

2021 Academic Year
Hokkaido University DX Doctoral Fellowship Application Guidelines

1. Purpose of the Fellowship

Based on the “SPRING: Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation” implemented by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), the purpose of the Hokkaido University DX (Digital Transformation) Doctoral Fellowship is to foster outstanding doctoral researchers who can develop Japan's science, technology, and innovation, and open up the future by creatively solving important issues. Therefore, this fellowship program will provide an environment in which doctoral students can devote themselves to research by providing them with research fellowship (amount equivalent to living expenses) and research expenses. In addition, this fellowship aims to enhance research capabilities and develop research personnel who can drive DX innovation, which can be a driving force for social change to realize Society 5.0 in Japan, toward the realization of “Hokkaido University contributing to the solution of global issues”.

2. Overview of the Fellowship

Before applying, applicants are required to fully understand the requirements of the fellowship, including the ideal candidate profile, curriculum, content of support, and responsibilities imposed on the selected applicant.

The understanding and cooperation of your supervisor are essential to the success of your fellowship, so you must obtain the approval of your supervisor before applying.

URL for this fellowship explanation video: Under construction

3. Eligibility, Application Categories, and Application Period

The fellowship program invites a total of 148 doctoral students (125 students in the 3-year doctoral course and 23 students in the 4-year doctoral course) who have excellent research abilities and are prepared to conduct challenging and interdisciplinary research.

	3-year course	4-year course	Total
Spring Selection	100 students	20 students	120 students
Fall Selection	25 students	3 students	28 students
Total	125 students	23 students	148 students

In this first year of the fellowship program, Spring selection will begin on October 1, 2021. With the selection categories in the table below, doctoral students who are enrolled in the university as of September 30, 2021, and meet the requirements in (1) or (2) below as well as “4. Application Requirements” as of October 1, 2021, are eligible to apply for the Spring Selection. Also, students who will have entered on October 1, 2021, are eligible to apply for the Fall Selection.

- (1) Students enrolled in a doctoral course with a standard course duration* of 3 years and have been enrolled for less than 36 months.
- (2) Students enrolled in a doctoral course with a standard course duration* of 4 years who have been enrolled for less than 48 months.

***About the Standard Course Duration**

Students enrolled in doctoral programs at the Division of Clinical Pharmacy, Graduate School of Life Science, Graduate school of Medicine, Graduate school of Dental Medicine, Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine, Graduate school of Infectious Diseases are required to complete four years of study. Doctoral programs at other graduate schools are 3 years. The period of leave of absence is excluded.

Selection category	The remaining period of standard course duration until completion	Support period	Application capacity	Application period
A	6 months to 11 months	6 months (0.5 year)	120(20) students	Current Students October 1, 2021 ~October 15, 2021 5:00 p.m. New students (entering in October, 2021) October 11, 2021 ~October 22, 2021 5:00 p.m.
B	12 months to 17 months	12 months (1 year)	28(3) students	
C	18 months to 23 months	18 months (1.5 years)	120(20) students	
D	24 months to 29 months	24 months (2 years)	28(3) students	
E	30 months to 35 months	30 months (2.5 years)	120(20) students	
F	36 months to 41 months	36 months (3 years)	28(3) students	
G*	42 months to 47 months	42 months (3.5 years)	20 students	
H*	48 months	48 months (4 years)	3 students	

The number in parentheses () is the number of applicants for the 4-year doctoral course
 *G and *H are for the 4-year doctoral course only.

4. Application Requirements

Among those who have excellent research ability to conduct challenging and interdisciplinary research and who wish to devote themselves to research, applicants for this fellowship must meet all of the following requirements.

- (1) Applicants who are **enrolled in a doctoral course*** (including those who are planning to enter a doctoral course) and have an excellent academic record (excluding those who have exceeded the standard course duration).

*Those who are on a leave of absence at the time of application are not eligible to apply.

