

FY2026 Research Grant Application Guideline

1. Purpose of Research Grant

As society continues to age rapidly, it is becoming increasingly important to understand conditions such as cancer, lifestyle diseases, and psychiatric and neurological diseases, so that we can develop treatments that are more effective and have fewer side-effects while still being economically viable.

We aim to promote “research that benefits the understanding of disease conditions and development of revolutionary treatments” by providing support for

- Original, pioneering and groundbreaking research proposals”
- Research proposals that are likely to produce clinically meaningful results”
- AI / information science related innovative research proposals.

The past achievements of applicants do not matter. We are looking for epoch-making research ideas that will be the next science trends.

Selection will be conducted uniformly for all applications, regardless of the research area. Potential areas include basic life science, drug discovery, and medical resources as follows:

- (i) Basic life science research**
- (ii) Scientific drug discovery research and research on medicinal resources**
(includes organic synthetic chemistry and natural product chemistry)
- (iii) Basic research into specific disease conditions**
- (iv) Research that has to comply with “*Ethical Guidelines for Medical and Health Research Involving Human Subjects*” .***

* For the details, please refer to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare's website:

https://www.mext.go.jp/content/20250325-mxt_life-000035486-01.pdf

1. Research applicable to these Guidelines

These Guidelines shall apply to any medical and biological research involving human subjects that is conducted by a Japanese investigator, etc., or is conducted in Japan. Of research that falls under the scope to which other guidelines are applicable, however, matters not set forth in such other guidelines shall be conducted in accordance with these Guidelines.

In addition, research falling under any of the following categories A through C shall not be applicable to these Guidelines:

- (A) Research conducted pursuant to the provisions of laws and ordinances;
- (B) Research included within scope of the code of conduct set forth by laws and ordinances; or
- (C) Research utilizing only the specimens and/or information listed in the following:
 - (i) Specimens and/or information, the value of which has already been established academically, that are widely used in research and are generally available;
 - (ii) Existing information that is not information relating to an individual; and,
 - (iii) Anonymously personal information that has already been created.

We are keen to support the following:

- (i) Individual Investigator-led Research (Researchers newly proposing research based on their own original ideas).
- (ii) Female researchers.
- (iii) Researchers who have recently established their own laboratory.
- (iv) Researchers who have recently returned from studying overseas (A specific grant frame is available for previous recipients of the AFRMD Overseas Study Grant) .
- (v) Researchers who have balanced research with life events (childbirth, childcare, caring for family, etc.).

2. Number of recipients of fiscal year 2025 Research Grant

We received 1,158 applications for fiscal year 2025 Research Grant (male:962, female:196). After in-depth scientific review by Selection Committee members, 80 applications (male:62, female:18) have been selected to give Research Grant of ¥2 million per application. Therefore, in total, ¥160 million has been given to the selected 80 applicants.

The results of the FY2025 selection of researchers that we especially would like to support are as follows:

	Research proposal based on your own idea	Female researchers	Started your own laboratory	Returned from studying overseas in 2 years	Balanced the research with life events*
FY2025	75%	21%	40%	11%	11%
FY2024	70%	24%	36%	21%	14%

* Childbirth, childcare, caring parent(s)/parent(s)-in-law, etc.

3. Application period

From 9 AM, April 1 to 3 PM, May 29, 2026 (JST)

Many applications may come together just before the application deadline, and it may take time to apply. Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted, please prepare your application in well advance of the deadline.

4. Eligibility Researchers conducting their proposed research in Japan.

- 1) Researchers conducting their proposed research in Japan.
- 2) No references are required; no age limits.
- 3) **Funding Limit:** No research grant will be awarded if a researcher has already received funding exceeding ¥25 million per project for fiscal year 2026 (direct costs excluding overhead) as the project leader as of the time of application, i.e., dispatch of the application form. This involves grants for fiscal 2026 and for multiple fiscal years including 2026.
- 4) Researchers belonging to profit-making organizations are not eligible.

5. Precautions

- 1) A clinical study proposal to use products of Astellas Pharma in the market or under the development is not subject for funding of research.
- 2) We will set the research grant frame for those who have received the AFRMD's overseas study grant and are planning to return to Japan by December 2026, and those who have returned to Japan within two years. We will subsidize those who meet the selection criteria. If applicable, please fill in the application form.
- 3) Applicants cannot apply for the research grant and the overseas study grant at the same time. You can apply for both the research grant and the step-up research grant, however, you cannot receive them at the same time.
- 4) Researchers may be awarded Research Grants on no more than two separate occasions* per person, dating back to the AFRMD's activities from fiscal 2007 onwards. A third Research Grant may be awarded in the case of the following circumstances:
 - If the research proposal is original, challenging, and relates to an entirely different subject and has entirely different contents from the researcher's previous two grant proposals; or if the research proposal is a continuation of a subject from the researcher's previous two proposals but includes novel original ideas which would be likely to produce significant results. Please note that the overseas study grant, COVID-19 overseas study abroad support, Emergency Research Grant related to East Japan great earthquake disaster, Kumamoto earthquake disaster, or COVID-19 research grant are not counted as research grant history.
 - There is no limit to the number of application times for female researchers.
- 5) Research to aim to gain personal or corporate profits is not subject of funding of AFRMD.
- 6) We will not support those who have received overseas study grant or research grant from AFRMD and have not complied with the recipient's obligations, such as submission of various report documents.
- 7) Research grants are issued for the purpose of purchasing goods and consumables related to the promotion of adopted research, and are not intended to be used for research support expenses (so-called overhead expenses) of the applicant's affiliated institution. As the grants are provided as donations, they will be awarded to those who agree with the donor's intentions. In principle, the grant must be managed by the researcher's affiliated institution, and management through a personal bank account is not permitted. We accept applications from applicants who agree with our policy.
- 8) The grant will be awarded on the condition that the Foundation's designated "Donation Application Form" and "Overhead Exemption Request Form" are used. We appreciate your cooperation in simplifying the procedures.

