

Kyushu University Program to Cultivate Innovative PhDs for a Better Future (K²-SPRING) 【FY2025 Regular Recruitment】 Application Guidelines

This is a K²-SPRING regular recruitment for those who already enrolled or intend to enter a doctoral program at Kyushu University or advance to the third year of an integrated doctoral program in October 2024 or April 2025.

[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 March 2024, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) announced the “Doctoral Human Resource Success Plan: Let's Get a Doctorate,” and prior to this, the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) launched the " Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation" (SPRING) in FY2021. Based on the Law Concerning the Revitalization of Science, Technology and Innovation (Law No. 63 of 2008), the SPRING Project provides 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 program, with the aim of leading 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 continue to develop the doctoral support program as of " Kyushu University Program to Cultivate Innovative PhDs for a Better Future " (hereinafter referred to as "K²-SPRING"). K²-SPRING is now accepting applications for program candidates who wish to enter or are already enrolled in a doctoral program.

【2. Application Eligibility】

Applicants for K²-SPRING (for FY2025 regular recruitment) 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 Kyushu University as of April 1, 2025 as regular students 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 three or four 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 1st, 2025
- (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 (**including those currently receiving the MEXT scholarships**).
 - (4) Those who receive scholarships, etc., from the national government, private organizations, or other bodies (hereinafter referred to as "the national government, etc.") and are not permitted by the national government, etc., to receive financial assistance apart from the said scholarships, etc.
 - (5) International students receiving scholarships or other support from their home countries.
 - (6) 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)
 - (7) 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".)
 - (8) Those who are on a leave of absence (**including those currently on leave of absence**)
- 5 Those who are expected to complete their doctoral program within the standard years of study.

【3. Period of Support】

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 will be enrolled in the first year of a three-year doctoral course as of April 2025, the maximum period of payment is three years.)

(Note) The start date of the support will be April 1st, 2025.

(Note) The period of payment may be shortened in case of suspension or cancellation of the research aids described in Appendix 2.

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

【4. Amount of Research Aids】

The following are actual results for FY2024. Subject to change depending on circumstances.

- Research aid: 200,000 yen per month
(Note) The research aid is based on 180,000 yen per month, but an additional 20,000 yen will be provided for first-year and second-year doctoral students to support their language studies and language examinations.
- Research expenses: 350,000 yen per year
(Note) This research expenses are 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 Appendix 1].
- Tuition exemption: Half of the tuition will be exempted.

【5. Application procedures and selection】

(1) Consultation with your **academic advisor**

[Students]

- 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]

- Academic advisors should carefully read these application guidelines and judge the applicant's suitability.
- Academic advisors should also keep the following points into consideration and please nominate those who are committed to directly engaging in and contributing to science, technology and innovation in 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*¹ P.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*¹ P.2-3)
- “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 JST SPRING Application Q&A*² P.11)

(2) Pre-entry by **students**

Please access the following URL during the entry period, enter the required information, and complete the pre-entry process.

(Note) Application documents without pre-entry will not be accepted.

[Entry period] From Friday, November 1st to Sunday, November 10th, 2024 at 11:59 p.m.

[Entry URL] <https://forms.office.com/r/LbU7cX3S9C>

(3) Documents to be prepared and submitted by **students**

① Application Form (required)

Please obtain the application form from the URL below and prepare the required documents.

<https://archive.iii.kyushu-u.ac.jp/public/rgJGQJqJeRGmZaFOJcUVHRT4l-wT73RCckJleimZt9wg>

② Transcript (undergraduate) (required)

③ Academic Papers (optional) (Submit only after peer review and decision of acceptance)

Please convert ① Application Form, ② Transcript and ③ Academic Papers to one PDF file and submit it from the application submission URL. **No documents will be submitted or modified after the application period.** For details, please check the Appendix 4 “Application Documents Checklist”.

[Submission period] From Tuesday, November 5th to Monday, November 11th, 2024 at NOON

[Application submission URL] The URL is included in the receipt confirmation email at the time

of pre-entry.

