Empowering Science, Inspiring Futures

JST Press Release #1848

May 12, 2026
Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)

JST Opens Call for Proposals under a New Funding Program on AI for Science, ARiSE (AI to Redesign Scientific Exploration)

JST is pleased to announce an open call for research proposals under a new funding program on AI for Science, called AI to Redesign Scientific Exploration (ARiSE), starting on May 12, 2026.

This program serves as a flagship initiative to lead the concrete actions outlined in the Basic Strategic Policy for Promoting AI for Science (established by MEXT on March 31, 2026; hereinafter “Strategic Policy”). It aims to promote innovative R&D by generating world-leading scientific outcomes through focused investment in strategic targets that leverage Japan’s strengths in AI for Science, as well as through strategic international collaboration with top-level research institutions and researchers worldwide.

Based on the Basic Policy for ARiSE Program (established by MEXT in April 2026; hereinafter “ARiSE Basic Policy”), proposals are invited in two research types: “Strategic Target-Driven” and “International/Convergent”.

The “Strategic Target-Driven” research type seeks proposals that aim to achieve the strategic targets defined in the ARiSE Basic Policy through the integrated development of scientific foundation models, AI agents, and next-generation AI-driven laboratory systems.

The “International/Convergent” research type covers all research fields, including emerging and interdisciplinary areas and priority fields defined in the Strategic Policy, and seeks proposals to promote innovative R&D on advancement of AI technologies for scientific research through strategic international collaboration.

Overall coordination and management of the program will be conducted by the Program Director, while the Program Officers will oversee the selection, promotion, and evaluation of R&D projects in each research type. The selection process will be carried out by the Program Officers with support from advisors (external experts).

Application Period

May 12, 2026 – June 30, 2026 (noon, in Japan time)

For details on the call for proposals, please refer to the attached document and the following website (mainly in Japanese):

https://www.jst.go.jp/program/arise/koubo.html

Appendix

Overview of the ARiSE Call for Proposals

Contact

IMABAYASHI Fumie
Department of Research Project (ARiSE Group)
Japan Science and Technology Agency
K’s Gobancho, 7 Gobancho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0076
E-mail: arise.koubo@jst.go.jp

“Empowering Science, Inspiring Futures”

Our world faces unprecedented global challenges - such as climate change, energy crises, and emerging infectious diseases - that demand innovative solutions. JST will rise to these challenges through “Science and Technology,” as a national research and development agency that plays a central role in implementing Japan’s science, technology, and innovation policy. We support fundamental research and startups to create new value, develop R&D strategies, foster the next generation of talent, disseminate vital information, and manage the Japan University Fund. Like a compass guiding ships through turbulent waters, JST will chart the way towards a vibrant and secure future by empowering science through a multifaceted approach.

Appendix

Overview of the ARiSE Call for Proposals

1. Purpose and Overview of the ARiSE

JST launched ARiSE, a new funding program on AI for Science, to promote R&D that transforms the research process by developing and integrating scientific infrastructure systems, including AI foundation models grounded in scientific theory, AI agents, and next-generation AI-driven robotic systems, to address previously unsolved scientific questions. As a flagship program, it also aims to accelerate Japan's AI for Science initiatives and enhance its global presence through strategic international collaboration with leading allied and like-minded countries.

To this end, the ARiSE requires joint leadership by researchers specializing in AI (including mathematical and systems development) and researchers from application domains, who will serve as Project leader and Project co-leader from proposal through implementation. Proposals are expected to include plans for the use of computational resources necessary to achieve the proposed R&D, as well as strategies and management plans for handling research data. It also welcomes projects that collaborate with researchers affiliated with overseas institutions who have established research systems and secured funding to conduct R&D in their home countries.

***Please note that this call is open to Japan-based researchers.

2. ARiSE Management

(1) Program Director

AOKI Takafumi, Executive Vice President, Tohoku University

(2) Program Officers

"Strategic Target-Driven" research type

KUROHASHI Sadao, Director, National Institute of Information (NII)

"International/ Convergence" research type

UEDA Naonori, Deputy Director, RIKEN Center for Advanced Intelligence Project

3. "Strategic Target-Driven" Research Type

This research type call invites proposals that contribute to achieving the strategic targets set forth in the ARiSE Basic Policy. In consideration of the project duration, proposals should build on initiatives that have already progressed beyond the preparation stage and have entered into initial implementation or pilot phases.

