

Call for Proposals for FY2025 CREST, PRESTO, and ACT-X Q & A

If there are major updates on this Q&A, it will be announced on the following website.

<https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/boshuu/teian-en.html>

For information related to the operation of the Cross-ministerial R&D Management System (e-Rad), registration of research institutions and researchers, and use of the e-Rad system, please refer to the following website:

<https://www.e-rad.go.jp/en/>

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1. Enrolling in the educational program for research integrity

(1) Content of the educational program for research integrity

Q What content must be included in the educational program for research integrity conducted by affiliated institutions?

A Educational programs for research integrity are the responsibility of each research institution. JST does not specify the specific teaching material to be used in such programs. In each research institution, it is acceptable to undergo a research ethics education program or training deemed equivalent to the following. If a research institution determines something to be equivalent, the video materials provided by JST titled 'Gaps in Ethics ' are also recognized as valid.

- “eAPRIN” provided by APRIN, Association for the Promotion of Research Integrity
- “eL CoRE” provided by JSPS, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science
- “For the Sound Development of Science -The Attitude of a Conscientious Scientist-” provided by JSPS, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science
- “Responsible Research Practices to Learn from Cases” provided by AMED, Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development
- “A Compendium of Near-Miss Incidents Related to Research Integrity” provided by AMED, Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development

(Reference)

According to the “Guidelines for Responding to Misconduct in Research Activities” (August 26, 2014, adopted by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology), which were effective as of April 2015, research institutions are required to implement a structure for preventing misconduct—such as the installation of a “Research Integrity Education Manager”—and conduct education at the institutional level. Further, the allocating institution is also required to confirm researcher enrollment in the institution’s research integrity education program.

Note, however, that the details in the referenced guidelines focus on misconduct related to academic papers and does not cover bioethics and conflicts of interest, which are different topics. If you have any questions, please contact the JST Office of Research Integrity.

Japan Science and Technology Agency Department of Audit and Legal Affairs, Research Integrity Division E-mail : rcr-kousyu@jst.go.jp
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(2) Program completion certification

Q Is it necessary to submit documentation certifying completion of an educational program for research integrity?

A No, submission is not necessary.

(3) About taking the digest version of eAPRIN

Q Is it necessary to declare the attendance confirmation number when you take the eAPRIN digest version through JST when it is difficult to take a research ethical education program at the institution?

A There is no need to declare the course confirmation card for applications for CREST, PRESTO, and ACT-X. Please select "eAPRIN digest version completed" in the input field of the course status in e-Rad system.

(4) Availability of an English version of the eAPRIN e-learning program digest version

Q Since I have not taken the program offered by my institution, I am planning to enroll in the digest version of eAPRIN e-learning program. What options are there if my native language is not Japanese, which makes taking the course in Japanese difficult?

A An English translation of the digest version of eAPRIN e-learning program has been published and posted on the Invitation for Proposal website.

(5) Regarding the deadline for completing the educational program for research integrity

Q I cannot complete the educational program for research integrity before the application deadline. Can I complete the program after the deadline?

A Completion of the educational program for research integrity is a prerequisite for applying. Enrollment and completion of this program will not be permitted after the solicitation deadline.

2. Common issue for CREST, PRESTO, and ACT-X

(1) Responding to the fiscal year 2025 Call for Proposals

Q When submitting a research proposal, is an approval of the institution with which I am affiliated required?

A No, it is not required. However, if your proposal is selected, a Research Contract will have to be signed by both JST and the research institution with which you are affiliated, so please notify your institution in prior ("5.2.7 Responsibilities of Research Institutions").

(2) Duplicate Application Restrictions

※ Please refer to "Chapter 7: Limitations on Multiple Applications within the Strategic Basic Research Programs."

Q Is it possible to simultaneously conduct PI projects under PRESTO/ACT-X and Co-PI projects under CREST?

A Starting with FY 2022, it has become possible to simultaneously conduct PI projects under PRESTO/ACT-X and Co-PI projects under CREST.

- It is possible to apply for a CREST Co-PI while being a PI conducting an ongoing PRESTO/ACT-X project.
- A CREST Co-PI can apply to be a PI in PRESTO/ACT-X.
- It is possible to apply for a PRESTO/ACT-X PI who is also applying to be a CREST Co-PI. If both are accepted simultaneously, it is possible to carry out both at the same time.

However, when candidates are selected, adjustments such as budget reductions may be made considering the research content and scale. Additionally, please consult with the CREST PI in advance before considering your application.

Q Is it possible to propose as a PI in CREST and also participate as a Co-PI in other CREST research proposals?

A It is possible to make such proposals. However, if those proposals become candidates for adoption, adjustments may be made considering the research content and scale. These adjustments might include reducing the research budget or having the researcher choose one project to carry out.

Note that it is not permissible for the PI and the Co-PI to swap roles and submit multiple applications.

Q Can current ACT-X PIs apply for the PRESTO program?

