

**Japan – Vietnam
Joint Call for Proposals:**

**Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) and
Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST)**

2024

Summary:

Call announcement:	Noon (JST), 10:00 AM (VST) on 6th December 2024
Deadline for submission:	Noon (JST), 10:00 AM (VST) on 14th February 2025
Selection results announcement:	September 2025 (tentative)
Start of projects:	October 2025 (tentative)
Funding per project:	(Japan-side: per project) Direct expenses International joint research: Up to 105 mil. yen Researchers' capacity building: Up to 13.65 mil. yen/person *Please refer to the Application Guidelines Appendix (for Japan-side PIs) for details Indirect Expenses: 30% of Direct Expenses (Vietnam-side: per project) Should not exceed 350,000 USD
Maximum duration of the projects:	42 months * The end of projects is March 2029, even if the start of projects is delayed because of the review processes.
The number of the projects:	Around three to five
Eligibility:	Researchers who belong to the Japanese research institution and researchers who belong to the Vietnam research institution
Submission:	To JST via e-Rad; To MOST via E - documents are submitted online at: https://stm.most.gov.vn and original documents are submitted directly or by post to the Ministry of Science and Technology, 113 Tran Duy Hung, Hanoi.
JST Contact Details:	SASAKI Takafumi (Dr.) YOKOYAMA Satoshi (Mr.) tel. +81-3-3222-2069 e-mail: joint-call-ja@jst.go.jp
MOST Contact Details:	<u>Trinh Quynh Trang (Ms.)</u> <u>Tel: +84985896385</u> <u>Email: tqtrang@most.gov.vn</u>

1. Introduction

Working collaboratively, the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) and Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) aim to promote and strengthen collaboration between researchers from Japan and Vietnam. Under this framework, JST and MOST launch this Call for Proposals for research, which are to be jointly developed and implemented by researchers from both countries.

The two agencies will jointly fund around three to five research projects in this call.

To enhance international joint research effectiveness, activities such as establishing joint laboratories, and industry-academia collaboration are recommended, though not mandatory. Collaboration with other ASEAN Member States is also welcomed.

JST and MOST are supporting joint projects through strategic project support measures to promote cooperation between Japan and Vietnam. On the Japan-side, this funding measure is carried out under NEXUS (**N**etworked **E**xchange, **U**nited **S**trength for Stronger Partnerships between Japan and ASEAN). On Vietnam-side, this funding measure is carried out under Viet Nameese-Japanese Call for Proposals for Joint R&D Projects under Protocol. The measure is aimed at promoting joint research projects of mutual interest and thus contributing to intensified scientific and technological cooperation with each country. Additionally, it includes fostering future leaders in the fields of collaboration through joint research.

At Japan-side, the aim of this program is to build a “Complementary and Sustainable Research Ecosystem” with ASEAN Member States, facilitating mutual growth as co-creating partners by enhancing sustainable research cooperation, grounded in longstanding initiatives such as international joint research and exchange activities of researchers. The foundation of a research ecosystem lies in its human resources. This joint call for proposals aims to foster talent needed to support this foundation through international joint research. To achieve this, JST will support international joint research projects and early-career researcher (ECR) candidates who would attain doctoral degrees in Japan while joining such international joint research. We encourage the ECR candidates who could play an active role in Japanese industry or academia or could return to Vietnam and serve as a bridge between Japan and Vietnam, such as career paths in academia and industry, after attaining a degree.

At Vietnam side, the aim to enhance the capacity of the applicants to collaborate in joint projects; produce a solution to a pressing scientific and technological issue; seek, study and master or develop innovative technology, contributing to introduction of a new product or manufacturing industry; improve capacity and efficiency of science and technology management; promote international cooperation in research and exchange of research personnel.

This call for proposals is based on international joint research supported by JST and MOST, and will also include activities related to researchers’ capacity building with support from the Japanese side. In the future, to further strengthen these activities, we plan to collaborate not only with JST and MOST but also with the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) of Vietnam, which plays a leading role in researchers’ capacity building in Vietnam, particularly in universities. Through this collaboration, we aim to support international joint research and the development of research personnel contributing to it.

2. Research Fields

Research Fields: Semiconductors

Subtopics:

- (i) Semiconductors design
- (ii) Semiconductors material

*Proposed research is recommended to follow the subtopics above, but the themes are not limited to them hence the team is open to explore other subtopics related to the “Semiconductors.”

3. Researcher Eligibility

Two identical copies of a proposal must be submitted to the JST by a Japan-side Principal Investigator (PI) and to the MOST by a Vietnam-side PI. Detailed information on project proposal and submission guidelines can be found in the sections below.