- (2) Those who can pledge to participate in and devote themselves to the project.
- (3) Applicants must **not be a recipient*** of Hokkaido University Ambitious Doctoral Fellowship.

*Those who have already been selected for the Hokkaido University Ambitious Doctoral Fellowship are not eligible to apply.

- (4) Applicants who are **not receiving support** from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Research Fellowship Program*.

*If you are currently applying for a JSPS Research Fellowship, you may apply for the DX Doctoral Fellowship, but if you are selected for a JSPS Research Fellowship, you must decline the DX Doctoral Fellowship.

- (5) Applicants who are **other than** those who are recognized as having a stable income such as salary or executive remuneration at a level sufficient to cover living expenses (approximately 2,400,000 yen per year) from the university, a company, or from starting their own business, etc.
- (6) International students who are **not be a recipients** of Scholarship to International Students from MEXT or scholarships from their home country.
- (7) Applicants who are **not recipients** of any other benefit-type support expenses* of an amount equal to or greater than 150,000 yen (However, this is limited to support expenses aimed at improving the environment for students to devote themselves to research).

*Applicants who are exempted from entrance fees or tuition fees, or who receive scholarships from the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) or other grants for tuition assistance are **eligible to apply**.

5. Application Procedure and Documents

To apply for this fellowship, **you must complete the following procedures (1) and (2)**. Please note that **if you fail to complete either (1) or (2), you will not be considered for the selection**. For details on how to apply, please refer to “How to Apply for the DX Doctoral Fellowship” on the website.

Please prepare the required documents in advance and complete the application process.

- (1) Research plan (required)
- (2) Proof of completion of various educational programs (only if applicable)
- (3) Letter of recommendation from the supervisor* (only if applicable)
- (4) Documents showing scores and grades of external English examinations (only if applicable)

*(3) Letter of recommendation from the supervisor

If you plan to submit a letter of recommendation from the supervisor, request the supervisor to prepare a letter of recommendation as soon as possible. The applicant should upload the letter of recommendation together with the other submitted documents by using the method specified in “How to Apply for a DX Doctoral Fellowship”.

6. Selection Method and Criteria

The selection process will be conducted as follows.

(1) 1st stage selection

Applicants will be evaluated at the graduate school to which they belong, based on the submitted documents. The evaluation will be according to the university-wide criteria, which are designed to prevent inequity among academic fields. In the evaluation, we will give particularly high marks to proposals that are **challenging and integrative**, and to proposals with **novel methodologies that lead to new principles**.

(2) 2nd stage selection

The fellowship selection committee will evaluate the applicants based on the submitted documents, especially on their qualifications as a **DX doctoral candidate and their ability to conduct challenging and interdisciplinary research**, as well as their participation in the educational program and their English proficiency test score.

If necessary, an **interview may be conducted**. (If an interview is to be conducted, the date and method of the interview will be announced separately after coordinating the date with the relevant applicants.)

7. Result of Selection

Applicants will be notified of the result of the acceptance or rejection through the graduate school to which they belong by the end of November. The name of the selected applicant will be announced on the website.

8. Obligations of the Fellowship Recipients

Those who are selected for this fellowship have the following obligations.

- (1) Recipients are expected to improve their independent research skills by acquiring the four abilities: [1] DX promotion skills, [2] problem identification and solution skills, [3] interdisciplinary development skills, and [4] international communication skills through participation in the educational programs recommended by this fellowship. (However, for recipients who are expected to complete the doctoral course this year, participation status will be considered according to the remaining period of the enrollment.)
- (2) Recipients are expected to devote themselves to their studies and research according to their research plans.
- (3) Recipients are required to report the progress of their research to the project leader at regular intervals.
- (4) In conducting research, the recipients must comply with the rules and regulations set forth by the university and strive to conduct research activities that will meet the trust and expectations of society in accordance.
- (5) Attend the research ethics and compliance training courses designated by the University.
- (6) When recipients publish the results of the research, please indicate that it was supported by this program.