A Possible to apply. However, if selected, the ACT-X research project will be terminated at the end of that fiscal year. When applying for the PRESTO program during the ACT-X research period (including the acceleration phase period), please notify JST (ACT-X research area staff) and the PO accordingly.

Q Can current PIs of the PRESTO program apply for the ACT-X program?

A Application to the ACT-X program is not allowed.

Q I have been selected for AMED-CREST or PRIME by AMED. Can I apply for CREST or PRESTO?

A If you are currently conducting research as a PI under AMED's AMED-CREST or PRIME, you are generally not allowed to apply as a research proposer for "CREST" or "PRESTO". However, if your research period ends in the FY 2025, you can apply. If the research period ends in the 2026 or later, you can apply only if it is approved by both the research area program supervisor of the current research area and AMED by three weeks before the application deadline, and you agree to terminate the current research if selected.

※ Similarly, a CREST PI applying for PRESTO or an PRESTO PI applying for CREST can apply if the research period ends in the FY 2025. For research periods ending in the FY 2026 or later, application and termination of the current research is possible only if it is approved by both the research area program supervisor of the current area and JST by three weeks before the application deadline.

Q Why are duplicate application restrictions applied between JST and AMED's Strategic Basic Research Programs?

A The target programs are based on a program of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's Strategic Basic Research Programs, which promotes strategic basic research under strategic or R & D goals, although the executing agency is divided into JST and AMED. For this reason, duplicate application restrictions are applied between the two organizations.

Q Can JSPS Research Fellows apply for PRESTO or ACT-X?

A There are no specific regulations regarding your status at the time of application. If you are already utilizing or planning to apply for other institutions' programs, please inquire with each institution about the permissibility of overlapping participation in their programs.

(3) Promotion of Diversity and Life Events During the Research Period

Q What initiatives are being taken to promote diversity in the Strategic Basic Research Programs?

A JST expects active applications from researchers of diverse backgrounds, regardless of gender or research experience. We are committed to creating an environment where researchers can fully exploit their potential. As

part of this effort, the Strategic Basic Research Programs have set up a dedicated website for initiatives aimed at promoting diversity. Please refer to the following links for more information:

CREST, PRESTO, and ACT-X Diversity Promotion Initiatives

<https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/crest/nadeshiko/index.html>

(Reference)

JST Diversity Promotion Page

<https://www.jst.go.jp/diversity/en/index.html>

Q Is it possible to suspend and later resume research in response to life events (childbirth, child care, and care giving)?

A In CREST, it is possible for someone to take over the role of the PI or the Co-PI and continue the research.

In PRESTO or ACT-X, if PIs experience life event during the research period, they can, in principle, suspend their research for the same duration as their leave or furlough period at their affiliated institution and then resume it. In such cases, JST will allocate an amount equivalent to the unused research funds due to the suspension after the research is resumed.

Additionally, there are support systems in place aimed at enabling researchers to continue their work during life events. For details, please refer to the following website.

Initiatives for Promoting Diversity in CREST, PRESTO, and ACT-X

<https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/crest/nadeshiko/index.html>

(4) Condition of Applicants

Q What is the status of applications from female researchers?

A For female researchers, they account for approximately 5-10% of applicants and awardees in CREST, around 10-20% in the "Sakigake" program, and about 15-30% in the ACT-X program.

(5) Use of color in research proposals

Q Is it possible to use color for the text or figures in research proposals? Do evaluators evaluate research proposals in color document?

A Evaluators do evaluate color document in their assessment of research proposals. However, proposals may be printed out from PDF files, so we request you to use figures and tables that are easy to read even at low resolutions.

(6) Research Budgets Plan

Q Is it necessary to include the basis of calculation for research expenses and the budget for each fiscal year in the research proposal?

A The basis of calculation for research expenses is not required. However, for CREST, please specify the budget plan items for each research group and the budget plan for each item in the designated format of the research proposal. For the PRESTO and ACT-X programs, those who are selected for interview screening will be asked to separately prepare supplementary explanatory materials, including details of research expenses.

(7) Research Achievements

Q Can I also write a proceedings paper?

A Important proceedings papers can also be listed as research achievements. Especially in the information and security research fields, its importance is being touted. For details, please refer to the final report of the Cybersecurity Research and Industry-Academia-Government Collaboration Strategy Working Group of the Cabinet Cybersecurity Center.

(March 12, 2021 Cybersecurity Strategy Headquarters Research and Development Strategy Special Committee Research/Industry-Academia-Government Collaboration Strategy Working Group Cybersecurity Research/Industry-Academia-Government Collaboration Strategy Working Group)

<https://www.nisc.go.jp/conference/cs/pdf/kenkyuwg-saishu.pdf>

(8) Disclosure of Funds

Q It says that it includes foreign institutions. What should be specifically described about the research funds that plan to accept or apply for from overseas institutions?

A At the time of application, researchers will be asked to fill in a wide range of research expenses that they are applying for and will accept, so competitive funding, subsidies from private foundations, contract research expenses from companies, joint research expenses, etc. Please be sure to fill in all research funds accepted from foreign institutions. Due to unavoidable circumstances, e.g. confidentiality agreement, it is possible to submit without filling in the items other than effort. Noted that the research proposal will be provided to outside experts during the review process.