If the MOST receives a proposal from a Vietnam-side PI but JST doesn't receive it from a Japan-side PI who collaborates with the Vietnam-side PI (and vice versa), the application will automatically be considered ineligible.

When submitting your application through both the JST and the MOST online submission systems, you will also need to enter some details online. Therefore, applicants are advised to start submitting their applications at least one week before the deadline of this Joint Call for Proposals. Applications that are submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.

3.1 Eligible researchers for JST support:

- Any independent researcher personally affiliated with (and actively conducting research at) a 'Domestic Japanese research institution', regardless of nationality, is eligible to apply.
- 'Domestic Japanese research institution' refers to universities, independent administrative institutions, national/public testing and Research Institutions, specially authorized corporations, public-service corporations, and enterprises, etc. that satisfy requirements predetermined by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Please refer to the MEXT homepage for more information: https://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kansa/houkoku/1324571.htm
- The PI must fulfill their responsibilities as the representative of the international joint research and engage in both the joint research and researchers' capacity building throughout the entire period. The PI should prepare the proposal while coordinating with researchers in Japan and Vietnam.
- The Japanese applicants must also complete a research ethics training program conducted by the research institute with which the applicants are affiliated, and then declare the completion of the program to JST. If it is very difficult for the Japanese PI to undertake a program provided by his or her affiliated institute, they should contact JST. Please note that unless applicants complete a research ethics program, his / her application will be deemed ineligible. For more details, please refer to the call

announcement page linked from the JST homepage.

- Japanese applicants will have to register their applications on the Cross-Ministerial R&D Management System (e-Rad: <https://www.e-rad.go.jp/index.html>).
- Please also refer to the Application Guidelines Appendix (for Japan-side PIs).

3.2 Eligible researchers for MOST support:

- Eligibility conditions for MOST support are described as follows.
- Science and technology organizations, researchers involved in scientific and technological activities and relevant state agencies, organizations and researchers who belong to the Vietnam research institution.
- Each country has to define a project coordinator who has the task to submit the joint application on behalf of the consortium simultaneously once on the Japanese submission system and once on the Vietnamese submission system.
- The coordinators are advised to contact their national contact persons before submitting their proposals.

4. Characteristics of Proposals under this call

4.1 Proposal for JST

A joint proposal must be written in English and must comply with instructions in the Joint Application Form. Identical copies of the proposal must be submitted to JST and MOST, respectively. In addition, Japan-side PIs must also submit the Japanese Application Form Appendix (for Japan-side PIs).

The proposal must include an international joint research plan and a researchers' capacity building plan.

Please also refer to the Application Guidelines Appendix (for Japan-side PIs).

4.2 Proposal for MOST

The project has a 3.5-year implementation period with annual evaluation to decide on the project's implementation in the following year.

* Specific requirements for Protocol tasks

- Ensure the contribution of resources from foreign partners to cooperate in implementing Protocol tasks;
- Contribute to promoting scientific and technological cooperation with foreign partners and meet one of the requirements specified in Article 4, Circular No. 10/2019/TTBKHCN dated October 29, 2019.
- Prioritize breakthrough proposals, advanced technologies, and tasks where the two partners have close and effective cooperation.

5. Amount of Funding

5.1 Amount of Funding by JST:

The research expenses include direct and indirect expenses. The direct expenses are consisted with the following types of expenses. In addition to the direct expenses, the overhead cost of 30% of the direct expenses will be added as indirect expenses.

(1) Amount for International Joint Research

JST will support each Japan-side team up to 105 million Japanese Yen as direct expenses for 42 months. The budget for a project may differ each year, depending on the content of activities. The amounts will be adjusted each year due to the budgetary limitations for this program.

*Amount for international joint research may be adjusted depending on the number of ECR candidates per project.

(2) Amount for Researchers' Capacity Building

JST will support accommodation costs and research expenses for ECR candidates, with a maximum allocation of 3.9 million yen/year for each ECR candidate. Accommodation costs will range from 1.8 to 2.4 million yen/year, while research expenses will be capped at 1.5 million yen/year. The maximum duration of the support is 3.5 years until March 2029, making the total amount for researchers' capacity building up to 13.65 million yen/person.

Please refer to the Application Guidelines Appendix (for Japan-side PIs) for details.

5.2 Amount of Funding by MOST:

Despite expenditure of a project may differ in each year, depending on the content of activities, the total budget for the Vietnamese researchers over a full 3.5-year period (i.e., 42 months) should not exceed 350,000 United State Dollars in principles.

6. Eligible costs

6.1 Eligible costs for JST:

(1) Direct expenses

1) Eligible cost for international joint research

Direct expenses for international joint research are expenses directly used for research purposes at the awarded research institution, and can be used for the following items and examples (please also refer to the Application Guidelines Appendix (for Japan-side PIs)).

