

**Important: Under this scheme, proposals may be submitted only by universities in Japan.
This English version is provided for the reference of AUN/SEED-Net Member Institutions.**

**Program for Promoting International Joint Research
between Member Institutions and Japanese Universities
under the AUN/SEED-Net Project**

**Researcher Mobility Support
Application Guidelines**

August 2026

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
Higher Education and Social Security Group, Human Development Department
AUN/SEED-Net Secretariat

Background and Objectives of the Program

◆ Background

In the field of higher education, JICA has long been supporting universities that play a central role in their respective developing countries. One of the flagship initiatives among these efforts is the ASEAN University Network/Southeast Asia Engineering Education Development Network (AUN/SEED-Net), which JICA has been implementing for more than 20 years. SEED-Net has built a network of leading engineering universities in ASEAN countries as Member Institutions (hereinafter referred to as "MIs") and has accumulated a long record of joint research and human resource development with Japanese universities.

Through this long-standing partnership, the MIs have developed strong research capacity and deep ties with Japan, and their researchers combine a solid understanding of Japan with an established record of collaboration. To date, however, opportunities to work with Japanese universities and companies have been limited mainly to those directly involved in the projects. This program seeks to widen these opportunities — connecting researchers of the MIs with a broader range of Japanese universities and companies, and thereby promoting international brain circulation between ASEAN and Japan.

◆ Objectives

This program aims to promote international joint research in which ASEAN and Japanese universities engage in co-creation as equal partners, working together on shared regional and global challenges. This collaboration is supported through the provision of the researcher information on ASEAN MIs (researcher database) developed by AUN/SEED-Net with JICA's support, and through the promotion of exchanges between researchers. It is expected to advance the research of universities in both ASEAN and Japan; to generate reverse innovation¹ — applying knowledge developed in ASEAN to solving challenges in Japan; and to contribute to the growth of Japan. In this way, the program also aims to build a win-win relationship between ASEAN and Japan.

◆ Activities Eligible for Support

Travel expenses will be supported for the following activity.

Activity	Description
International joint research	Joint research between a MI and a Japanese university, including reverse innovation that applies the knowledge of MIs to solving domestic challenges in Japan.

Note: Proposals that include industry-academia collaboration activities — such as joint research between a MI and a Japanese company, or support for the overseas business expansion of Japanese companies — are also welcome.

◆ Phase Structure of the Program

Projects selected under this call (Stage 1) that demonstrate high potential for further development and a superior research plan may be invited to apply for a research grant (Stage 2).

Stage 1 (this call)		Stage 2
Mobility support to promote joint research initiated by Japanese universities	→	Research grants to faculty members of SEED-Net MIs (counterparts)

About Stage 2 (Research Grant)

- Eligibility: Limited to projects selected under Stage 1.
- Scale: Approximately 1–2 million Japanese yen per project, for a duration of one to three years.
- Timeline: Details, including application procedures, are currently under development. Selection for Stage 2 will be based on the research plan and the progress of Stage 1 activities.

¹ Reverse innovation generally refers to innovation that is first introduced in developing countries and subsequently adopted in developed countries.

Further information will be provided to the selected applicants during FY2026.

◆ About the Researcher Information on ASEAN MIs (Researcher Database)

JICA's AUN/SEED-Net is a flagship project that has supported the formation of an engineering higher education network in ASEAN for more than 20 years, and it has 27 leading engineering universities in ASEAN as its MIs. JICA maintains a researcher database in which approximately 600 individuals, mainly researchers at these MIs, are registered.

SEED-Net's Japanese Partner Universities (hereinafter referred to as "JPUs"; Annex 1) are encouraged to make active use of this database to identify prospective counterpart researchers. Access requires the prior conclusion of a Data Transfer Agreement (DTA). Use of the database is, however, optional.

Universities other than JPUs cannot access this database due to contractual constraints. Instead, they may use the matching support described below, which is likewise optional.