(9) Overhead Costs (Indirect Costs)

Q Is support for covering overhead costs (indirect costs) paid to all research institutions that sign a Research Contract?

A In principle, an amount equal to 30% of research costs (direct costs) is paid to all research institutions that sign a Research Contract. This amount covers overhead costs (indirect costs).

Q What types of expenditures are counted as overhead costs (indirect costs)?

A Overhead costs (indirect costs) include expenditures for improving the research environment for participants in research projects implemented under CREST, PRESTO and ACT-X programs and money used by research institutions to cover expenditures required to enhance their overall functions.

(10) Use of Research Budgets

Q Is it possible to subcontract program preparation and other such work to external companies, etc.?

A If it is required as a matter of advancing research work, it is possible. However, there is a premise that such subcontracting of work to outside parties is based on subcontracting agreements that exclude research and development work. In principle, the subcontracting of research and development work is not permitted.

(11) Personnel Transfers after Proposal Selection

Q If a PI (CREST, PRESTO or ACT-X) experiences a change in position (promotion, transfer to a different research institution, etc.) while conducting research, will the PI be permitted to continue research activities?

A As long as it is possible to continue research activities unhindered by the change in position, research activities may be continued. Having another person take over as PI as a result of a change in position, however, is not permitted.

Q If a research institution affiliation changes because of a personnel transfer, for example, as research is being conducted, is it possible to move research equipment, etc., purchased with research funds to the new research institution?

A Equipment, etc., purchased with funds accounted for as research costs (direct costs) must, in principle, be moved, via transfer of ownership, etc., to the new research institution in accordance with a Research Contract.

(12) Others

Q Who is the Research Supervisor (PO) for the program? What roles does the PO perform?

A For the CREST, PRESTO, and ACT-X programs, the Research Supervisor is the PO designated for competitive funding systems. For information on the roles played by the Research Supervisor, refer to “2.1.1 CREST Overview,” “3.1.1 PRESTO Overview,” and “4.1.1 ACT-X Overview.”

Q Please provide information on the research topics selected and applications submitted for the previous fiscal year.

A Please refer to the JST websites below.

- CREST <https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/crest/en/application/index.html>
- PRESTO <https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/presto/en/application/index.html>
- ACT-X <https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/act-x/en/index.html>

Q At present, I am affiliated with an overseas research institution and do not have a researcher number. How should I register for e-Rad when applying as a CREST Joint Research Group or PRESTO (not JST employed) Researcher?

A Please arrange e-Rad registration for overseas Co-PIs and PRESTO Researchers by yourself under “Worker: Proposer” and “Registration Details: Researcher Information.” Please prepare a researcher registration application form and a picture of personal identification (passport, driver's license, my number card, health insurance card, etc.), and apply for registration by the applicant via "new registration method" for researchers. For more details, refer to Application Guidelines “8.4.1 Pre-registration of research institution and researcher information” and the e-Rad portal site.

<https://www.e-rad.go.jp/en/researcher/index.html>

* In principle, researchers affiliated with overseas research institutions cannot be the CREST Co-PIs. For detail, please refer “2.2.6 Proposal Submission Requirements” of the Application Guidelines and “Items for CREST” of this Q&A

Q At present, I am affiliated with an overseas research institution. When applying as a CREST Joint Research Group or PRESTO (not JST employed) Researcher, can I use the e-Rad researcher number obtained when I was affiliated with a Japanese domestic research institution in the past?

A If you have already obtained an e-Rad researcher number and are currently able to apply, it is no problem to apply with that number. In that case, details of the registered institution with which you were affiliated in the past may be displayed in the system. Please enter your current affiliated institution in the entry field for “individual items”. After selection, JST will register the affiliated institution.

- * In principle, researchers affiliated with overseas research institutions cannot be the CREST Co-PIs. For detail, please refer “2.2.6 Proposal Submission Requirements” of the Application Guidelines and “Items for CREST” of this Q&A
- * In the PRESTO program, conducting research at overseas research institutions as a PRESTO exclusive appointment researcher is not allowed from the perspective of safety and health management. Please refer to section "3.2.6 (3)" for details.

Q I am not able to temporarily store my research proposal on the e-Rad system.

A Unless you fill in all items in “Application,” you cannot store information temporarily. Modification of the input data is possible, so fill in all the items with temporary information first; then, temporary storage will be possible.

Q If the date of the interview scheduled as part of the selection process is inconvenient, is it possible for someone else be interviewed in my place? Alternatively, is it possible to schedule a different interview date?

A It is not possible to have someone else interviewed in your place. In addition, since, interview dates are set by coordinating the schedules of numerous evaluators, securing a different interview date is not possible. Please check the interview period information shown in “(2) Call and Selection Schedule” in the first section “Overview of the Call for Research Application” of this document and also the interview schedules for individual Research Areas which will be announced on the “Call for Research Proposals” website (<https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/boshuu/teian-en.html>).

