

Guidelines for Applying to the SOKENDAI Special Researcher Program (Collaborative Research Type)
(Appointment begins from October 2025)

1. Overview

This program aims to appoint SOKENDAI students who are conducting or are willing to conduct collaborative research with researchers from other programs (departments), institutions or companies as “SOKENDAI Special Researchers” and provide financial support as well as to broaden their perspective on research and careers.

2. Expected Number of Students to be Selected (For October 2025)

Maximum four persons

3. Requirements for Applicants

Applicants are required to meet all the following conditions as of October 1, 2025. ^{*1}

- 1) They have been enrolled for 30 to 54 months (exclusive 54 months) in a 5-year doctoral course or have been enrolled for 6 to 30 months (exclusive 30 months) in a 3-year doctoral course.
- 2) They must not be receiving a fellowship under the SOKENDAI Special Researcher Program (Field-specific Type, Pioneering Research Type, General Category or Special Category (BOOST)), a scholarship under the government-sponsored international student system, a research grant from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) for special researchers^{*2}, any foreign government-financed scholarship, or a scholarship from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
- 3) They must not be receiving stable income^{*3} such as salary or executive remuneration at a level sufficient to cover living expenses (JPY 2.4 million/year (before tax) or more) from SOKENDAI, a parent institute, or a company. ^{*4}
- 4) They are currently conducting or planning to conduct any of the following:
 - "Internal Joint Advising Program" that you receive joint research guidance from your current supervisor and a faculty member of another program (department). ^{*5}
 - "International Collaborative Degree Program" based on agreements with overseas universities. ^{*6}
 - "Collaborative Research" with researchers from other programs (courses), universities, institutes, companies, etc. (not include simple research guidance, provision of knowledge, technology, or equipment, etc.)

^{*1} The period of a leave of absence (calculated by rounding up to the nearest month) is not counted within the enrollment period.

^{*1} Students on leave of absence and in the long-term course system are not eligible to apply.

^{*2} Those who are currently applying for JSPS DC Research Fellowship (DC2) are eligible to apply. However, if selected for DC2 in FY2026, financial support under the SOKENDAI Special Researcher Program will end at the end of FY2025.

*³ Temporary income from research assistant or other part-time works are not counted.

*⁴ Parent Institute: The Inter-University Research Institute, where the program of SOKENDAI is located.

*⁵ Reference URL (Japanese text only): <http://kitei.soken.ac.jp/doc/gakugai/print/582.html>

*⁶ Reference URL: <https://www.soken.ac.jp/en/education/curriculum/cotutelle-program/>

Note: Those who have previously applied for a SOKENDAI Special Research Program (Field-specific Type/Pioneering Research Type/General Category/Special Category (BOOST)) and were not selected (or were selected as a substitute) are also eligible to apply.

4. Appointment date

October 1, 2025

5. Period of appointment

The period obtained by subtracting the period of enrollment up to the day before the start of appointment from the standard period of study stipulated in Article 16 of the School Regulations.

Note: If you complete the doctoral course and obtain a doctoral degree during the period, the appointment will be terminated at the end of month in which you obtain the degree.

6. Scholarship

1) Fellowship (for living expenses)

JPY 190,000 per month

2) Research grant (for research expenses)

JPY 320,000 per year (JPY160,000 in FY2025)

Please note that the above scholarship amounts are subject to change depending on the budget situation.

7. Application documents

1) Application form

Please fill out the form according to the “Instructions for filling out the application form”, convert it to a PDF file, and submit it as an email attachment to the Promotion Office.

Note:

- To apply, you will need to obtain an ORCID ID and have completed the linkage with SOKENDAI. If you have not yet registered an ORCID ID, please contact “[orcid\(at\)ml.soken.ac.jp](mailto:orcid(at)ml.soken.ac.jp) (Please replace (at) with @.)” and we will guide you how to register.

2) Research Guidance Plan (指導計画書)

Please ask your chief supervisor to prepare the document, convert it to a PDF file, and submit it as an email attachment to the Promotion Office. However, with the consent of the chief supervisor, the secondary supervisor may be asked to prepare it.

8. Application destination

Promotion Office for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation

Email: jisedai-jimu(at)ml.soken.ac.jp *Please replace (at) with @.

9. Application deadline

Monday, August 25, 2025, 15:00 (JST: Japan Standard Time)

10. Selection process

1) Selection

The first screening (document review) and the second screening (online interview) will be conducted by the screening committee. In addition, the opinions of the supervisor may be heard if necessary.