- Equipment costs (equipment and consumables)
- Travel costs
 - In principle, travel costs are incurred in accordance with the guidelines of the awarded research institution. Travel expenses are applicable to travel directly related to the execution of the research, dissemination activities, etc.

- Personnel costs (PI personnel costs and buyout policy may apply)
- Miscellaneous
- In addition to the above, research expenses may include, for example:
 - Costs for organizing and hosting events for research result dissemination
 - Outsourcing costs (excluding subcontracting)
 - Equipment leasing costs, transportation costs, for equipment used for the research project
 - Airfare of coming to Japan and going back to Vietnam (excluding expenses for temporary return trips) for ECR candidates.
 - Personnel costs for research assistantship for ECR candidates, other young researchers, and students, as well as for administrative staff who coordinate the travel of outgoing researchers and their personnel-related procedures can be recorded as direct expenses.
 - Costs related to establishing joint laboratories, inviting Vietnamese research team members to Japan and covering their stay costs, and developing curriculum for human resource development.
 - Travel and other costs for holding lectures and seminars for students in the partner country.

(Points of Caution)

In principal, participants are to allocate around 30% of the total direct expenses for international joint research to exchange activities of researchers including graduate and undergraduate students who can play an important role in the joint research and who are expected to be internationally active in the future, *e.g., by promoting their international mobility and circulation, such as dispatching them to the partner country or holding workshops, or by providing international research opportunities such as presenting at international conference, and research assistantship and airfare of coming to Japan and going back to Vietnam (excluding expenses for temporary return trips) for ECR students.*

2) Eligible cost for Researchers' Capacity Building

Direct expenses for researchers' capacity building are accommodation costs and research expenses for ECR candidates. Eligible costs of the research expenses must follow the same rule as the direct expenses for international joint research. The use of the expenses must be decided in consultation between a PI or Co-PIs and ECR candidates. For further details, please refer to the Application Guidelines Appendix (for Japan-side PIs).

(2) Indirect expenses

Indirect expenses go directly to the awarded research institution for the purposes of administrative purposes and must constitute 30% of the direct expenses.

6.2 Eligible costs for MOST

This call is designed to support cooperative research activities with Japanese counterparts for Vietnamese researcher, such as expenses for travel and/or conducting seminars/symposia. A

preference is that the main research infrastructure is already ensured by each research group.

Funding provided within this call is intended to enhance the capacity of applicants to collaborate. Funding will therefore be provided mainly in support of collaborative activities and may include some of the local research that is necessary for the collaboration. Funded expenses include costs for research activities as well as research exchange.

The principal cost categories include labor costs for staff members and direct costs such as equipment, travel and consumables. All budget items must conform to the rules and regulations issued by of MOST.

7. Submission

Japan-side PIs must submit joint proposals to JST, and the Vietnam-side PIs to MOST, **ensuring identical copies are submitted to both JST and MOST.**

7.1 Submission procedure for JST:

Application documents by the Japan-side PIs should be submitted through the online e-Rad platform (<https://www.e-rad.go.jp/>).

7.2 Submission procedure for MOST:

Application submission requirements comply with the provisions of Clause 2, Article 11 and Article 12 of Circular No. 10/2019/TT-BKHCN dated October 29, 2019 of the Minister of Science and Technology regulating task management science and technology according to the Protocol. The soft file of documents is submitted online at the address: <https://stm.most.gov.vn> and originals are submitted directly or by post to the Ministry of Science and Technology, 113 Tran Duy Hung, Cau Giay District, Hanoi.

8. Timeline

Call announcement: Noon (JST), 10:00 AM (VST) on 6th December 2024

Deadline of submission: Noon (JST), 10:00 AM (VST) on 14th February 2025

Selection results announcement: September 2025 (tentative)

Expected start of granted projects: October 2025 (tentative)

9. Assessment and Selection

9.1 Evaluation Procedure

Independent Committees consisting of experts selected by JST and MOST respectively will evaluate all proposals. Based on the results of the evaluation, JST and MOST will make a common decision regarding funding of selected proposals.