(4) Submission of the evaluation report by **academic advisors**

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

<https://archive.iii.kyushu-u.ac.jp/public/rgJGQJqJeRGmZaFOJcUVHRT4l-wT73RCckJleimZt9wg>

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

The Evaluation Report must be submitted **by the academic advisor himself/herself** using the form below after converting it to PDF format. **No documents will be submitted or modified after the application period.**

The file name should be "Entry number_ Applicant Name_ Evaluation"

[Submission period] Tuesday, November 5th to Monday, November 11th, 2024 at NOON

[Evaluation report Submission URL] <https://forms.office.com/r/R31ZjCse3P>

【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 concepts of 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 **FY 2025 K²-SPRING program students**.
- (4) The unit of affiliation will be determined from among all the FY 2025 K²-SPRING program candidates based on the results of the screening.

【7. Selection Schedule (Note)】

Friday, November 1st to Sunday, November 10th at 11:59 p.m.: Pre-entry Period

Tuesday, November 5th to Monday, November 11th at NOON: Submission period for the
Application, Evaluation and Transcript

Tuesday, November 12th to Monday, January 27th, 2025: Conducting the Initial Screening

Tuesday, January 28th, 2025: Initial Screening Results Notification

Monday, February 3rd, 2025: Conducting the Secondary Screening

Friday, February 7th, 2025: Announcement of the Results

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

【8. Number of students】

FY2025 K²-SPRING program students: Approximately 80 students (tentative)

(Note) The number of students may increase or decrease depending on the number of students who decline the offer due to being appointed as a JSP Research Fellow (DC1/DC2).

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

K²-SPRING will provide a curriculum as shown in Appendix 1.

【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. Publication of names】

The names and student ID numbers of students who were selected as K²-SPRING students will be published on the SPRING website.

【12. Cooperation of Academic Advisors and Faculty Members】

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

- 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, 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 K²-SPRING to program students are provided to program students for their free, challenging, and interdisciplinary research (proposals) (JST SPRING Application Guidelines*¹ P.14). Please understand that we do not intend to support academic advisors' research or doctoral dissertation research based on their suggestions.
 - 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.

【13. Continuation Screening as program students after the start of support】

- 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.

【14. Definition of 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.

K²-SPRING students will participate in the open platform “MIRAI-SDGs Platform” established by K-SPRING, regardless of which unit they belong to. They will relate their own research themes to the 17 issues of the “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” and choose the SDGs issue that is most relevant to them.

Within the platform, students will introduce their own research content and make proposals for collaborative and fusion research that they are currently considering, which will be sent out to students, faculty members, and corporate members (corporate consortium members). This platform is a “place of emergence” that generates challenging and interdisciplinary research, and it is a place where you can engage in free and open exchange of ideas with students, faculty, and corporate members (corporate consortium members), and break out of your specialist shell (Fusion-of-Intelligence A: Compulsory).

*Note: As for the Material Unit, we will not be accepting applications for program candidates at this time, as it is an integrated program throughout the five years of the master's and doctoral programs.

① Interdisciplinary Unit

In this unit, we will develop the exchange of opinions on the “MIRAI-SDGs Platform”, which is a “place of emergence” that gives rise to challenging and fusion research, into an Integrated Research Project (elective course). We hope that you will actually propose and implement interdisciplinary fusion projects. For this purpose, we will formally start an AI Co-Pilot Boundary Crossing (elective course) to support the proposal of Integrated Research Project from FY2025.

Having friends of the same generation who are studying different specializations through Integrated Research Project, etc., will enrich your research life as a relationship in which you can support each other even after completing your doctorate. In addition, this unit will develop various career path development support, including the new Fusion-of-Intelligence B and C. Through learning in this unit, we will develop outstanding doctoral human resources with abundant creativity who can contribute to the development of science and technology, the creation of innovation, and the solution of social issues in Japan by acquiring a cross-disciplinary, bird's-eye view in addition to their specialized fields and being able to flexibly generate new thinking that transcends existing values.

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 five-year program, we will accept applications at the end of the 4th year of undergraduate (before entering the master's program) (Capacity: 4 people).