This is an example of an Acknowledgment in a paper (Grant Number will be notified separately).

“This work was supported by JST SPRING, Grant Number JPMJSPxxxx.”

- (7) To verify the effectiveness of the efforts made in this fellowship, the recipients must cooperate with the career tracking survey conducted by the University for about 10 years after the completion of this program.

9. Amount of research fellowship and research expenses (2021 Academic Year)

- (1) Research fellowship (amount equivalent to living expenses): 150,000 yen per month (annual amount is 900,000 yen because the payment starts in October)
- (2) Research expenses: 400,000 yen per year will be provided to all recipients. Other research expenses necessary for challenging and interdisciplinary research will be provided as appropriate after reviewing the proposals.

* In the 2021 Academic year, the Amount of research fellowship may be adjusted in consideration of the short research period after the grant. In the case of starting or stopping the payment of the research fellowship in the middle of a month, the amount of research fellowship for that month will be determined according to the criteria specified separately.

[Cautions]

- (1) Handling of the amount equivalent to living expenses
 - ① The amount equivalent to living expenses is taxable as miscellaneous income. Therefore, you have to do a final tax return (*Kakutei shinkoku*) once a year. The taxable amount is remaining after deducting tuition and other expenses for research as necessary expenses from the amount equivalent to living expenses received during the year (January 1 to December 31). In addition, it is necessary to prepare income and expenditure statements and keep receipts and other evidence to do a tax return. For more information on the final tax return, please refer to the National Tax Agency website.
(<https://www.nta.go.jp/english/index.htm>)
 - ② Depending on the amount of taxable income, you will be obliged to pay “resident tax” to the municipality in which you reside (for international students, the taxing may differ due to tax treaties between Japan and the student's home country).
- (2) Handling of National Health Insurance, etc.
 - ① Loss of dependent requirements for National Health Insurance, etc.

If a student is enrolled in his/her family's health insurance, seamen's insurance, or mutual benefit association as a dependent, and if a student has a constant income of more than 1,300,000 yen per year by receiving the amount equivalent to living expenses, the student will no longer be a dependent of the family's health insurance, etc., and will be required to join the National Health Insurance yourself.

* National Health Insurance premiums vary by municipality, so please contact

your local Ward Office's Health & Welfare Department, Insurance & Pension Section.

* Tell your sustainer (parent, etc.) to confirm the alimony, etc. at his/her office accordingly.

② Payment of National Pension Insurance premiums

As a general rule, all people living in Japan between the ages of 20 and 60 are Category 1 insured persons of the National Pension System and are required to pay National Pension Insurance premiums. Students can defer payment of the premiums if their income for the previous year is below a certain level* under the Special Student Payment System.

If you are no longer eligible for the postponement under the "Special Student Payment System" due to receiving the amount equivalent to living expenses, you will be obligated to pay National Pension Insurance premiums. For more information about the specific procedures for National Pension Insurance, please contact your local Ward Office's Health & Welfare Department, Insurance & Pension Section.

* The income in the previous year is below a certain level.

Estimate: 1,280,000 yen

+ number of dependents x 380,000 yen

+ deduction for social insurance premiums, etc.

10. Handling of Personal Information

- (1) In addition to complying with the "Act on the Protection of Personal Information Held by Incorporated Administrative Agencies, etc." and other laws and regulations, Hokkaido University takes all possible measures to protect personal information following the "National University Corporation Hokkaido University Personal Information Management Rules".
- (2) Names and other personal information provided in the application will be used for the following purposes: [1] student selection (application processing and selection), [2] announcement of acceptance/rejection results, [3] participation procedures, [4] surveys, and research on student selection methods and [5] other related activities.

11. Notes

Depending on the future situation of the COVID-19 infection, there is a possibility that the selection process will be conducted using a method different from that described in the guidelines. If any changes are made, they will be announced on the website as soon as possible.

12. For inquiries, please contact

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