9.2 Criteria for evaluating proposals

The following general evaluation criteria will apply to each proposed proposal:

- Consistency with the research field of the call
 - The proposal's alignment with the designated research area of the call and its potential to contribute to advancements in the field.
- Capability of research leaders
 - Assessment of the capabilities and expertise of the research leaders involved, including their track record and ability to effectively lead the proposed project.
- Expected scientific results of the joint research
 - Evaluation of the expected scientific achievements resulting from the joint research effort.
- Synergy effects of international collaboration
 - Examination of the potential synergies and added value generated through the collaboration between international partners.
- Validity of research plan
 - Review of the validity and robustness of research plans outlined in the proposal.
- Validity of exchange plan
 - Review of the validity and robustness of exchange activities plan, outlined in the proposal.
- Validity of researchers' capacity building plan
 - Evaluation of whether the development plans are appropriate for the scale of the number of individuals targeted for researchers' capacity building.
 - Evaluation of a development plan that anticipates entry and exit strategies: The entry strategies aim to ensure the quality of ECR candidates, such as conducting pre-interviews and recommendation letters from the Vietnam-side PI. The exit strategies aim to encourage the ECR candidates who could play an active role in Japanese industry or academia or could return to Vietnam and serve as a bridge between Japan and Vietnam, such as career paths in academia and industry, after attaining a degree.
 - Evaluation of effective industry-academia collaboration to nurturing ECR candidates.
- Expected economic and social impact of the joint research
 - Consideration of the potential economic and societal impacts arising from the outcomes of the joint research initiative.
- Expected impact of the researchers' capacity building
 - Consideration of the potential impacts arising from the outcomes of the capacity building.
- Feasibility of implementation
 - Assessment of the practical feasibility of implementing the proposed project, considering factors such as the proposed timeline, budgetary allocations, availability of facilities, and the mechanisms for cooperation among participating entities.

10. Contract between Researchers

It is required that a Collaborative Research Agreement (CRA) be signed for any joint research collaboration among institutions with which collaborating researchers are affiliated. The contract for cooperative research shall include conclusions of discussions among the institutions which are entitled to intellectual property arising as a result of research collaboration, and the institutions concerned on issues regarding treatment of research information brought by researchers involved for the implementation of research collaboration, of research achievements as a result of research collaboration and of intellectual properties among the concerned institutions. Reference to this joint guideline (“10. Contract between Researchers”) should be made within the contract drawn up by the institutions in Japan and Vietnam.

10.1 the Japan-side PIs

Before the conclusion of the contract, the Japan-side PI must submit the checklist in specified form to JST and then undergo a check by JST. When concluded, JST needs to be promptly notified of the contract. If there is any difficulty in concluding the contract, please consult JST in advance. Please note that in cases where research activities or technology handled within this project relate to sensitive technologies or information that may impact international security, please ensure to contact JST in advance. We may request that you consult with the Japan-side program officer (PO) and exercise caution as appropriate.

10.2 the Vietnam-side PIs

When concluded, MOST needs to be promptly notified of the contract. If there is any difficulty in concluding the contract, please consult MOST in advance.

11. Reporting

11.1 the Japan-side PIs

Japan-side PIs shall submit to JST annual research plans for the year ahead and reports on the progress in the past year, and the institution with which the PI is affiliated shall submit an annual financial report. Any key changes to the project team or activities, particularly if they affect the ability to complete the project should be made known to JST immediately.

At the end of the period of support and after completion of the joint research activities, the Japan-side PI shall promptly submit to JST a final report which shall include a financial report and a description of the research activities and outcomes. The report shall include a general summary of the activities of both the Japanese and the Vietnam research teams. If papers describing results of the research activities are presented to academic journals, societies etc., a list of those papers and other related information should be attached to the final report. Detailed instructions for preparation of the final report will be provided to the Japan-side PI during the final year of the project. Completed projects will be duly evaluated and excellent outcomes may be made public.

11.2 the Vietnam-side PIs

The Protocol tasks have an implementation period of 3.5 years with annual evaluation to decide on implementation in the following year

Vietnamese-side PIs shall submit to MOST periodically report progress and result of the tasks to MOST; and report difficulties arising and propose solutions to MOST.

Procedures for assessment, commissioning and recognition of results of protocol-based tasks and completion of contracts are provided for in the Circular No. 11/2014/TT-BKHCHN dated May 30, 2014 by Minister of Science and Technology providing guidelines for assessment and commissioning of results of state-funded national scientific and technological tasks (hereinafter referred to as “Circular No.11/2014/TT-BKHCHN”).

When contract completion, PIs must be prepared propose the meeting on assessment and commissioning of a protocol-based task. A dossier includes:

- a) The documents listed in Article 6 of the Circular No. 11/2014/TT-BKHCHN;
- b) A report on international cooperation in protocol-based task (using Form No. 14 of the Appendix enclosed with this Circular);
- c) An assessment of the cooperation process and result and of prospects for cooperation from partner.

12. Contact information

Japan-side applicants:

inquiries to JST regarding this Call for Proposals should be sent to joint-call-ja@jst.go.jp

Vietnam-side applicants:

inquiries to MOST regarding this Call for Proposals should be sent to:

Trịnh Quỳnh Trang (Ms.)

Official of International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Science and Technology

113 Tran Duy Hung, Cau Giay, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Mobile: 0985-896-385;

E-mail: tqtrang@most.gov.vn