【Inquiries about recruitment】

Student Affairs Department SPRING program office

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

Contact Form: <https://k-spring.kyushu-u.ac.jp/en/contact/#form>

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

*1 JST SPRING Application Guidelines:

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

*2 JST SPRING Application FAQ:

<https://www.jst.go.jp/jisedai/spring/dl/faq-2024SPRINGr2.pdf>

K²-SPRING 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 |
|----------------------|-------------|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| 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 |
| 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. | Unit Original *See table below for details |
| Elective | [4] | Fusion-of-intelligence B | 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 |
| Elective | [5] | Fusion-of-intelligence C (Fusion-of-intelligence Internship) | 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 |
| Elective | [6] | AI Co-Pilot Boundary Crossing | 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----------|------|---------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|---|----------|
| Elective | [9] | Entrepreneurship Training | Take one course from the Entrepreneurship Education group. | Up to the second year | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | 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 | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | 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 | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | 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 | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | 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 | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | Optional |
| Elective | [14] | International Network B | K ² -SPRING original overseas training program | Second or third year | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | 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 | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | <input type="radio"/> Can be approved as an elective | Optional |

Q-Energy Innovator Unit and Quantum Unit original curriculum

| | | |
|--------------------|---|---|
| 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. |

Suspension of Research Aid and other matters after being selected for K²-SPRING

1. Suspension, cancellation, and return of Research Aid

- (1) If any of the following situations arise, then the provision and expenditure of Research Aid will be suspended, or the status of the program student will be revoked.
 - 1) If the student falls under any of the categories set forth in **【2. Application Eligibility】** 4.
 - 2) If the student takes a leave of absence, withdraws, or is expelled from the program
 - 3) In the event of death
 - 4) In the event of disciplinary action
 - 5) If, in the review conducted each year for the continuation of payments, the program student is found not to have fulfilled their obligations
 - 6) If a student is found to be unqualified as a program student; for example, if the student is not devoted to their studies or research, failure to meet submission deadlines, or if their attitude and conduct is poor
 - 7) In addition to the above, when a student has difficulty in research or activities as a program student due to circumstances such as childbirth or childcare

- (2) If the suspended or revoked Research Aid has already been transferred or used, then the program student must promptly return it.

2. Resumption of the payment of Research Aid

With respect to a person whose Research Aid has been suspended, the payment may be resumed when the reason for the suspension has ceased to exist and it is deemed appropriate for the student to receive the Research Aid again.

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

The research aid (200,000 yen per month) is 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 and obliged to pay "income tax".

*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 Documents Checklist

■ List of Application Documents

1. Application Form (required)

Use the “R7 Regular Recruitment” format.

*Do not submit in the past format.

2. Transcript (required)

Only undergraduate transcript needed. (Those who graduated from a technical college (KOSEN)'s advanced course must submit both the KOSEN's undergraduate course and the advanced.)

A transcript you previously received (with date of graduation) is acceptable. No need to obtain a new one.

3. Thesis (optional)

If your research achievements of your application form include published (peer-reviewed) or unpublished-accepted (peer-reviewed) academic papers, please submit the full text of those papers.

If the thesis is an unpublished - accepted (with peer review), attach a copy of the acceptance letter (email) from the editor to the first page of the thesis.

*For papers written in languages other than Japanese or English, a Japanese or English translation of the title and abstract must be submitted in front of the full text of the thesis.

e.g.1) Order of a PDF file in case of Published (peer-reviewed) thesis:

- ① A Japanese or English translation of the title and abstract of your thesis (in the case of published thesis in languages other than Japanese or English)
- ② Your original thesis

e.g.2) Order of PDF file in the case of unpublished-accepted (with peer review) thesis:

- ① A copy of the acceptance letter (email) from the editor
- ② A Japanese or English translation of the title and abstract of your thesis (in the case of published papers in languages other than Japanese or English)
- ③ Your original thesis

■ How to Submit

The files 1 and 2 (or 1 to 3 if you have) above must be **arranged in numerical order and** combined into a single PDF file, and submitted to the submission URL indicated in the confirmation of receipt e-mail received at the time of pre-entry.

*The evaluation form is submitted by the applicant's academic advisor, so the applicant does not submit it.

File name should be [**Entry No._Name**].