3. Items for CREST

(1) Research Organization and Budget Allocation

Q Please give inappropriate examples of Joint Research Group organization and Joint Research Group budget allocations which would be unacceptable.

A Unacceptable formation of Joint Research Groups include (but are not limited to) followings:
 1) The PI does not play the central role in the research organization to pursue the proposed research initiative; 2) A substantial portion of the research is subcontracted to an external party or parties; 3) The role and position of the Joint Research Group in the research initiative is unclear; and 4) The budget is allocated equally to the Joint Research Groups without considering their roles and positions.

Q Is it possible to change the research project organization and total budget, which were presented in the research proposal at the interview screening process?

A No, please do not change the contents of the research proposal since selections are conducted based on these contents. Please be very careful to create a research proposal that you will not change later. It should be noted, though, that after the selection process, changes may be requested in accordance with the instructions of the Research Supervisor.

(2) Applicant Requirements

Q Is it possible for non-full-time researchers (guest researchers, etc.) to submit research proposals? Also, is it possible for researchers scheduled to retire during the research period to submit proposals?

A Both are possible if you can establish your own research project organization at a domestic (located in Japan) research institution during the research period and the research institution could conclude a Research Contract with JST.

(3) Research Team Organization

Q Can researchers affiliated with industrial companies join a research organization as Co-PIs or other research participants?

A Yes, it is possible. Concluding a Research Contract with JST is required to be a Co-PI. See also “5.2.7 Responsibilities of Research Institutions” of the Application Guidelines.

(4) Research Site

Q What criteria will be used to determine whether the performance of research would be impractical if not done at a foreign institution?

A Decision concerning whether research must be performed overseas are assumed as following.

- 1 . Required facilities do not exist in Japan and have been installed only in foreign institution.
- 2 . Field studies that can be performed only at overseas are required.
- 3 . Research materials can be obtained only at a foreign research institution or foreign location and cannot be brought to Japan.

(5) Research Cost

Q After a research proposal is selected, how should the allocation of research expenditures within the team be decided?

A Once a research proposal is selected, allocation of research expenditures within the team are determined based on the research plan prepared every fiscal year. For more information on research plans, please refer to "5.2.1 Research Plan Preparation."

Q If there are researchers from other institutions participating in the same group, and it is necessary to execute CREST research funds at those institutions, is it possible to provide research funds from your own institution to the other institutions?

A Providing research funds from your own institution to other institutions is not permitted as it falls under subcontracting that includes R&D elements. Research funds pertaining to researchers from other institutions should be executed and managed by your own institution. If it is not feasible for your own institution to execute and manage the research funds for other institutions, it is necessary to designate the concerned institution as the principal co-investigator and establish a collaborative research group to conclude a research contract with JST.

Q I am considering applying as a principal investigator, but I will reach retirement age during the CREST research period. Can my salary after retirement be paid from CREST research funds as PI personnel expenses?

A Regarding the payment of PI personnel expenses from CREST research funds, it is possible to be paid if your institution has established a system related to the PI personnel expenses system and has notified the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and certain requirements are met. Please check with the person in charge at your institution regarding the status of the system establishment and whether you will meet the payment requirements after retirement.

(6) Research Contract

Q Would a Research Contract with Co-PIs be subcontracted¹ from the research institution with which the PI is affiliated?

A In this program, Research Contract are not subcontracts. JST contracts separately with each of research institutions with which the PI and Co-PIs are affiliated. In research contracts, "subcontracting" refers to the format where JST concludes a research contract only with the institution to which the principal investigator belongs, and then that

institution concludes a research contract with the institutions of co-researchers. As a general rule, subcontracting that includes R&D elements is not permitted.

(7) Research Evaluations

Q How is research evaluated and how will the evaluation results be utilized?

A In principle, CREST research projects undergo an:

1) Interim evaluation around three years after they begin,

and an

2) Ex-post evaluation at the end of the research period.

For more information, please refer to “5.2.4 Project Evaluations”. In addition, “Research Areas” are evaluated (“5.2.5 Research Area Evaluation”) as well as “follow-up evaluations” which take place after a certain amount of time has passed after the completion of the research period. All evaluation results will be posted on the website.

4. Items for PRESTO

(1) Requirements for Applicants

Q Does the PRESTO program have an age limit?

A There is no particular age limit for submitting PRESTO research proposals. However, research is performed mainly by researchers in their 30s and it is expected that PRESTO can help to boost the careers of such researchers.

Q Could students apply?

A Yes, he/she can apply. A requirement is, however, that the student participate in PRESTO will end the status of being a student by the end of March in the following year after if his/her proposal is selected. Concerning the way how to obtain e-Rad ID, refer to Q&A of 6. Issues for ACT-X.

Q Is it possible for non-full-time researchers (guest researchers, etc.) to submit research proposals?