6. Subject

Research that benefits understanding of specific disease conditions and development of breakthrough treatments

Based on mutual voting by researchers who have presented the research results at Research Conference, three researchers will receive Best Presentation Certificate. It is allowed that one can obtain simultaneously all three certificates mentioned above.

13. Compliance with the Act on the Protection of Personal Information

- 1) AFRMD will only use personal information obtained in relation to the above Research Grant program for administrative purposes including the selection process, notification of pass/fail to applications, requests to recipients to prepare essays to be listed in AFRMD website or to respond to questionnaire prepared by AFRMD.
- 2) Once Research Grants have been finalized, AFRMD will publish details of recipients on its website and in other publications, including recipients' names, job titles and the nature of their research.
- 3) Any inquiries regarding personal information should be directed as follows:
Personal information officer: Yoshito Abe, Secretary General, AFRMD

14. Languages permitted on application form

Japanese or English

15. Application steps

The application steps are as follows:

- 1) Create My Page
- 2) Submit application documents through "My Page"

16. Application procedure

Application Form / English Version <Sample, For Viewing Purpose Only>

※This is a sample for viewing purpose only. For application, please download the application form from "MY PAGE".

1) Application procedure

(1) Creating "My Page"

Create your account by clicking、「[基本情報登録 \(ID・パスワードの取得\)](#)」Registration of basic information (acquisition of ID / password)" and fill out the form. You can continue to use My Page from next year onwards.

※If you already have "My Page", please proceed to (2).

(2) Login to "My Page"

Please login to My Page using the ID and password you obtained.

Confirm your information by opening the "Confirm and Change" from My Page.

(3) Fill out the research grant application form and prepare for the required documents

After logging in to your account : My page, click the red button: 「[応募はこちら](#)」 under the "Information" tab and select the program, "Research Grant" or "Overseas Research Grant". Or,

you can also select the program by opening the "Submit Application" tab.

Fill out the "Research Grant Application Form 「助成申請受付フォーム」", download the application format, and prepare the application documents.

The classification of research contents into categories ① to ③ provides essential data for conducting an appropriate selection process. Based on the three axes below, please select up to two items per category that best match your research. In addition, please provide up to two keywords closely related to your proposal.

Classification Category	Selection Limit	Options
① Target Area	Max 2	Cardiovascular, Metabolic/Endocrine, Central Nervous System (CNS), Immune/Inflammation, Oncology (Tumors), Bone/Muscle, Reproduction/Development, Sensory Organs, Drug Discovery Seeds/Molecular Design (no specific disease), Others (Model organisms, Environment, etc.)
② Biological Phenomena / Mechanisms	Max 2	Genome, Cell Death, Signal Transduction, Organelles, Structural Biology, Stem Cells/Regeneration, Mathematical/AI, Chemical Reactivity / Intermolecular Interaction / Synthesis, Aging/Homeostasis, Others (Unclassifiable)
③ Research Methodology	Max 2	1. Drug Discovery / Exploration, 2. Fundamental / Basic Analysis, 3. Technology Development, 4. Data-Driven, 5. Others (Unclassifiable)
④ Keywords	Max 2	Keywords related to the proposed research

(4) Submit document

Click “「確認する」 (Confirm) ” after filling out all the forms and uploading the required documents, then check the contents and click the “「応募する」 (Apply)” button at the bottom of the page.

The contents cannot be modified after submission, so please check carefully before submission.

2) Preparation of application documents

(1) Required documents for the application

The filled-in application formats (PDF) is required documents for application.

(2) Download the format

The format is available on the application form on "My Page".

(3) Points for the preparation of application documents

(i) The Application Formats

Please check the followings when filling in the application format.

- Please enter your name in the upper right corner.
- Use 11 pt. font size or more (no specified font).
- You may change the size of the designated frame, but please briefly fill in the application items from [1] to [8] within 4 pages. Please do not change the left and right margins as it will be printed. Applications that exceed 4 pages will not be accepted.
- Please include figures and tables such as preliminary data within the text, if necessary.
- Delete the "Notes in the frame" from the format and increase entry fields. Please delete the "Notes in red" before submission.
- Please write in an easy-to-understand manner, as referees outside of your field may review your proposal.
- Graphical Abstract
 - Summarize your research concept, appeal points, and future vision in a single conceptual diagram.
 - Provide a simple conceptual diagram so that non-specialists can understand the main points easily. Please refer to the following links to create a conceptual diagram; 「Cell Press Graphical Abstract Guidelines」 (https://www.cell.com/pb/assets/raw/shared/figureguidelines/GA_guide.pdf)、ACS Publications 「Guidelines for Table of Contents / Abstract Graphics」 (https://pubsapp.acs.org/paragonplus/submission/toc_abstract_graphics_guidelines.pdf)、Royal Society of Chemistry Guideline (<https://www.rsc.org/journals-books-databases/author-and-reviewer-hub/authors-information/prepare-and-format/figures-graphics-images/>)
 - Please use a font size of 11pt or more and keep the number of characters small. No font is specified. Japanese or English is acceptable as the language.

(ii) PDF conversion of application documents and total file size

- The completed application formats must be converted to PDF.
- Total file size of the application documents must be 3MB or less.

17. Confidentiality

All the AFRMD officers, the selection committee members, and secretariat members signed the "Pledge for Confidentiality" and obliged to retain confidential information such as contents of an application form.

18. Inquiries

Secretariat, Astellas Foundation for Research on Metabolic Disorders (AFRMD)

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