

Sakura Science Program (Open Application)

Science and Technology Experience Course (Course A)

Collaborative Research Activity Course (Course B)

Science and Technology Training Course (Course C)

Application Guidelines for FY2025 (Overview)

Application must be prepared and submitted by the Japanese host organization.

1. Basic framework of the program

1.1 Purpose

Countries share the challenge of advancing science and technology while transforming the R&D results into innovations. In 2014, the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) established the “Sakura Science Program.” Since then, the program has invited talented young individuals to Japan, giving them the opportunity to experience Japan’s cutting-edge science and technology as well as its culture. The Sakura Science Program’s objectives include:

- To support the development of talented human resources from overseas who have the potential to contribute to innovation in science and technology.
- To Accelerate the international brain circulation.
- To promote continuous collaboration, cooperation and interaction between Japanese educational and research institutes and overseas ones.
- To strengthen good relationship between Japan and other countries and regions that will help science and technology diplomacy.

1.2 Eligible countries or regions for invitation

Countries and regions which are eligible for the program are shown in Attachment 1.

For FY2025, North America, Europe (excluding Ukraine, Central Asia, and the Caucasus), and Oceania (excluding select island countries and regions) are not eligible for the program.

1.3 Fields of exchange

Science and technology (natural sciences, humanities and social sciences)

1.4 Requirements for main invitees

The main invitees must meet the following requirements.

(1) Affiliation / Age

- i. High school students, technical college students
- ii. University students, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty members, and individuals working

in science and technology related fields at public institutions

iii. Those who are 40 years old or under.

* Those who were enrolled in an eligible organization at the time of application but graduated or left their position by the time of the exchange program cannot participate. Exceptions apply if the candidate's enrollment in graduate school has been confirmed by the sending organization.

* In principle, those who are employed by private companies are not eligible for this program. However, those who are in a position deemed vital for promoting public affairs are eligible.

(2) First time visitors to Japan (w/exceptions)

Among those who were mentioned in the above "(1) Affiliation / Age"

- For high school and technical college students, invitations through the Sakura Science Program must be the first time they visit Japan. Those who have visited Japan only for a short-term tourist visit (up to 10 days) or stayed in Japan only in their childhood (12 years old and under) are still eligible.
- For university students or others, invitation through this program must be their first time visiting Japan after entering university. Those who have visited Japan only for a short-term tourist visit (up to 10 days) are still eligible.

1.5 Requirements for supervisors

The supervisor should be able to lead the invitees and ensure that the exchange proceeds safely and effectively. It is preferable that the supervisor be 40 years old or under and visiting Japan for the first time through this program.

1.6 Requirements for Japanese host organization

Universities, technical colleges, high schools, national research and development agencies, independent administrative agencies, private enterprises, local public entities, organizations having corporate status such as public corporation or general corporation in Japan are eligible.

*In the case of private enterprises, only airfare will be covered by JST.

1.7 Requirements for invitation period

Please set the start date of the exchange at least two and a half months after the application deadline. The exchange must end before March 13, 2026.

1.8 Exchange plans not covered

- i. Those not relevant to science and technology, e.g., Exchange plans aiming merely at holding events
- ii. Those whose main purpose is participation in events sponsored by other organizations.
- iii. Those with the purpose of profit.
- iv. Those training employees of the host organization or its subsidiaries.

1.9 Other important requirements (advance notification)

When inviting participants from China, it is necessary for the counterpart Chinese organization to file a notification with the China Science and Technology Center, China-Japan Technical Cooperation Center, before applying to JST.

- Information on how to submit the notification will be announced on the website below as soon as the procedure and deadlines are fixed.

<https://ssp.jst.go.jp/form/index.html>

- Important Notice

- Applications from China that do not submit this notification will not be considered.
- This notification must be submitted even if the exchange plan includes the invitees of countries and regions other than China.
- Notifications are required for each deadline (Resubmission of the notification is not needed only if a previously non-accepted exchange plan is reviewed and applied to the next deadline in the same year).
- Invitees from Hong Kong or Macao do not need to submit a notification.

2. Requirements for the exchange plan

The Sakura Science Program is a short-term invitation program to foster sustainable mutual exchanges between Japan and counterpart countries. JST offers three courses with different objectives. The exchange plan must align with the course objectives and include activities that increase interest in Japan's cutting-edge science and technology, while also enabling young, talented individuals to explore their interest in research activities in Japan.

(1) Science and Technology Experience Course (Course A)

This course provides the invitees with the opportunity to experience Japan's cutting-edge science and technology, connect with Japanese researchers and students, and aims to promote sustainable collaborations in the field of science and technology. Although the activities can include those directly related to research or training, it is recommended that the exchange mainly focuses on providing experiences and learning activities.

(2) Collaborative Research Activity Course (Course B)

This course is to kick off international collaboration research efforts and to involve the invitees in specific ongoing research. Exchange plans that only include activities such as laboratory visits or provide skill training to invitees will not be accepted.