A The PRESTO program has no restrictions in terms of the institutional affiliations or positions of applicants. Whether an applicant is a full-time employee of a research institution or not, or paid or not, is not considered in the selection process. PRESTO full-time researchers must have a full-time employment relationship with the research institution, be covered by employment regulations, and work under the discretionary labor system.

Q If I am a researcher (post-doctoral fellow) with a doctoral degree (but only a Japanese national) and I am proposing to conduct research at an overseas research institution, etc., can I apply to PRESTO?

A You are permitted to apply. However, if you are employed by an overseas project or program, other research activities may be restricted, so please confirm with the research institution that you can conduct PRESTO research before applying.

(2) Research Organization

Q What is the difference between researchers and research assistants in the PRESTO program?

A Researchers are those who proactively conduct part of the research under the management and guidance of individual researchers, and up to two can be registered in the research plan. Research assistants are those who are in charge of research support tasks based on the instructions of individual researchers in the PRESTO program, and up to five can be registered in the research plan. However, only those who belong to the research institution conducting the PRESTO research can be registered as researchers in the research plan.

Q If two researchers are registered in the research plan, can only three research assistants be registered?

A Even if researchers are registered in the research plan, up to five research assistants can still be registered.

Q In the PRESTO program, can researchers with a PhD (postdocs) be employed as researchers or research assistants?

A Employment is possible. In that case, the researcher (postdoc) will take on the role of either a researcher or a research assistant in the PRESTO program.

Q Is it possible to conduct joint research in the PRESTO program?

A Since PRESTO is an individual-type research program, it is not possible to establish a team-based research implementation structure where individuals other than the individual researcher bear responsibility for the PRESTO research (similar to the Co-PIs in CREST) or allocate PRESTO research funds to anyone other than the individual researcher. (Researchers and research assistants are participants in the research and do not bear responsibility for the PRESTO research.)

However, joint research between PRESTO research subjects and other research is allowed, so individuals other than the individual researcher can be co-authors in papers and other publications.

(3) Requirements for Performing Research Work at an Overseas Research Institution

Q What are the requirements for performing research work at an overseas research institution?

A Please contact to person in charge of contract in the foreign institute for prior consent since there are requirements such as conclusion of a research contract with conditions indicated by JST is needed. (Please also check PRESTO-Form 6)

*Refer to “References” in the “How to apply” section of the following website

<https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/boshuu/teian/en/top/ryoiki.html>

Particular attention should be paid to the three points below.

1. Appropriate expense execution shall be possible based on the research expense execution guidelines specified by JST.
2. Payment of indirect expenses to the relevant overseas research institution does not exceed 30% of direct expenses (research expenses).
3. It shall be possible to submit to JST English-language cost statements showing the details of research expenditures (equivalent to the account books used by Japanese institutions).

Research Agreement may cannot be concluded if foreign institute does not accept above condition.

Please refer to “3.2.6 Proposal Submission Requirements” for details.

Please also note that PRESTO PI personnel expenses cannot be disbursed from PRESTO research costs.

* Researchers affiliated with overseas research institutions are exempt from “Measures for Strategic Basic Research Programs (CREST, PRESTO, ACCEL, ACT-X) Related to the “Use of Direct Costs for Principal Investigator (PI) Personnel Expenses (revised June 3, 2022, JST Department of Innovation Research).”

https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/crest/manual/pi_houshin.pdf

In addition, "Regarding the response of Strategic Basic Research Programs (CREST, PRESTO, ACCEL, ACT-X) regarding the ``Review to make it possible to pay agency expenses for work other than research from direct cost (introduction of a buyout system)" (Revised on June 3, 2022) is also not covered at this time.

https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/crest/manual/buyout_houshin.pdf

Q Is it possible to conduct PRESTO research remotely while myself living overseas (outside Japan) after nominating a Japanese domestic institution as the institution for carrying out PRESTO research (exclusive assigned institution)?

A If the researcher themselves is living overseas even though a Japanese domestic institution is the institution for carrying out PRESTO research, it is crucial to build a complete structure for thorough information management and security export control systems at the assigned institution. Personnel management of the researcher also needs to be carried out according to the laws of the country of residence. Therefore, carrying out PRESTO research as an exclusive appointee is possible at a Japanese domestic assigned institution only if the JST deems that the following three conditions are satisfied:

- (1) An appropriate personnel management structure is in place in accordance with the laws of the jurisdiction of residence, such as facilities for carrying out research being provided at the satellite office etc. in the country of residence
- (2) In light of the cross-border flow of information taking place, sound network security is fully implemented to ensure that thorough security export control systems are provided
- (3) Systems are in place at the assigned institution so that research costs can be executed and managed remotely from overseas, and the assigned institution has consented to research taking place overseas

*Those who are not JST employed Researchers may also carry out research overseas under the responsibility of their affiliated institution while paying heed to (1) to (3) above.

(4) **Other**

Q I am currently assigned or am planned to be assigned from my affiliated institution to another institution. Is it possible to conduct PRESTO research at my assigned research institution?