Example: If the entry number is No. 7: *7_KYUDAI Taro*

[Reference: How to merge multiple PDFs into one]

[Adobe's Official PDF Merger Tool](#)

FAQ <K²-SPRING Regular Recruitment>

10/15/2024

*Please click [HERE](#) to contact the SPRING office.

| No. | Categories | Question | Answer |
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| 1-1 | Application | I am currently enrolled in a master's program at another university and will enter the doctoral program at Kyushu University in April 2025. Can I apply? | Yes, you can. |
| 1-2 | Application | I am currently a research student. After passing the doctoral exam, I plan to enter the doctoral program in April 2025. Can I apply? | Yes, you can. |
| 1-3 | Application | Are there any restrictions on working students (including those with work experience) or 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. |
| 1-4 | Application | 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. |
| 1-5 | Application | 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. |

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| | | | <p>You may apply in the following cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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. |
| 1-6 | Application | What exactly does a stable income of over 2.4 million yen per year mean? | <p>Stable income is defined as stable, fixed income such as salaries and executive compensation. Part-time job, TA/RA salaries and paid internships are 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 SPRING office.</p> |
| 1-7 | Application | <p>I am receiving the JASSO Study Incentive Fee from April of this year until March of the following year. Will there be any negative impact on the screening process for this program?</p> | <p>There is no negative impact at the screening process, but if you become a program student, you will not be able to receive them in parallel.</p> |
| 1-8 | Application | Is it necessary to submit a certificate of income at the time of application? | <p>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.</p> |
| 1-9 | Application | I didn't study for my bachelor's degrees at Kyushu University, so I | <p>Yes, you have to submit your undergraduate transcript from university which you completed.</p> |

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| | | <p>don't have the relevant academic transcripts to provide.</p> <p>Should I submit the transcript from my previous university where I completed my bachelor's degree?</p> | |
| 1-10 | Application | <p>My academic advisor differs between the master's and doctoral programs.</p> <p>Which one should I ask to write the evaluation report?</p> | <p>Please ask your academic advisor in the doctoral program to write an evaluation report. The academic advisor who wrote your evaluation report will be in charge of managing your research expenses, so please ask for academic advisor's approval in advance.</p> |
| 1-11 | Application | <p>To what extent do you mean by “directly pioneer the future of science, technology, and innovation in Japan”?</p> | <p>It refers to direct involvement in research and activities that will contribute to innovation in Japan in the future by demonstrating the abilities cultivated in the doctoral program at Japanese universities, government offices (including basic research), or in industry (companies, etc.).</p> |
| 1-12 | Application | <p>Conducting research overseas and contributing to Japanese science and technology in the form of papers would be “directly pioneer the future of science, technology, and innovation in Japan”?</p> | <p>Just conducting research overseas and publishing papers is not considered “directly pioneer the future of science, technology, and innovation in Japan” as required by this program.</p> |
| 1-13 | Application | <p>If I bring back to Japan my experience and knowledge from overseas, is it considered “directly pioneer the future of science, technology, and innovation in Japan”?</p> | <p>As stated in the application guidelines, the program students will be tracked by the government survey for approximately 10 years after you complete this program. In other words, the program requires that the students contribute directly to innovation at a research institution, company, or other place in Japan during the 10-year period.</p> <p>On the other hand, if students contribute to the creation of a new innovation in Japan within 10 years after serving as a</p> |

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| | | | postdoctoral fellow overseas, for example, this will be considered a direct contribution to Japan. |
| 1-14 | Application | Is the content different from the doctoral research project considered different even if it is derived from the doctoral research project? | Although derivative content is acceptable, the research must be original and based on the applicant's own ideas. The quality and originality of the applicant's research will be evaluated in an evaluation report by the applicant's academic advisor. |
| 1-15 | Application | Is the capacity of the unit fixed per academic department? | There is no fixed number of students per unit. However, there is an approximate capacity for each unit, and the top applicants will be assigned to the unit of their choice. Therefore, please understand that you may not necessarily be assigned to the unit of your choice. |
| 1-16 | Application | In the application form, should diagrams be in color or black and white? | Either way is fine. The diagram should be designed to be easily understood by non-specialized judges. |
| 1-17 | Application | Regarding the budget plan for research expenses on the application form, should I write a 3-year plan or a plan only for the first year? | Please write your budget plan for research expenses for the first year of K ² -SPRING. If you are selected as a K ² -SPRING student, you will be asked to submit both a report for current fiscal year and a research plan for the following year at the time of the continuation review each fiscal year. Please provide for the second and subsequent years of research expenses at that time. |

