Call for Selection for PhD Candidates Support Project

Graduate School of Medicine, Science and Technology, Shinshu University
Sustainable Society AI Project
（**JST BOOST: Broadening Opportunities for Outstanding young researchers and doctoral students in STrategic areas**）

Application Guidelines for April 2026
(The recruitment for the 2025 fiscal year)

[Important]
This recruitment guideline is intended for selecting program students under the following admission categories.
Please note that this will be the final call for applications for the BOOST Program.

Recruitment Category	Number of Recruits	Target Applicants *
Support starts in April 2026	3	Students engaged in research in the field of next-generation AI who fall into one of the following categories: ●For three-year doctoral programs: Those who plan to enroll in the doctoral program of this graduate school in April 2026. ●For four-year doctoral programs: Those who are currently enrolled as first-year doctoral students and are expected to advance to the second year in April 2026.

*Please make sure to check the details of the eligibility requirements before applying.

Shinshu University starts providing salary-style support consisting of a stipend to defray living expenses along with research funding to talented students enrolled in doctoral programs under "BOOST: Broadening Opportunities for Outstanding young researchers and doctoral students in STrategic program of JST"
The research fields eligible for support under this project include not only 'AI-specific research,' which specializes in AI itself, but also 'AI-applied research,' which utilizes AI in research. For more details, please refer to '*2' in '2. Application Requirements' below.
An overview of the project follows. These guidelines summarize the requirements for selection of this project.

Program Objectives
・Supporting research in the field of AI by doctoral students, as well as research in emerging and converging areas within the AI field.
・To provide an environment in which students can focus on research by providing research incentives
・Cultivating talent to become leading scientists in the next-generation AI field, which is a strategic area for our country. Aim to foster innovation and enhance industrial competitiveness in our country.

Shinshu University initiative　"Sustainable Society AI Project"

Program career and personal development content
We aim to foster doctoral candidates who will lead the next generation of AI by implementing cross-disciplinary guidance provided by a diverse team with various expertise, offering special lectures in the field

of next-generation AI, coordinating the utilization of the university's data assets, and enabling participation in career development and educational content in JST-SPRING, thus expanding career paths and student interactions.

Program Website: http://www.shinshu-u.ac.jp/graduate/spring/

1.Eligibility

Applicants must have been enrolled in the Shinshu University Graduate School of Medicine, Science and Technology, and recognized as outstanding students. Students who further intend to become leading scientists in the field of next-generation AI.

However, the following individuals are not eligible, regardless of whether they meet the above requirements:

Ineligible individuals
1. Students who have been selected as a special fellow (DC) by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science(JSPS)
2. International students who are being supported by a Japanese government (Monbukagakusho: MEXT) scholarship (Including "JICA")
3. International students who are receiving scholarship or other support from their home country
4. Students with a stable income in the form of salary or director remuneration from a company or other organization that provides sufficient funds to cover their living expenses (amount of ¥2.4 million or more per year)
5. Recipients of other scholarships (including those who are in the process of applying) who are not allowed to receive the scholarship together with this project. However, this does not include the application to JSPS DC.
6. Students who are on a leave of absence
7. Students who are planning to withdraw before completing their doctoral program
8. Students who have been enrolled for longer than the standard term of study

*After applying for or being accepted into this project, if any of the following conditions apply during enrollment, you will lose eligibility.

2. Application Requirements

The person eligible for support shall meet all of the following criteria. Due to the project period of the BOOST program, the eligible academic years for application are limited. Please pay special attention to the academic year requirements.

(1) Eligible Academic Years
 1) For three-year doctoral programs:
   Students who will enroll in this graduate school in April 2026.
   Please note that students who were selected for provisional acceptance as first-year master's students (M1) in last year's SPRING program are also eligible to apply for this BOOST recruitment.

 2) For four-year doctoral programs:
   Students who are currently enrolled as first-year doctoral students and are expected to advance to the second year in April 2026.