(3) Science and Technology Training Course (Course C)

This course offers intensive training to develop specific scientific and technological skills or abilities that will help address global issues and/or meet the needs of the invitee's country or region.

(Reference) The max numbers of invitees that can be supported by JST

Course (max stay length)	Course A (≤7 days in principle)		Course B (≤ 21 days)		Course C (≤ 10 days)	
	Single	Multiple	Single	Multiple	Single	Multiple
Invitees	~8	~8	~8	~8	~8	~12
Supervisors	~1	~2	~1	~2	~1	~2
Total # of Participants	~8	~8	~8	~8	~8	~12

* The number of Invitees from one organization must be 8 or less.

* Multiple supervisors cannot participate from one organization.

3. Recruitment period

	Opening Date	Deadline	Result notification	Exchange period
1	March 18 (Tue)	April 21 (Mon)	Mid-June	Late July ~ March 13, 2026
2	April 22 (Tue)	July 4 (Fri)	Early September	Mid-October ~ March 13, 2026
3	July 5 (Sat)	October 6 (Mon)	Early December	Mid-January ~ March 13, 2026

4. Selection criteria (Abstract)

(1) Purpose and Objective

Exchange plans should align with the objectives of each course (A, B or C) and the purpose of the program as outlined in "1.1 Purpose".

(2) Invitees

The organization (institution, faculty, laboratory etc.) of the invitees should have talented individuals who are well-suited to achieve the objectives and purpose of the exchange plan.

(3) Content value and details

The contents of the exchange activities should match the purpose and objective of the exchange plan and provide a meaningful experience for the invitees. Opportunities for hands-on experiences and active communication are preferred to passive activities.

5. Other

(1) Visa

It is the responsibility of the host organization to arrange and obtain the visas of the invitees before their departure date.

(2) Joining Sakura Science Club

JST sponsors the "Sakura Science Club" to spark interest in Japan's science and technology, foster

friendship among the invitees, and to encourage on going exchanges even after the program ends. The invitees registered as members of this club can receive information about science and technology in Japan and related educational institutions through JST. We will occasionally ask members to cooperate by filling out questionnaires and other forms to help us improve our activities

6. Expenses covered by JST

- Airfare
- Transportation, accommodation and meal fee in Japan
- Admission fee for science museums and cultural facilities
- Expenses to conduct essential events

*If the host organization is a private enterprise, only airfare will be covered by JST.

*There is an upper limit for each fee.

*Transportation fee in the country/region of the invitees is not covered.

*JST will provide the funds to the host Japanese organization, and not directly to the invitees.

Attachment1

A-Z List of Countries			
Afghanistan	Dominican Republic	Libya	Sao Tome and Principe
Algeria	Ecuador	Madagascar	Saudi Arabia
Angola	Egypt	Malawi	Senegal
Antigua and Barbuda	El Salvador	Malaysia	Seychelles
Argentina	Equatorial Guinea	Maldives	Sierra Leone
Armenia	Eritrea	Mali	Singapore
Azerbaijan	Eswatini	Marshall Islands	Solomon Islands
Bahamas	Ethiopia	Mauritania	Somalia
Bahrain	Fiji	Mauritius	South Africa
Bangladesh	Gabon	Mexico	South Sudan
Barbados	Gambia	Micronesia	Sri Lanka
Belize	Georgia	Mongolia	Sudan
Benin	Ghana	Morocco	Suriname
Bhutan	Grenada	Mozambique	Syria
Bolivia	Guatemala	Myanmar	Taiwan
Botswana	Guinea	Namibia	Tajikistan
Brazil	Guinea Bissau	Nauru	Tanzania
Brunei	Guyana	Nepal	Thailand
Burkina Faso	Haiti	Nicaragua	Timor-Leste
Burundi	Honduras	Niger	Togo
Cabo Verde	India	Nigeria	Tonga
Cambodia	Indonesia	Niue	Trinidad and Tobago
Cameroon	Iran	Oman	Tunisia
Central African Republic	Iraq	Pakistan	Turkey
Chad	Israel	Palau	Turkmenistan
Chile	Jamaica	Palestine	Tuvalu
China	Jordan	Panama	Uganda
Colombia	Kazakhstan	Papua New Guinea	Ukraine
Comoros	Kenya	Paraguay	United Arab Emirates
Republic of Congo	Kiribati	Peru	Uruguay
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Korea	Philippines	Uzbekistan
Cook	Kuwait	Qatar	Vanuatu
Costa Rica	Kyrgyzstan	Rwanda	Venezuela
Côte d'Ivoire	Laos	Saint Christopher and Nevis	Vietnam
Cuba	Lebanon	Saint Lucia	Yemen
Djibouti	Lesotho	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Zambia
Dominica	Liberia	Samoa	Zimbabwe