Note: Information contained in the researcher database must be used only within the receiving university.

◆ Matching Support (Possible Inquiries to Registered Researchers)

Japanese researchers who are not affiliated with a JPU cannot access the researcher database. To help them find prospective counterparts, JICA and the SEED-Net Secretariat provide matching support based on summary information on registered researchers (affiliated university, field of specialization, etc.).

As part of this support, the SEED-Net Secretariat may contact a registered researcher of a MI to ask whether his or her contact details may be shared with a Japanese researcher seeking collaboration. Contact details are shared only with the researcher's consent, and researchers are free to decline. Where consent is given, subsequent discussions and consensus-building toward the joint research are carried out directly between the researcher and the Japanese applicant.

Note: As applications are subject to the deadline set out in "8. Schedule," a prompt reply to such inquiries would be highly appreciated.

Note: Consenting to the sharing of contact details does not oblige the researcher to accept the proposed collaboration. Each application requires the counterpart's agreement, which the researcher may give or withhold at his or her discretion.

1. Eligible Applicants

Researchers who satisfy all of the following conditions are eligible.

- Researchers affiliated with a university in Japan (regardless of the university, position, or form of employment; students are not eligible, regardless of whether they have an employment relationship with the university). Note, however, that the researcher database is provided only to SEED-Net JPUs (Annex 1). Researchers affiliated with other universities will receive matching support from JICA and the SEED-Net Secretariat in finding a counterpart (see "Matching Support (Possible Inquiries to Registered Researchers)" above).
- The planned travel falls under "3. Eligible Travel Types" below.
- The activity concerned is joint research.
- The applicant is able to submit the prescribed activity report by the deadline after selection.
- The agreement of the counterpart has been obtained.

Note: Applications from early-career researchers are also welcome.

2. Overview of Support

Number of awards (indicative)	Around 15-20
Implementation period	From the date of the selection decision to mid-March 2027

Number of trips	As a general rule, one or two trips. If the nature of the activities makes three or more trips indispensable, clearly state the reason and necessity in the proposal.
Number of cities visited	As a general rule, one city. If the nature of the activities makes visits to more than one location indispensable, clearly state the reason and necessity in the proposal.
Duration of travel	Approximately one to two weeks as a guide.
Air tickets	Economy-class air tickets provided in kind (arranged by JICA)
Daily allowance and accommodation	Fixed amounts based on the JICA travel regulations
Transportation	For travel from Japan, JICA will arrange vehicles for local transportation. Note: In the case of invitations to Japan, transportation costs within Japan are to be borne by the individual (not covered).
Other research/education activity expenses	Not covered (this program supports travel expenses only)

Note: Air tickets will be arranged directly by JICA. No reimbursement will be made for air tickets booked or purchased by applicants themselves.

3. Eligible Travel Types

This program supports not only visits by Japanese researchers and faculty members to ASEAN, but also invitations of researchers and faculty members of ASEAN MIs to Japan. Proposals combining travel in both directions are also welcome.

Travel type	Description / examples
(A) Japan → ASEAN	Researchers or faculty members of Japanese universities visit ASEAN MIs to conduct joint research or hold discussions to promote it.
(B) ASEAN → Japan	Researchers or faculty members of ASEAN MIs are invited to Japanese universities to conduct joint research or hold discussions to promote it.
(A)+(B) Both directions	A combination of (A) and (B) above. Costs will be assessed according to the number of travelers and trips.

4. Eligible Institutions

Eligible counterparts are the SEED-Net MIs located in the countries listed below. For the list of MIs, see Annex 2.

Eligible countries	Remarks
Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, and Timor-Leste	All are countries in which JICA is implementing assistance

5. Target Fields

Priority will be given to the following 17 strategic fields² under the growth strategy of the Government of Japan;

² “Public-Private Investment Roadmap for Key Products and Technologies in the 17 Strategic Sectors (available in Japanese only): <https://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/nipponseichosenryaku/pdf/rm2026.pdf>

however, applications in other fields are also welcome.