A It is possible to conduct research at an institution other than that to which you are affiliated. However, when executing research costs at the institution where research is actually carried out, JST will conclude a Research Contract with the institution actually conducting research (Note that receiving consent from the institution where research is conducted is a precondition of PIs arranging of their own volition an assigned institution to conduct research). In terms of the e-Rad account, using either the affiliated or assigned institution is possible when applying, but please enter the research institution with which concluding the Research Contract is planned in the entry field for entering the Research Institution under the e-Rad individual particulars.

Q Should personnel cost for PRESTO PI of Exclusive Appointment come from research expense? How much is the approximate cost?

A Personnel cost for PRESTO PI of Exclusive Appointment is not out of research expense. JST will pay directly to the PI as a salary based on JST regulations. Specific salary amounts will be informed individually when the notification of working conditions is issued.

5. Items for ACT-X

(1) Requirements for Applicants

Q Does the ACT-X program have an age limit?

A No. There is no limitation on age. However, this program is intended for researchers who have held a doctoral degree for less than eight years as of April 1, 2025

Researchers who earned their bachelor's degrees less than 13 years ago (as of April 1, 2025) if they have not acquired doctoral degrees.

*This includes researchers who satisfy the described terms and conditions when the period of maternity or paternity leave taken after acquiring the degree is excluded.

Graduate school students are also invited to our program regardless of the terms and conditions described above.

Q Can university students apply?

A Only post-graduate students can apply.

Q Is it possible for non-full-time researchers (guest researchers, etc.) to submit research proposals?

A It is a condition of application that the applicant himself/herself (in the case of this person who cannot be a party to research contract due to the regulations of the affiliated institution, his or her academic supervisor, etc.) is able to be the "research manager" of the Research Contract.

Q I belong to a company, but I do not have a doctorate. Can I apply for the program?

A You can apply if you are a bachelor for less than 13 years as of April 1, 2025. However, it is required that the Research Contract between the organization the researcher belongs to and JST should be able to specify the applicant him- or herself as the "Principal Investigator".

Q How do I know if I have the authority to execute a contract research fund or can be a party to a Research Contract?

A In the form of the Research Contract template (<https://www.jst.go.jp/contract/index2.html>), become a "Principal Investigator" and become a registered researcher of the affiliated institution to determine whether or not it is

possible to conclude the Research Contract with JST and whether or not it is possible to execute the contract research fund by itself based on the cosigned Research Contract. Please check with the secretariat. For non-students, first coordinate with the academic supervisor and the affiliated institution so that you have executive authority and be a party to the Research Contract (See 4.2.6 “Proposal Submission Requirements”). Please contact JST if there is anything you are unsure about at the stage of coordinating with your institution.

Q I have been a doctor for less than 8 years as of April 1, 2025, but have been a bachelor for more than 13 years. May I apply for the program?

A Given that you are a doctor, the number of years being a bachelor does not matter. You can apply for the program if you have held a doctor for less than 8 years. However, you should know that the Research Areas of ACT-X are intended for the development and production of young researchers, thus, one of our norms for the selection is that your proposal should conform to the intention of the Research Areas.

Q If I belong to multiple institutions, which institution should I apply for?

A Please apply under the affiliation of the institution that actually executes the ACT-X contract research funds.

Q What if I was expecting to continue the research at a research institute in this country until I finish the ACT-X research, but I happen to transfer to another research institute overseas before I finish the research, which implies that I have difficulty in continuing the research. Should the research be canceled?

A If you cannot meet the ACT-X requirement, the research will be terminated.

Q Can I apply for ACT-X even when I am planning to study abroad?

A Application is possible. However, if the affiliated institution (domestic research institution) cannot conclude a contract research agreement while studying abroad, ACT-X research cannot be carried out during that period. Please keep this in mind when applying (ACT-X cannot conclude Research Contract research with overseas institutions). Please however also enter the fact that you are planning to study abroad and the period, destination, and status of discussions with the affiliated institution in the other special remarks section of the Application Form 7 Other Important Information, points of difference and planned changes from previous applications, other special remarks, etc.”. We will check if ACT-X research is possible as part of the selection process.

(2) Details that Should be Included in the Project Description

Q Do I have to give the project description for the acceleration phase in the research proposal?

A No, you do not. Please give the project description for the 2 years and 6 months in the research proposal.

(3) Execution of Research Cost

Q I am a JSPS special researcher, but if I am selected, I can apply for "Additional budget support such as research assistant (RA) to ACT-X student (doctor / master) researcher". ?

A A student (DC) can apply, but a non-student PD (PD) cannot. Please check with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science to confirm if there is no problem applying for ACT-X from the position of a Research Fellow (DC).

(4) Employment of Researchers with Doctoral Degrees

Q Under the ACT-X program, is it possible to employ another researcher with a doctoral degree (a postdoc)?

A Under the ACT-X program, it is not possible to create a research team including postdocs. However, postdocs can be employed as research assistants to support the efforts of a PI.

6. Items for ACT-X (Applications by Students)

(1) Regarding the Affiliated Institution at the time of Application

Q I am a student but I am conducting research at a research institution different from my university. In this case, which affiliation should I use when applying?

