

Guidelines for Applying to the SOKENDAI Special Researcher Program (Field-Specific Type)
(Appointment begins from October 2023)

1. Aim

The SOKENDAI Special Researcher Program (Field-Specific Type) is designed to foster future leaders in academic research by appointing SOKENDAI students as special researchers and providing financial support to them. A special researcher with outstanding achievements will be offered a two-year research position at the parent institute* upon the completion of their doctoral course.

This program is subsidized by Japan Science and Technology Agency under “the establishment of university fellowships towards the creation of science technology innovation.” In addition to financial support, special researchers will be provided with a program to support their research career.

* Parent institute: The Inter-University Research Institute, where their program (department)* is located.

2. Fields and corresponding programs (departments)*

Fields		Programs (Departments)
Information and Artificial Intelligence	Research on the principles and technologies related to information (including statistics), research on artificial intelligence, or research that integrates these two fields.	• Informatics

* From the 2023 academic year, SOKENDAI will reorganize our educational organization and shift to 20 programs per faculty. However, students who enrolled before AY2022 will continue to be affiliated with the previous affiliation (6 schools and 20 departments).

3. Intended number for adoption (Appointment begins from October 2023)

Fields	Number
Information and Artificial Intelligence	2

4. Requirements for applicants

Applicants are required to meet all of the following conditions as of October 1, 2023 (An estimation can be made at the time of application). *1

1) They should have been enrolled for 24 to 36 months (exclusive 36 months) in a 5-year doctoral course or have been enrolled for less than 12 months in a 3-year doctoral course. *2

2) They should have not received 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, or any foreign government-financed scholarship.

3) They should not receive stable income 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. *3

*1 Those who have completed (or are expected to complete) a master's degree course at a university other than SOKENDAI and have passed the entrance examination for a 3-year doctoral course at SOKENDAI (scheduled to enroll on October 1, 2023) are also eligible to apply.

*1 Even if you are expected to meet the qualifications at the time of application, your application may be canceled if you are unable to meet the qualifications due to a leave of absence or other reasons.

*2 Only students who belong to the programs (departments) listed in section "2" can apply.

*2 Students in the long-term course system are not eligible to apply.

*2 The period of a leave of absence (calculated by rounding up to the nearest month) during the doctoral course is not counted within the enrollment period. However, if the total leave of absence is less than six months, it will be counted within the enrollment period.

*3 It is possible to receive reward for Research Assistant (RA) • Teaching Assistant (TA) together with the support from SOKENDAI Special Researcher Program (Field-Specific Type).

Note: Once you have applied, you will not be eligible for future applications.

5. Period of appointment

3 years (from October 1, 2023)

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)

The amount to be paid for AY 2023 is listed below. Please note that the amount is subject to change.

JPY 190,000 per month

2) Research grant

To support the research plan described in the application form, it is possible to receive a grant for research expenses (up to JPY 220,000 per year).

*The maximum amount of support for FY2023 is JPY110,000.

*Please note that the above scholarship amounts are subject to change depending on the budget situation in AY2023.

7. Application form

1) Application form A

Details of your personal information and background

2) Application form B

A description of your research plans, self-analysis of research performance, and the image of the researcher you want to become.

3) Recommendation letter

Please ask your chief supervisor (if you plan to enroll in October 2023, your supervisor at the time of application or a faculty member at SOKENDAI whom you plan to ask to supervise you at the time of enrollment) to write it.

Note: The recommendation letter should be submitted directly from the supervisor to the project office, and the project office will not disclose it to the applicant.

Note: Please convert Application Form A and B into PDF files and submit them as email attachments.

8. Application period and destination

Application period and destination will be posted on the following web page.

<https://www.soken.ac.jp/en/news/2023/20221024.html>

9. Selection and disclosure of results

1) Selection

The first screening (document review and online interview) will be conducted by the program (department) to which the applicant belongs (or will belong), whereas the second screening (document review only) will be conducted by the Special Researcher Screening Committee established for each of the research fields listed in section “2.”

2) Standard for screening

- (1) The applicant must be strong-willed and possess a specific vision to become a researcher after completing the doctoral course.
- (2) The research theme must be consistent with the research fields listed in section “2.”
- (3) The applicant must be expected to become an outstanding researcher who will play a leading role in the future of academia.
- (4) The applicant must display originality in terms of their research method and must have a vision for the future of their research topic.
- (5) The applicant must possess the ability to effectively conduct the research.

3) Disclosure of results

Applicants will be notified of the first screening results immediately.

The results of the second screening (“unofficial decision,” “backup candidate,” or “rejection”) will be announced by the end of September 2023.

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

Note about “backup candidate”:

In the event of a vacancy in the Special Researchers, a backup candidate may be appointed to that position.

However, the period of appointment for the backup will be three years minus the period served by their predecessor.

10. Information regarding application documents and selection

- (1) Application documents must be submitted in the prescribed format.
- (2) After the application documents have been submitted, the information in the documents cannot be changed or supplemented.
- (3) If more than one application is submitted, all applications will be invalidated.
- (4) If any falsehood is found in the application documents, the application may be canceled even after the applicant has been appointed.
- (5) The results of the examination are valid only for recruitment in FY2023. However, they will be valid until the September, 2025 for the backup candidates.

11. Obligation of Special Researcher (Field-Specific Type)

- (1) Special researchers must be enrolled in a doctoral course at SOKENDAI during the appointment period.
- (2) The special researcher must devote themselves to research based on the research plan described in the application form during the period of appointment.
- (3) The special researcher must submit a research status report at the designated time each year and submit an employment status survey upon completing the appointment period and the doctoral course, respectively.
- (4) Special researchers must participate in lectures, workshops, etc. designated by SOKENDAI to improve their research ability and embark upon a career as a researcher.
- (5) The special researcher may not receive any other scholarships or loans provided by SOKENDAI or the Inter-university Research Institute during their period of appointment.
- (6) Special researchers may not take a permanent job* (JPY 2.4 million/year (before tax) or more) during their appointment period.

* They are allowed to take a job for temporary income (part-time job, research assistant, etc.).

12. Termination or cancellation of appointment and request for refund

In the event that 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 they receive 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, 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 researcher taking a leave of absence from SOKENDAI.
- (5) In case of the researcher's withdrawal from SOKENDAI (including expulsion).
- (6) In case of disciplinary action against the 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 is discovered.
- (12) If research funds are misused.
- (13) If the researcher declines the position.
- (14) In the event of other clearly inappropriate behaviors as a special researcher.

13. After the program period

This program combines a three-year fellowship in a doctoral course with a two-year researcher post at a parent institute after graduation. However, to obtain a researcher post, it is necessary to go through the screening process of the employing institution. Please note that this does not preclude special researchers from obtaining positions at other research institutions or private companies.

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. Contact (Program Office)

SOKENDAI Special Researcher Program (Field-Specific Type) Office: [fellowship\(at\)ml.soken.ac.jp](mailto:fellowship@ml.soken.ac.jp)

*Please replace (at) with @.