The 17 strategic fields of the Government of Japan

1) AI and semiconductors; 2) Shipbuilding; 3) Quantum; 4) Synthetic biology and biotechnology; 5) Aviation and space; 6) Digital and cybersecurity; 7) Content; 8) Food tech; 9) Resources, energy security, and GX; 10) Disaster risk reduction and national resilience; 11) Drug discovery and advanced medicine; 12) Fusion energy; 13) Materials (critical minerals, parts and materials); 14) Port logistics; 15) Defense industry; 16) Information and communications; 17) Ocean

In the proposal, indicate the strategic field together with the corresponding item among the key products and technologies. For the key products and technologies in each strategic field, see Annex 3.

6. How to Apply

◆ Documents to Be Submitted

Please submit the following documents by e-mail to the designated address (all are required).³

	Document	Notes
1	Research proposal (Form A)	A4 size, up to two pages.
2	Travel plan (Form B)	Direction of travel (A / B / both directions), number of travelers, places of stay, and the main activities for each day
3	Counterpart's letter of agreement	A letter of agreement from the counterpart (free format), or an e-mail or other document by which the agreement can be confirmed
4	Curriculum vitae (CV)	CVs of the principal investigator (PI) and all prospective travelers. Submission of URLs (research map, researcher profile pages on university websites, etc.) is also acceptable.

◆ Submission Deadline

Please submit the above documents by e-mail to the address below no later than Wednesday, **September 23, 2026**.

All applicants will be notified of the screening results by e-mail, whether their proposals are selected or not.

Note: No individual disclosure will be made of the screening process or scores.

7. Screening

◆ Screening Process

On the basis of the submitted documents, screening will be conducted through the following process to determine the selected applicants. The screening is intended to select outstanding proposals in light of the purpose of this program, and will place particular importance on the social impact to be achieved by JICA.

- **Eligibility check:** The JICA secretariat confirms that the submitted documents satisfy the requirements and that the application is eligible (eligible applicants, travel type, target country, type of activity, etc.).
- **Document review:** A review committee established by JICA and comprising academic experts and other specialists will evaluate each proposal's academic quality, novelty, potential for further development, and social impact based on the evaluation criteria set out below.

³ Multiple proposals may be submitted; however, please prepare and submit a separate proposal form for each proposal.

- **Interview:** Interviews with applicants may be conducted as necessary. Applicants concerned will be notified separately.
- **Selection decision:** JICA determines the selected applicants on the basis of the screening results.

◆ Evaluation Criteria

Document screening will be conducted from the following viewpoints.

	Criterion	Points of focus
1	Quality and significance of the research	Novelty and potential for further development of the theme as joint research, and whether the proposal makes use of the strengths of the MI.
2	Appropriateness of the travel plan	Reasonableness of the activities, schedule, and their correspondence to the expected outcomes; appropriateness of the travel type (A / B / both directions) and the number of travelers; where more than one trip is requested, the necessity thereof.
3	Concreteness and prospects of outcomes	In addition to the outcomes to be obtained directly from the travel, outcomes expected to be realized in the future (social implementation, etc.) will also be evaluated.
4	Potential for future development	Whether there is a continuing and progressive collaboration plan looking ahead to Stage 2 (research grant applications from the ASEAN side, competitive funding, etc.).
5	Relevance to Japan's growth strategy	Content strongly related to solving domestic challenges in Japan through reverse innovation and the like, and to the growth strategy of the Government of Japan, will be highly evaluated.