A Please apply under the affiliation of the institution where the ACT-X commissioned research funds will actually be executed. JST will sign the research commission contract with the institution that will execute the ACT-X commissioned research funds. Coordinate with your university and the research institution you belong to on where the ACT-X research funds will be executed in case you are selected. If you plan to execute the ACT-X commissioned research funds at an institution different from your university, apply under the affiliation of that other institution. In this case, ensure that the contents of the confirmation form are verified and submitted in collaboration with an equivalent supervisor at the said institution. Additionally, after being selected, the relevant position at that institution is required for signing the commissioned research contract. Please note that if such a position is not granted, the commissioned research contract cannot be concluded, and ACT-X research cannot be conducted.

Q I am a working doctoral student. Should I apply under the affiliation of my university or my company?

A You can apply under either affiliation, but please apply under the affiliation of the institution where the ACT-X commissioned research funds will actually be executed. If you apply under your university's affiliation, submission of a confirmation form is also required. Please note that the purpose of the ACT-X research areas is to foster and produce young researchers, and aligning with this purpose is one of the selection criteria.

(2) Preliminary Discussions with your affiliated Institution

Q I am a student. Is there anything that I have to discuss with the university I am affiliated to with the course of making an application?

A First of all, it is necessary that the institution with which you are affiliated can conclude a Research Contract with JST. Please refer to the following web page to see the format for the Research Contract:

<https://www.jst.go.jp/contract/index2.html>

For the detail, refer “4.2.6 Proposal Submission Requirements”

Furthermore, as stated in Special Clause 4 of Appendix 8-2, it is essential that an understanding is required between the affiliated institution and you regarding the treatment of any discoveries etc. that are made.

Furthermore, it is stipulated that the responsibility for the management or, should it arise, any misuse of research funds lies with not only with you but also with your academic supervisors under the Research Contract. Your academic supervisors are required to submit a memorandum of confirmation giving their consent for the above, and you must submit the memorandum together with the research proposal.

The form of memorandum of confirmation can be downloaded from the following website. You and your academic supervisor are requested to sign the document, save it in a PDF format and submit it together with the research proposal via e-Rad.

<https://www.jst.go.jp/kisoken/boshuu/teian/en/top/ryoiki.html>

※Please click the name of Research Area which you are going to apply. Forms can be downloaded from “How to apply” section on the website

(3) Continuation of ACT-X Research after Taking Up Employment

Q I am a student. If I become employed by a company etc. midway through my research, can I continue with the ACT-X research?

A In order to continue pursuing your ACT-X research you need to obtain the consent of your place of employment for simultaneously carrying out the work of your employers and the ACT-X research. Moreover, if the place where

you conduct your research is your place of employment, a Research Contract has to be drawn up between your employers and JST. You can continue to carry on your ACT-X research when your employer's consent to both of these conditions have been obtained.

(4) Description in the Research Contract in the case that the PI does not have the authority to execute the Research Cost

Q I am a student. After discussions with my institution, it has become clear that I am unable to have the authority to execute contract research funds and I cannot become a party to the Research Contract. In that case, who will be listed in the Research Contract as the person conducting the research?

A The names of the academic supervisor etc., as research manager, and the applicant (student), as research leader, will both be listed in the Research Contract.

(5) Graduation during the ACT-X Research Period

Q I am a student. I am going to graduate during my 2.5 year research period. In this case, should I just conduct research work before graduation?

A Please accomplish your 2.5 year research period. Consult with your academic supervisors to obtain academic post and continue your research work. If you worked hard to obtain academic post but failed and became difficult to continue ACT-X research, please immediately consult with JST.

(6) Responsibility of Academic Supervisors

Q I am an academic supervisor. One of my students is considering applying for the ACT-X program and I would like to know to what extent academic supervisors are responsible for it.

A Under the Research Contract between JST and the affiliated institution to which the student is affiliated, academic supervisors are held responsible for the management of contract research costs and any misuse of them as a "research implementation manager". If the student graduates before he/she finishes the research, you are requested for consideration as much as possible so that they can continue the ACT-X research after graduation.

(7) Registration of students in e-Rad

Q I am a student. How can I acquire a researcher ID for e-Rad?

A 1. Confirm that the affiliated institution can conclude Research Contract with JST. (There is another Research Contract prescribed for the case in which a student is the main researcher.)

2. Have the secretariat of the affiliated institution confirm whether it allows you to acquire a research ID for e-Rad. If not, consider methods acceptable to the organization, including the following:

- (1) Use the ID of a guiding instructor for application.
- (2) Acquire a researcher ID as “a researcher not affiliated with any organization”

<https://www.e-rad.go.jp/en/>

Q I am a student. A guiding instructor has approved for me to make a proposal to ACT-X and to sign a confirmation document. However, the university I attend does not approve for a student to possess a researcher ID for e-Rad, whether the student is affiliated with the university or not. Therefore, I am studying how to make a proposal using the ID of the guiding instructor. Are there any precautions concerning the submission of a proposal to e-Rad?