   Therefore, students who will enroll in this graduate school in October 2025, or students who will enter a four-year doctoral program in April 2026, are not eligible.
However, even if you are not eligible for this BOOST recruitment, you may still be eligible for the "JST-SPRING" program. Please consider applying for the JST-SPRING program.
(2) Alignment with the Objectives of the BOOST Program
・The research field must be related to next-generation AI (including both established and emerging/converging fields within AI), and the student must engage in AI-related research during their doctoral studies.
・Applicants should have the ambition to shape the future of science, technology, and innovation in Japan and be able to produce research results, such as conference presentations and papers, annually. Furthermore,

during the support period, it is mandatory to present their AI research at academic conferences and through paper publications. (*)

・For international students, demonstrating an intention to contribute to innovation creation and enhancement of industrial competitiveness in Japan's national strategy.

(*): As the definition of "Artificial Intelligence: AI" is diverse, specific research areas are not explicitly stated. Applicants should ensure that their application materials enable reviewers to determine suitability for support as researchers in the next-generation AI field.

According to JST, the target student profile for this program is as follows:

> The program aims to bolster the next-generation AI researcher base to foster innovation creation and enhance industrial competitiveness in Japan. To achieve this, the program aims to increase the number of students specializing in AI fields entering the doctoral program and to train students from other disciplines to become researchers with expertise in AI.
>
> Regarding the specialized expertise in AI expected from students majoring in other disciplines, we aim to foster students to meet the following criteria by the completion of the doctoral program (upon completion of this program):
>
> - It is desirable for recipients to become next-generation AI researchers contributing to innovation creation and enhancement of industrial competitiveness in Japan after obtaining their doctoral degrees.
> - Recipients should possess skills as AI engineers and data scientists, leveraging these skills to conduct their own research (proficiency in programming, machine learning algorithms, databases, mathematics, statistics, etc.).
> - Recipients should be able to catch up with rapidly evolving AI technologies and introduce optimal AI into their research.
> - It is desirable for recipients' research to contribute to the advancement of AI and its application to other fields.
> - Presenting research findings related to their AI studies at academic conferences and through paper publications during the support period is mandatory.
> - Although presenting papers at information science conferences and academic conferences is highly desirable, it is not mandatory.

3. Number of Places
Support starts in April 2026：3 students

*Based on the results of the selection process, if the number of students meeting the recruitment criteria is insufficient, we may conduct additional recruitment.

4. Research Incentives
Total annual amount: ¥3.9 million (stipend of ¥3 million and research funding of ¥900,000),
50% tuition fee waiver.

5. Funding Period
Within the standard period of study.
If the period of enrollment exceeds the standard length of study, any subsequent period will not be eligible for support.

Additionally, the funding period may be shortened if certain conditions under which funding may be canceled or terminated are satisfied.

※The amount of support for research encouragement stipend, etc. may change depending on the status of

budgetary measures from JST or government.

6. Application Documents
  Prepare the prescribed slides, videos and documents explaining your research and submit them after obtaining approval from your faculty advisor. Please prepare documents in Japanese or English.

(*Selection will be canceled if a student is found to have included false information on his or her application documents.)

7. Submission Information
  Applicants must submit the following 3 files, prepared entirely by themselves.
  Your score will be deducted if the documents are incomplete.

(1) Application document (Specified format. One -page slide document describing your research.
  PDF file format. Within 10MB)
  [Common to SPRING and BOOST]
  Formats can be obtained from (.pptx file is downloaded):
   https://www.shinshu-u.ac.jp/graduate/sogoiriko/slide_ID_name.pptx

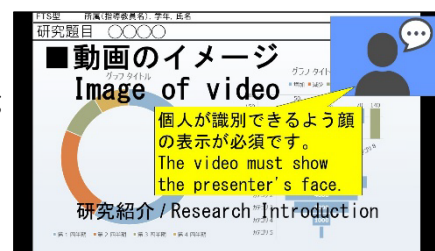 Slides should be concise and easy to understand with figures and tables.
  If you are applying only for the BOOST program, you do not need to select either the FTS type or CDS type.

(2) 2 minutes-video presentation file. (MP4 file format. Within 100MB)
  [Common to SPRING and BOOST]
  Please create video files using tools such as PowerPoint or Zoom's recording feature.
*The video must show the presenter's face so that he/she can be identified.