8. Schedule

Timing	Description
Early August 2026	[Launch of the call] The researcher database will be provided to those JPU's that have agreed to a Data Transfer Agreement (DTA). Start of application acceptance.
Wednesday, September 23, 2026	[Application deadline] Deadline for submission of documents (must be received by e-mail by this date).
Late September 2026	[Document screening] Document screening by the members of the screening committee.
Mid-October 2026	[Notification of results] Completion of document screening and determination of selected applicants. Both selected and non-selected applicants will be notified by e-mail.
Mid-October 2026 – mid-March 2027	[Travel and activities] Travel and joint research activities by the selected applicants. Note: Travel dates will be set individually for each selected applicant (the return deadline will also be adjusted within this period).
On a rolling basis through mid-April 2027	[Receipt of Activity Reports] JICA will receive the prescribed activity report (Form C) from each selected applicant within 30 days after completion of the trip. [Stage 2] Based on the outcomes of Stage 1, JICA will consider inviting the ASEAN counterparts of particularly promising projects to apply for research

	grants and selecting projects for grant support.
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9. Procedures After Selection

(1) Arrangement of air tickets

After selection, JICA will arrange the air tickets. Selected applicants should finalize their travel schedules in coordination with their counterparts. When researchers or faculty members from the ASEAN side are invited to Japan, JICA will likewise arrange their air tickets.

Note: Costs arising from cancellations or changes made for personal reasons shall be borne by the selected applicant.

(2) Payment of daily allowance and accommodation

Before travel, a fixed amount based on the JICA travel regulations will be paid in a lump sum (no expense settlement documents are required). In addition, participants invited from ASEAN countries to Japan will receive travel-related allowances and reimbursements in accordance with JICA regulations.

(3) Submission of the activity report (within 30 days after travel)

Promptly after returning home or completing the travel, please submit the prescribed activity report (Form C) by e-mail.

Note: The content of the activity report will also serve as a basis for decisions concerning Stage 2.

10. Important Notes

- This program supports travel expenses only (air tickets, daily allowance and accommodation, and local transportation). Other research activity expenses, equipment and materials costs, and the like are not covered.
- If the travel is canceled or changed, please promptly inform the JICA officer in charge.
- For safety management during travel, please act in accordance with JICA's regulations.
- It is recommended that support from this program be mentioned in the acknowledgments of any research outputs (papers, etc.).
- If any false statement is found in the submitted documents, the selection may be revoked.
- The researcher database to be provided must be used only within eligible universities. Please refrain from forwarding or disclosing it to any third party.
- Information on selected applicants and outlines of their activities may be published on JICA's website, in reports, and the like (to be confirmed with the applicants in advance).

11. Submission of Application Documents and Contact Information

Department in charge	Higher Education and Social Security Group, Human Development Department, JICA
E-mail	cocreation@icnet.co.jp

Note: Please make inquiries by e-mail.

Attachments

- Form A: Research Proposal
- Form B: Travel Plan
- Form C: Activity Report

Annexes

Annex 1: List of AUN/SEED-Net Japanese Partner Universities (JPUs)

No.	University
1	Hokkaido University
2	Institute of Science Tokyo
3	Keio University
4	Kyoto University
5	Kyushu University
6	Nagoya University
7	Nara Institute of Science and Technology (NAIST)
8	Shibaura Institute of Technology
9	The University of Kitakyushu
10	The University of Osaka
11	The University of Tokyo
12	Tohoku University
13	Tokai University
14	Tokyo City University
15	Toyohashi University of Technology
16	University of Tsukuba
17	Waseda University
18	Yokohama National University

Annex 2: List of AUN/SEED-Net Member Institutions (MIs) Eligible for This Program

No.	Country	Institution
1	Indonesia	Universitas Indonesia (UI)
2	Indonesia	Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM)
3	Indonesia	Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember (ITS)
4	Indonesia	Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB)
5	Cambodia	Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC)
6	Thailand	Kasetsart University (KU)
7	Thailand	Thammasat University (TU)
8	Thailand	Chulalongkorn University (CU)
9	Thailand	Burapha University (BUU)
10	Thailand	King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL)
11	Philippines	De La Salle University (DLSU)
12	Philippines	University of the Philippines-Diliman (UP)
13	Philippines	Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT)
14	Vietnam	Hanoi University of Science and Technology (HUST)
15	Vietnam	Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology (HCMUT)
16	Malaysia	University of Malaya (UM)
17	Malaysia	Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)
18	Malaysia	Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)
19	Malaysia	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM)
20	Lao PDR	National University of Laos (NUOL)
21	Timor-Leste	Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e (UNTL)