2) Standard for screening

- (1) The collaborative research plan must be well-constructed, in accordance with the purpose of this program and aimed at obtaining a doctoral degree.
- (2) The applicant must be competent enough to carry out the research plan.
- (3) The applicant must be willing to expand his/her interests to other research fields beyond his/her own field of specialization as well as social problems and innovation.

3) Notification of the first screening results and the schedule of the second screening

The result of the first screening will be notified to each applicant by early September.

The second screening (online interview) will take place in mid-to-late September.

The result of the second screening will be announced by the end of September.

The promotion office will not respond to individual inquiries regarding the selection process.

11. Notes on application documents and selection

- (1) Application documents must be submitted in the prescribed format.
- (2) Any information in the documents cannot be changed or supplemented after submission.
- (3) If any falsehood is found in the application documents, the application may be canceled even after the applicant is appointed.
- (4) The use of generative AI tools is prohibited in the preparation of application documents.

12. Obligations of Special Researchers

- (1) Special researchers must be enrolled in a doctoral course at SOKENDAI during the appointment period.

- (2) Special researchers must devote themselves to research based on the research plan described in the application form during the period of appointment.
- (3) Special researchers must submit a research status report at the designated time each year and cooperate in tracking career information for 10 years after leaving.
- (4) Special researchers must participate in various activities (inter-field seminars, overview lectures on social problems, lectures on AI/data science, regular interviews by an academic mentor in a different research field, career seminars, etc.) designated by SOKENDAI to improve their research ability and expand the scope of their carrier paths.
- (5) Special researchers may not receive stable income such as salary^{*1} or executive remuneration at a level sufficient to cover living expenses (JPY 2.4 million/year (before tax) or more) from SOKENDAI, a parent institute, or a company during the appointment period.
- (6) Special researchers must attend research ethics and compliance training provided by SOKENDAI or parent institutes.
- (7) Special researchers must register for “Research Internship Program” account.

^{*1} Temporary income from research assistant or other part-time works are not counted.

13. Termination or cancellation of appointment and request for refund

If the performance of the obligations listed in the previous section is found to be inadequate, or if the president determines that the special researcher meets any of the disqualifying conditions mentioned below, the appointment of the special researcher may be terminated or canceled. Additionally, the payment of scholarship may be stopped, or a request may be made for the return the scholarship amount that has been already disbursed. The disqualifying conditions are:

- (1) If the special researcher completes the doctoral course and receives a degree.
- (2) If the special researcher receives a scholarship under the government-sponsored international student system, a research grant from JSPS for research fellowship, or any foreign government-financed scholarship.
- (3) If it is clear that the research cannot continue due to illness, etc.
- (4) In case of the special researcher taking a leave of absence^{*2} from SOKENDAI.
- (5) In case of the special researcher’s withdrawal from SOKENDAI (including expulsion).
- (6) In case of disciplinary action against the special researcher.
- (7) In case of poor academic performance or conduct.
- (8) If there is a significant problem with the progress of the research and it is judged that the desired research results cannot be achieved.
- (9) If the documents required for the post-application procedures are not submitted on time.
- (10) If any falsehoods are found in the documents submitted for the post-application procedures.
- (11) If research misconduct (fabrication, falsification, plagiarism etc.) is discovered.
- (12) If research funds are misused.
- (13) If the special researcher declines the appointment.

(14) In the event of other clearly inappropriate behaviors as a special researcher.

^{*2} However, if the leave of absence is due to childbirth, childcare, or nursing care and is approved by SOKENDAI, the scholarship may be suspended for up to two years and resumed upon the student's return to the university after the review of performance.

14. Policy on Handling Personal Information

SOKENDAI shall not use the personal information of applicants for purposes other than the execution of the Special Researcher Program, which includes outsourcing operations on the condition that SOKENDAI reaches an agreement with the outsourcers regarding the appropriate handling of personal information. Additionally, it will not disclose such information to third parties without the student's consent, except as otherwise stipulated in Article 9 of the Act on the Protection of Personal Information Held by Independence Administrative Agencies.

15. Online Information Session (in Japanese only)

The online information session for those who are interested in this program will be held on the following date.

July 30, 2025, 11:00-12:00 (JST)

Notes:

- Language: Japanese
- Pre-registration is required to attend the information session (and view the recorded data). The registration deadline is July 29, 12:00 (JST).
<https://forms.office.com/r/1RUL6b4m6d>

16. Contact

Promotion Office for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation

Email: jisedai-jimu(at)ml.soken.ac.jp *Please replace (at) with @.