(3) Explanation materials on the utilization of AI in your own research (Specified format. One -page text documents. PDF file format. Within 2MB)
  [BOOST Only]
  Formats can be obtained from (.docx file is downloaded):
  https://www.shinshu-u.ac.jp/graduate/sogoiriko/document_ID_name.docx

File-name:
  1) One-page slide document file: slide_Student(examinee's) ID_your name. pdf
  2) Two- minutes video presentation file: movie_Student(examinee's) ID_your name. mp4
  3) One-page text document file: document_Student(examinee's) ID_your name. pdf

  Three files must be submitted via the application form below.
  https://forms.gle/J1dMdVxmaFCgWSJ39

*If you are unable to submit documents via this form, please contact us via email at
  shin-jisedai@shinshu-u.ac.jp
(Graduate School Office, Division of Student Affairs)

*If you are applying for both SPRING and BOOST, please make sure to read and follow the guidelines for both programs when submitting your application. For applications to both SPRING and BOOST, you may use the same presentation slides and video, or prepare separate ones.

8. Submission Period
From noon on Tuesday, July 15 to noon on Thursday, July 17 (Japan Standard Time)

9. Screening Method
(1) Document screening (primary screening)
  Application documents submitted by applicants will be screened.

(2) Interview screening (secondary screening)
 Applicants who pass the document screening will move on to an interview screening (online).
 The interview screening will be conducted on **Tuesday, August 19**, at 4:30 PM (Japan Standard Time).
 Details will be provided to eligible applicants as they become available.
 We cannot accommodate changes in interview times, so please secure your schedule.

10. Selection
 Applicants will be notified if they were selected by email in early September.

11. Obligations of Selected Students
(1) Requirements
- Please fully understand the purpose and objectives of this project and engage in research related to the next-generation AI field. If your research theme is not related to AI, you will not be eligible for support.
- Program students must take an e-leaning course on research ethics through the APRIN e-learning program (eAPRIN).
- Program students must submit an activity report on a regular basis.
- Program students are required to present at academic conferences and publish papers on AI research during the support period.
- Program students must consent to the sharing by SHINSHU University of their email address with JST.
- Registration for the " Job-type Research Internship (Coop-J internships)" program.
- Registration with the Japan Graduates Database (JGRAD). Cooperation in surveys regarding post-graduation career paths and research achievements.
- Proper execution of research funds in accordance with the rules.
- Cooperation in promotional activities within the scope that does not pose any hindrance.
- Submit a pledge form.

(2) Recommendations
 Program students will be expected to take the initiative to actively pursue career development opportunities, for example by participating in the following initiatives:
- Participation in the career development and training content of the SPRING program, as well as interdisciplinary exchanges with other doctoral students.
- Participation in a long-term internship at a company or other entity or in work as a research staff member at a company or other entity
- Participation in exchanges hosted by JST for doctoral students from various universities
- Active participation in other activities as instructed by the program's leadership

12. Cancellation/cessation of support
(1) If the student fails to satisfy the requirements set forth in "1. Eligibility", your program support will be terminated.
(2) In the event it determines any of the following has occurred, the program's supervision will either provide guidance so that the student can improve his or her conduct or, if it determines that such improvement will not be forthcoming, cancel the student's selection for participation in the program. And then, you might have to refund your money which we paid such as research financial incentive.
・If the above-mentioned mandatory requirement under 11.(1) is not fulfilled, or if there is an apparent lack of enthusiasm toward the recommended action under 11.(2) in this program
・If the student fails without a legitimate reason to implement the research plan he or she submitted at the

time of application for research incentives
・If the student is subjected to disciplinary action as stipulated in the Shinshu University Graduate School Regulations.
(3) In the event a student is found to have conducted fraudulent research or included false information on his or her application, his or her selection will be canceled, and he or she will be required to repay research incentives already received.

*You must be in Japan to receive aid.