Annex 3: “Key Products and Technologies” in the 17 Strategic Fields

Note: For details, please also refer to the following material of the Council for Japan’s Growth Strategy (available in Japanese only): <https://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/nipponseichosenryaku/kaigi/dai5/shiryou2.pdf>

Strategic field	Key products and technologies
AI and semiconductors	(1) Physical AI (especially AI robots) (2) Semiconductors serving as the core required for the implementation of physical intelligent systems (3) Vertical AI (domain-specific AI)
Shipbuilding	(1) Next-generation vessels (2) Ship repair (3) LNG carriers
Quantum	(1) Quantum computing (2) Quantum communication and networks (3) Quantum sensing
Synthetic biology and biotechnology	(1) Biomanufacturing (2) Biopharmaceuticals, regenerative medicine products, etc. (same as (3) under Drug discovery and advanced medicine)
Aviation and space	(1) Civil aircraft (next-generation single-aisle and other next-generation aircraft) (2) Unmanned aerial vehicles (3) Flying cars (4) Rockets and launch sites (5) Satellites and satellite services (6) Lunar exploration and low-Earth-orbit technologies
Digital and cybersecurity	(1) Data platforms (2) Secure AX/DX infrastructure for national and local governments (3) Advanced cybersecurity products and services for the AI era (4) Cloud services and data centers; storage batteries (5) Medical DX platforms optimized for cloud-native environments (6) Autonomous driving technologies
Content	(1) Games (2) Anime (3) Manga (4) Music (5) Live-action film
Food tech	(1) Plant factories (2) Land-based aquaculture (3) Food machinery (4) Novel foods
Resources, energy security, and GX	(1) Next-generation solar cells (perovskite solar cells, etc.) (2) Hydrogen, etc. (3) Green steel (same as (2) under Materials (critical minerals, parts and materials)) (4) Next-generation geothermal energy (5) Offshore wind power

	(6) Next-generation innovative reactors (7) GX chemicals
Disaster risk reduction and national resilience	(1) Disaster risk reduction technologies
Drug discovery and advanced medicine	(1) First-in-class and best-in-class products (pharmaceuticals and regenerative medicine products) (2) Products for responding to infectious diseases (3) Biopharmaceuticals, regenerative medicine products, etc. (same as (2) under Synthetic biology and biotechnology) (4) Advanced medicine utilizing innovative devices (AI, robotics, etc.) (5) Healthcare-related services utilizing lifelog data, etc.
Fusion energy	(1) Fusion energy
Materials (critical minerals, parts and materials)	(1) Permanent magnets (2) Green steel (same as (3) under Resources, energy security, and GX) (3) Innovative metal parts and materials (4) Low-carbon metal parts and materials (other than steel) (5) Technologies for smelting, separation and refining from primary raw materials (ores, etc.) and secondary raw materials (circular resources such as recycled materials), and for dismantling and sorting (6) New composite materials utilizing AI, etc.
Port logistics	(1) Port cargo-handling machinery (2) Cyber Port (port logistics DX) (3) Next-generation warehouses
Defense industry	(1) Small unmanned aerial vehicles (2) Naval vessels (3) Dual-use technologies
Information and communications	(1) All-Photonics Network (APN) (2) Submarine cables (3) Next-generation wireless (non-terrestrial networks, 5G/Beyond 5G (6G), etc.)
Ocean	(1) Uncrewed maritime vehicles (marine drones) (2) Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) (3) Innovative seabed development technologies and systems