included in stable income. Cases in which an employment contract is concluded with a clear post and term (e.g., fiscal year staff),

		for example, may not be supported, and will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Please be sure to consult with us.
7	What if I am hired for the Research Fellow of Japan Society for the Promotion of Science?	You will lose your qualification as a program student. However, it is possible for you to continue your activities as a student of this program after being selected as a JSPS research fellow. If the student declines the JSPS research fellow, he/she will continue to receive support as a program student.
8	If I am selected as a program student, is it okay to continue TA / RA?	Yes, you can continue. Income from TA/RA, part-time jobs, part-time work, paid internships are not included in the income threshold.
9	Is it possible to work part-time after being selected as a program student?	Yes, it is possible provided that the part-time job never interferes with your research activities and the program works. Income from TA/RA, part-time jobs, part-time work, paid internships, etc. are not included in the income threshold.
10	What month will the payment start?	If selected as a program student in the April recruitment, your payment from April will be accumulated in August. After that, the amount for each month will be paid every month. However, for international students who have not yet entered Japan, the month of your arrival in Japan will be the month when the research aids begin.
11	I need to submit my transcripts for my application, but I cannot obtain them in time for the submission deadline. What should I do?	Instead of a transcript, please submit objective documentation of your request for a certificate. After obtaining the transcript, please submit it to the SPRING office by e-mail as soon as possible.
12	If I take a leave of absence, can I receive financial support as a program student?	In the case of a leave of absence, as a general rule, support will be suspended, but support will be resumed after returning to school. Depending on the reason and period of the leave of absence, it may be necessary to consult with JST. So please contact us individually.
13	If I drop out of school after being selected as a program student, do I need to refund the research aids?	As a general rule, no return is required. However, if you are expelled from school due to improper receipt of research aids or due to disciplinary disposition, you may be required to return all or part of the research aids.
14	If I am selected as a program student, will my research aids be supported during the standard period of study?	Program students are required to submit an annual report at each end of the fiscal year. The activity of research and program-work will be examined each year, and the financial support may be discontinued or reduced if it is evaluated that research activities or program-works are not carried out properly.

【Reference】

JST SPRING Application Guidelines:

<https://www.jst.go.jp/jisedai/dl/application-guideline-2024SPRING.pdf>

SPRING Application FAQ:

<https://www.jst.go.jp/jisedai/dl/faq-2024SPRINGr3.pdf>

JST BOOST Application Guidelines:

<https://www.jst.go.jp/jisedai/boost-s/dl/application-guideline-2024BOOST-S.pdf>

BOOST Application FAQ:

<https://www.jst.go.jp/jisedai/boost-s/dl/faq-2024BOOST-S.pdf>