A1 When you use the ID of a guiding instructor for application, input information on yourself instead of information on the guiding instructor in [individual item] tab (JST makes various contacts with the proposer on the basis of the information). => See the figure below.

The screenshot shows the e-Rad application interface. The '個別項目' (Individual Item) tab is highlighted with a red box. A red callout box points to this tab with the text: **When a student uses the ID of a guiding instructor for application, please input information of the student applicant (not the guiding instructor) in the “Entries specific to the program” tab.**

The form fields visible include:

- 所属区分 (Affiliation) with a red '必須' (Required) label.
- 所属機関 (Affiliated Institution) with radio button options: 国立大学法人、大学共同利用機関法人、私立大学、特定非営利活動法人、国立研究開発法人、独立行政法人、公立試験研究機関、民間企業、その他.
- 所属部署 (Department)
- 役職 (Position)
- 連絡先区分 (Contact Category)
- 連絡先郵便番号 (半角英数字) (Contact Postal Code)
- 連絡先住所 (Contact Address)
- 連絡先電話番号 (半角英数字) (Contact Phone Number)
- E-mailアドレス (E-mail Address) with a red '必須' (Required) label.

A2 Definition of efforts in case of students is different from a usual definition (ratio of involvement time to the total work time per year). The former means the “ratio of time spent on ACT-X research to weekly 40 hours.” Follow this definition for input in the proposal. However, input of an intact efforts value of the proposal in e-Rad imposes pressure on the ratio of guiding instructor’s efforts on e-Rad possibly influencing on managing instructors’ efforts by the university. Properly make adjustment in such a case, such as inputting the smallest possible value (1%) in e-Rad. => See the figure below.

基本情報 **研究経費・研究組織** 個別項目 応募・受入状況

研究経費

年度ごとの経費の登録を行います。
「1.費目ごとの上下限」

1.費目ごとの上限

	上限	下限
直接経費	500,000千円	(設定なし)
間接経費	(設定なし)	-

2.年度別経費内訳 (単位:千円)

	2018年度	2019年度	2020年度	20	合計
直接経費					
間接経費					

研究組織

1.申請経 (初年度)
「1.申請経 (初年度)」
ここで入力した経費

直接経費
間接経費

2.研究組織情報
課題に参加するメンバーと、研究メンバーごとの研究経費初年度を入力して、
「研究者ごとの金額合計」に反映されます。

行の追加

研究者を検索	研究者番号 氏名	研究機関 部署/職階 <small>必須</small>	専門分野 学位 役割分担 <small>必須</small>	直接経費 間接経費 (千円) <small>必須</small>	エフ ォ ー ト (%) <small>必須</small>	閲覧・ 編集権限	削除	移動
代 表 者	10000142 基礎研 市ヶ谷 (キンクン イチ 方ヤ)	独立行政法人科学技術振興 研究部 主査/その他	なし	0 千円 0 千円				

行の追加

研究組織内の連絡事項を登録する

▼ 任意項目を表示

[Research Cost, Research Organization] tab

**When a student uses the ID of a guiding instructor for application, use 1%, for convenience, as efforts ratio to minimize the influence on guiding instructor's actual efforts.
(Input the student's actual efforts in the text of a proposal document.)**

(8) Intellectual property right related to inventions by students

Q I am in charge of contracts for a research organization. A student of this university is considering a proposal to ACT-X. The university has a stipulation in place that the intellectual property right related to invention by a student belongs to the student him/herself, which makes it impossible for the right to belong to the university.

On the other hand, the Research Contract (Appendix 8-2) of JST states that “a contract research organization takes measures for the intellectual property right related to contract research achievement to belong to the contract research organization.” The provision does not agree with the stipulation by the university. Is the student of this university not allowed to make a proposal to ACT-X in such a situation?

A ACT-X believes that an intellectual property right for invention by a student researcher not employed by a university belongs to the university in principle. However, it is possible for the intellectual property right to belong to the student in case the university has such a rule that an intellectual property right related to research achievement in ACT-X must belong to the student. It is possible also for the student to apply a proposal to ACT-X. In that case, however, the student needs to submit a “confirmation document” of agreement to (1) and (2) below in addition to provisions of agreement in an ordinary “confirmation document.” A confirmation document for such a case (a special form) is prepared separately. Contact rp-info@jst.go.jp to ask for the special form.

- (1) A student has the same obligations as those of OTSU (B) in articles 2-7 of “intellectual property provisions” of Research Contract, separate prescription 4, when an intellectual property right related to invention obtained as research achievement in ACT-X belongs to the student.
- (2) Considering universities’ recent view to inventions by students during their employment on a contract job, such as “About how to handle inventions at universities (Study Committee for Risk Management in Collaboration between Industry and University of Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology),” there may be cases in the future in which an intellectual property right related to contract research achievement belongs to the affiliated institution. The affiliated institution who decided that the intellectual property right will belong to the organization, should follow the duties stipulated in “intellectual property provisions,” Research Contract, separate prescription 4.