

Japan-Vietnam Joint Call for Proposals 2026:

Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST),
and the Vietnam Ministry of Science and Technology (MST)

Summary:

Call announcement:	Noon (JST), 10:00 AM (VST) on 6th April 2026	
Deadline for submission:	Noon (JST), 10:00 AM (VST) on 4th June 2026	
Selection results announcement:	September 2026 (Tentative)	
Start of projects:	January 2027	
Funding per project:	Japan side: funded by JST (direct expenses)	<u>International joint research:</u> Up to 105 mil. yen <u>Researchers' capacity building:</u> Up to 13.65 mil. yen/person *Indirect expenses:30% of direct expenses
	Vietnam side: funded by MST	<u>International joint research:</u> Up to 400,000 USD
Maximum duration of projects:	42 months	
The number of projects:	Up to 10	
Research fields:	Semiconductors	
Submission:	To JST via e-Rad (online) To NAFOSTED/MST via E - documents (online)	
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1. Introduction

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

The two agencies will jointly fund up to ten 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 MST 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 the 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 is to enhance the capacity of the applicants to collaborate in joint projects; to produce a solution to a pressing scientific and technological issue; to seek, study and master or develop innovative technology, contributing to introduction of a new product or manufacturing industry; to improve capacity and efficiency of science and technology management; to promote international cooperation in research and exchange of research personnel.

Notably, the NEXUS is also referenced as part of the collaborative efforts mentioned in the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed in April 2025 between the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) of Vietnam and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan, which sets forth a shared commitment to training doctoral-level human resources in the semiconductor field by 2030. The objectives of this Call are aligned with the shared vision outlined in the MoC.

2. Research Field

Research Field: Semiconductors

Subtopics:

- (i) Design (incl. advanced logic/memory semiconductor design, low-power optimization, large-scale power semiconductor design)
- (ii) Materials (incl. advanced packaging materials, green transformation (GX) power semiconductor materials, next-generation manufacturing component materials)
- (iii) Support Technologies (incl. electronic design automation (EDA), evaluation and analysis technologies)
- (iv) Manufacturing (incl. manufacturing technologies for current-generation and mature-node semiconductors, and process design kits (PDKs))

Japan's "Semiconductor and Digital Industry Strategy" prioritizes advanced semiconductor R&D, production capacity, and human resource development as keys to Green and Digital Transformation. Under the Prime Minister's Decision No. 1017/QĐ-TTg, and No. 1018/QĐ-TTg, Vietnam targets building an ecosystem, attracting enterprises, and training 50,000 engineers by 2030. This collaboration aims to leverage both countries' strengths, foster mutual growth, and contribute to semiconductor industry development while deepening the Japan-Vietnam strategic partnership.

3. Eligibility

Two identical copies of a proposal must be submitted to both JST and MST (via NAFOSTED: National Foundation for Science and Technology Development). Detailed information on a project proposal and submission guidelines can be found in the sections below.

Please note that proposals received by MST and not submitted to JST (and vice versa) will automatically be considered ineligible.

When applying through both JST and MST online submission systems, it might take time to fill out a form with some details. 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.

Additionally, we suggest that applicants should also confirm specific submission procedures with the responsible officers at both JST and MST to avoid any discrepancies.

3.1 Eligibilities for JST Support:

The research project must remain eligible in accordance with the eligibility requirements set forth below for the entire research period. If the project fails to meet these requirements at any point during the research period, the will in principle be completely or partially suspended (i.e. be terminated early).

Please also note that the Vietnam-side applicants are required to submit a copy of an agreement, such as Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), concluded between the institutions of both Principal Investigators (PIs) for this project. The PIs' affiliations stated on the first page of the application form must be identical to the affiliations of the signatory to the agreement.

The Japan-side eligibility criteria are as follows. Please also refer to the Application Guidelines

(Appendix for Japan-side PIs).

- Any independent researcher personally affiliated with (and actively conducting research at) a “Domestic Japanese research institution,” where they will organize and pursue the proposed research 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 website for more information:
https://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/kansa/houkoku/1324571.htm
- The Japanese applicants must complete a research ethics training program conducted by the research institute with which they are affiliated, and then declare the completion of the program to JST. If it is extremely difficult for applicants to undertake a program provided by their affiliated institute, they should contact JST. Applicants who have not completed a research ethics program will be deemed ineligible. For more details, please refer to the call announcement page linked from the JST website.
- The Japan-side researchers are not allowed to propose more than one proposal as a PI in this Call; the Co-PI is not restricted in this respect, and is not prevented from proposing one proposal as a PI and participating in other proposals as a Co-PI. In such cases, measures might be taken to avoid excessive concentration. For details, please refer to the Application Guidelines (Appendix for Japan-side PIs).
- The “Confirmation Form” on the last page of Application Form (Appendix for Japan-side PIs) must be approved by the head of the PI’s institution. Any deficiencies in this form, without prior notice, will result in automatic ineligibility.
- Japanese applicants must register their applications in the Cross-Ministerial R&D Management System (e-Rad: <https://www.e-rad.go.jp/index.html>).