13. Other
1. JST requires that universities conduct a survey to track selected students' careers for at least 10 years after graduation. Successful applicants are required to cooperate with this tracking survey and report associated information to the University. Be sure to register with the Japan Graduates Database (JGRAD).
2. The names and other information of students selected to receive research incentives will be published on the University's website and in other materials.
3. Since the stipend portion of the research incentive is considered miscellaneous income, successful applicants will need to pay tax on those funds by filing their income taxes the year after they are received. Applicants who are listed as a dependent of a taxpayer (for example, a parent) should inform that person that they will be receiving a stipend that is treated as miscellaneous income and seek instructions from the person responsible for tax issues at that person's employer.
4. Program students who newly become JASSO Type 1 Scholarship recipients from FY2023 are not eligible for the "Return Exemption System for Particularly Meritorious Achievements" in the doctoral program.
5. This recruitment is not for the doctoral program entrance examination at Shinshu University. To enroll in our doctoral program, you must pass a separate entrance examination conducted by the graduate school.

Reference
1. Under Japan's Income Tax Act, if a dependent of a family member such as a parent earns more than ¥380,000 after necessary expenses are subtracted from stipend payments received from January through December, that family member may not be able to claim the student as a dependent, and the student will be subject to income tax. In addition, the dependent will have to pay resident tax the following tax year based on his or her income during the year in question.
2. For the purpose of health insurance and mutual-association insurance, students who expect to receive stipend payments of greater than ¥1.3 million during the year may not be classified as dependents. Since the amount of the stipend is determined at the outset, students who do not meet the requirements for being classified as a dependent are responsible for registering for National Health Insurance (Kokumin Kenko Hoken).
3. Although the manner, in which household income is calculated for students who are exempt from tuition payments depends on their particular circumstances, successful applicants may not qualify for a tuition exemption as a result of their income.

■Contact: Shinshu University Program Office
          shin-jisedai@shinshu-u.ac.jp

Application for JST Doctoral Student Support Programs SPRING and BOOST

Shinshu University has been selected for two doctoral student support projects: SPRING and BOOST.
・JST SPRING: Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING) program-
　SHINSHU University "Next Generation Advanced Human Resources/Regional Innovators Development Program"
・JST BOOST: Broadening Opportunities for Outstanding young researchers and doctoral students in STrategic areas
　SHINSHU University "Sustainable Society AI Project"

Both SPRING and BOOST are support programs for doctoral students, but the available application tracks differ depending on your research field and academic year. You may apply for both SPRING and BOOST.
Please review the respective recruitment guidelines and submit your application accordingly.

■Summary of the Differences between SPRING and BOOST
(Please refer to the recruitment guidelines for details).

item	SPRING	BOOST
Your research field	Without conditions	The research field is in next-generation AI, AI-related, and AI-integrated areas.
Research Incentives	Total annual amount: ¥2.7 million (stipend of ¥2.4 million and research funding of ¥300,000) 50% tuition fee waiver	Total annual amount: ¥3.9 million (stipend of ¥3 million and research funding of ¥900,000) 50% tuition fee waiver
Career support	A wide range of career development and training content centered around Shinshu Tamon Juku is implemented	Training programs related to AI research are conducted.
Project Purpose	To broadly nurture doctoral talents who can contribute to Japan's science, technology, and innovation across diverse careers.	To cultivate talents who will become leading scientists in the next-generation AI field, a strategic area of focus for our nation.

■Types of Positions You Can Apply For
You can apply for recruitment categories where both Condition 1 and Condition 2 in the table below are marked with a checkmark (o).

Condition / Recruitment Category			SPRING			BOOST
			Support starts in October 2025	Support starts in April 2026	Support starts in April 2027 (Reserve admission for M1 students at Shinshu Univ.)	Support starts in April 2026
Condition 1	Your research field	Related to AI	o	o	o	o
		Not related to AI	o	o	o	✕
You can apply to recruitment categories marked with a circle in both Condition 1 " Your research field" ⬆ and Condition 2 " Current grade " ⬇						
Condition 2	Current grade	First year of master's student	✕	✕	o (Shinshu Univ.)	✕
		Second-year master's student scheduled to graduate in September.	o	o	✕	✕ *If you enter in April, it's acceptable.
		Second-year	✕	o	✕	o

						*
		master's student scheduled to graduate in March.				
		Current doctoral students *In the standard period of enrollment.	○	○	✕	✕ *

*In the case of a four-year doctoral program, only students who will advance to the second year of the doctoral program in April are eligible to apply for BOOST.