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| 1-18 | Application | <p>If I am unable to make the scheduled secondary screening date, is there an online or backup date available?</p> | <p>Interviews will be conducted online. If you are out of the country, we will try to accommodate the time difference as much as possible.</p> <p>In that case, please contact us individually when you are eligible for the secondary screening immediately.</p> <p>Since experts from outside the university will participate in the screening process, applicants may be asked to take the screening even during the night if it is unable to make the necessary arrangements.</p> |
| 2-1 | Financial support | <p>What month will the payments start?</p> | <p>For this time, support will begin in April 2025 after you enter the doctoral program. For those who entered the doctoral program in October 2024, support will begin in April 2025. Payment of research aids is scheduled to begin in May, with the accumulated amount from April onwards being paid.</p> <p>However, if students won't be in Japan when the support starts, the month when the research aids begin may be different.</p> |
| 2-2 | Financial support | <p>About tuition fee exemption, if I apply for entrance fee and tuition fee exemption, will I only receive half of the tuition fee exemption?</p> | <p>Under the K²-SPRING program, only tuition fee is exempted half.</p> <p>Entrance fee exemption: If you apply for the exemption yourself, please follow the result of the decision.</p> <p>Tuition exemption: Half of the tuition will be exempted until the semester in which the standard period of study expires. However, the content of support may be subject to change depending on budgetary measures and other factors.</p> <p>You can apply for the University's Tuition Fee Exemption (original system) if you are applicable. For those who are judged to be</p> |

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| | | | in particularly high financial hardship during the tuition fee exemption (original system) screening process, the full amount may be exempted. If you think you are in high financial hardship, please apply for the University's Tuition Fee Exemption (original system). |
| 2-3 | Financial support | What if I'm selected for the Research Fellow of Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (DC1) after being selected for K ² -SPRING program? | You have to choose which financial support you would like to receive because it's impossible to get both supports together. If you decline K ² -SPRING, please contact to the SPRING office as soon as possible. |
| 2-4 | Financial support | Can I apply for DC2 after I'm selected as K ² -SPRING student? Also, if I'm selected as a JSPS Research Fellow DC2 at my second year of K ² -SPRING, do I have to refund the first year's research aids? | Yes, you can. Please select one of the supports as in 3 above. Even if you choose DC2, you do not need to refund the payment from the first year. Those who are supported as K ² -SPRING students in the first year are expected to continue their activities as K ² -SPRING students even after becoming DC2. |
| 3-1 | As a K ² -SPRING student | I am planning to apply for the "Long-Term Registration System" for my doctoral program. Will this affect the selection? Also, will the period of support be considered? | No, there is no effect on the selection. However, even if you are accepted for the long-term registration system, the period of K ² -SPRING support is limited to three years (or four years for a 4-year program) as the standard period of study. |
| 3-2 | As a K ² -SPRING student | Is the compulsory "Career development" subject offered in person at Ito Campus or online? | We would prefer to hold this seminar in person so that students can experience the enthusiasm of the lecturers, but as this is a compulsory subject, we plan to hold this seminar in conjunction with online. However, depending on the lectures' schedule, it may be held online only. |
| 3-3 | As a K ² -SPRING student | Does registration for a job-based internship also require that I | Registration for the job-based internship is mandatory, but participation in the |

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| | | actually participate in the internship? | internship is optional to those who wish to do so. |
| 3-4 | As a K ² -SPRING student | I'm currently an M1 student with a JASSO scholarship type 1 loan. I would like to apply for a scholarship return waiver, but will I be exempt from applying for the return waiver of my current scholarship type 1 once I am selected for a reserved K ² -SPRING student? I know that I will not be eligible to apply for a waiver of return after entering the doctoral program. | You can apply for the scholarship return waiver for master's degree programs. To submit the application, please follow the instructions of the Department Student Affairs Section or the Scholarship Section of the Career Scholarship Support Division. |
| 3-5 | As a K ² -SPRING student | If I am selected as a program student, is it okay to continue TA / RA and part-time jobs? | As long as it does not interfere with your research activities or your efforts in the program works, there is no problem with continuing your work. Income from TA/RA, part-time job/work, paid internships, etc. is not counted toward the income threshold. |
| 3-6 | As a K ² -SPRING student | 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. |
| 3-7 | As a K ² -SPRING student | 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. In that case, please contact us individually. |

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| 3-8 | As a K ² -SPRING student | 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 refund 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 refund all or part of the research aids. |
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[Reference]

JST SPRING Program for Challenging Researches by Next-Generation Researchers

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

SPRING Q&A on Public Offering

<https://www.jst.go.jp/jisedai/spring/dl/faq-2024SPRINGr2.pdf>