3.2 Eligibilities for MST Support:

Eligibility conditions for MST 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.
- For the Vietnam side, a photocopy of the agreement between the Vietnamese host institution and the foreign partner is required, specifying the scope of cooperation, implementation plan, result-sharing principles, and mutual contributions (including in-kind

and financial contributions from the foreign partner). The Vietnamese and Japanese applicant organization must be the signatories to the agreement.

* 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 Circular 44/2025/TT-BKHCN dated November 30, 2025.
- Prioritize breakthrough proposals, advanced technologies, and tasks where the two partners have close and effective cooperation.

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 MST, 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).

The Japanese team is basically composed as follows:

- Principal Investigator (PI)
 - The PI is a researcher who will be directly supported by JST and is the representative of the research team(s) in Japan. They are responsible for directing and overseeing the whole project. The PI must be affiliated with a research institution in Japan.
- Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) (if needed)
 - The Co-PI is a researcher who will be directly supported by JST and collaborates with the PI in conducting the research project. The Co-PI must be affiliated with a research institution in Japan. Whether or not it is necessary to designate a Co-PI depends on the unit by which the research contract with JST is concluded. If the research expenses can be executed under the same contract as the PI (e.g., when the Co-PI belongs to the same department as the PI), it is not necessary to designate a Co-PI. Please confirm the unit of the contract with the administrative office in charge of research contracts at your institution.
- Research participants (if needed)
 - Research participants are researchers, technicians, research assistants, students, coordinators and others who are part of the research project under the direction of

the PI or Co-PIs but are not directly supported by JST.

4.2 Proposal for MST:

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

5. Amount of Funding

5.1 Amount of Funding by JST:

The research expenses include direct and indirect expenses. The direct expenses consist of the following types of expenses. In addition to the direct expenses, 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, 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 MST:

Despite of 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 400,000 United State Dollars in principles.

6. Eligible Costs

6.1 Eligible Costs for JST:

(1) Direct expenses

1) Eligible costs 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 costs 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, for example, research expenses may include:
 - Costs for organizing and hosting events for research result dissemination
 - Outsourcing costs (excluding subcontracting)
 - Equipment leasing costs and transportation costs for equipment used for the research project
 - Personnel costs for administrative staff that coordinate the travel of exchange activities and their personnel-related procedures can be recorded as direct expenses
 - 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
 - Costs related to establishing joint laboratories, 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)

Participants are to allocate around 30% of the total direct expenses for international joint research to exchange activities of young 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 costs for temporary return trips) for ECR candidates.*

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

In addition to the direct expenses, 30% of the direct expenses will be added separately as indirect expenses to cover administrative purposes.

6.2 Eligible Costs for MST:

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 MST.

7. Submission

Japan-side PIs must submit joint proposals to JST, and the Vietnam-side PIs to NAFOSTED / MST, **ensuring identical copies are submitted to JST and NAFOSTED / MST, respectively.**

7.1 Submission procedure for JST:

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

7.2 Submission procedure for MST:

- Application submission requirements comply with the provisions of Chapter II of Circular No. 44/2025/TT-BKHCN dated November 30, 2025 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.mst.gov.vn>.

8. Timeline

Call announcement: Noon (JST), 10:00 AM (VST) on 6th April 2026

Deadline for submission: Noon (JST), 10:00 AM (VST) on 4th June 2026

Selection results announcement: September 2026 (tentative)

Start of projects: January 2027

9. Review and Selection

9.1 Review Procedure

Independent Committees consisting of experts selected by JST and MST respectively will review all proposals. Based on the results of the document review, JST and MST will make a common decision regarding funding of selected proposals. In the course of this joint decision-making process, consideration may also be given to the overall distribution of subtopics among the proposed research projects.

9.2 Criteria for reviewing proposals

The following general review criteria will apply to each 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 with a focus on reciprocal/mutual and balanced contributions from both countries.
- 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, MST needs to be promptly notified of the contract. If there is any difficulty in concluding the contract, please consult MST 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 Japan 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

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

Procedures for assessment, commissioning and recognition of results of protocol-based tasks and completion of contracts are provided for in the Circular No. 44/2025/TT-BKHCHN dated November 30, 2025 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. 44/2025/TT-BKHCHN dated November 30, 2025”).

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

- a) The documents listed in Chapter III of the Circular No. 44/2025/TT-BKHCHN dated November 30, 2025
- b) Final evaluation, including assessment of the effectiveness of outputs of the science, technology, and innovation task
- 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 MST regarding this Call for Proposals should be sent to:

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