Scope of Research	Total Project Budget (including indirect cost)	Number of Projects to be Selected*
<u>T1 "Strategic target 1"</u>: To enable Japanese companies to rapidly produce materials essential to global supply chains in the future, this target seeks to realize AI-driven materials development systems with the potential to increase the speed of new materials discovery tenfold		

compared to current levels:		
T1-1 “Strategic target 1-1” Proposals should aim to develop materials science foundation models and AI agent systems that transform inference, along with their international benchmarks, and to establish frameworks and secure funding[*1] for the continuous accumulation of computational and experimental data beyond the project period.	Approx. JPY 3 billion	Approx. 1 project
T1-2 “Strategic target 1-2” Proposals should aim to integrate component technologies—including materials science foundation models, AI agent systems, orchestration software, and advanced research equipment—to enable human–AI co-creation[*2], and to develop and demonstrate international benchmarks for AI-driven materials development systems capable of inference, planning, autonomous experimentation, and report generation. Proposals are also expected to present a pathway toward securing private-sector investment[*3].	Approx. JPY 3 billion	Approx. 1 project
T1-3 “Strategic target 1-3” Proposals should aim to develop AI models and AI agent systems for specific materials, along with their international benchmarks, and to undertake prototype development of innovative material candidates. Proposals are also expected to include plans for securing the resources necessary to sustain development beyond the project period.	Approx. JPY 1 billion	Approx. 4 projects
<u>T2 “Strategic Target 2”</u> This target aims to develop, within three years, bio-generative foundation models that enable Japan to maintain international competitiveness in high-precision and efficient bioproduct development and drug discovery, including through the realization of digital twin models of cells, biological systems, plants, animals, and human organs. Proposals are expected to leverage Japan’s strengths to promote large-scale data acquisition and the development of AI-ready datasets, including through AI-driven laboratory systems.	Approx. JPY 2 billion	3 or 4 projects
<u>T3 “Strategic Target 3”</u> This target aims to develop and demonstrate state-of-the-art AI agent systems and AI foundation models to enhance the operation and utilization of Japan’s world-leading large-scale research facilities and instruments, through optimized operation for high utilization, stability, and measurement performance; automation and autonomy for high-throughput experimentation; and improved data analysis, hypothesis validation, and experimental design using AI-driven digital twin models and high-precision simulations. Proposals are expected to leverage these technologies to advance efficient measurement, experimentation, and large-scale data analysis.	Approx. JPY 2 billion	1 or 2 projects

*The number of projects to be selected may vary depending on the total budget, the results of the selection process, and other relevant factors.
*1 In addition to the research funding from JST, funding may also be obtained from sources such as joint R&D funding from industry, membership fees, and user fees. This also applies to T1-3 "Strategic Target 1-3."
*2 Human–AI Co-scientist
*3 Funding levels equivalent to seed to Series A stages

4. "Internationa/Convernegce" Research Type

"International/Convergence" research type covers all fields, including emerging and interdisciplinary areas as well as priority fields defined in the Strategic Policy, and promotes innovative R&D and advancement of tools for AI for Science through strategic international collaboration with leading allied and like-minded countries.

In particular, rather than merely applying existing AI technologies, this call supports R&D aimed at solving previously unsolved scientific questions by embedding domain-specific theories, laws, structural knowledge, and constraints into AI, and integrating them into learning and inference processes to create innovative AI technologies, including AI-driven robotic systems.

Scope of Research	Total Project Budget (including indirect cost)	Number of Projects to be Selected*
All research areas (not limited) *4,*5	Approx. JPY 200 million*6	Approx. 20 projects

*The number of projects to be selected may vary depending on the total budget, the results of the selection process, and other relevant factors.
*4 Please specify the field of expertise of the researcher(s) in the application domain of AI ("domain researchers"). Reviewers will be selected with consideration of these areas of expertise.
*5 Proposals involving collaboration with researchers affiliated with overseas institutions who have established research systems and secured funding in their home countries ("international collaborators") are also eligible. For such proposals, their track record and collaboration framework will be considered under criterion (d) "Implementation Structure."
*6 If necessary to achieve the project objectives, a total budget exceeding JPY 200 million may be proposed at the application stage or additionally upon achieving specific milestones (typically within about one year). The total budget is capped at JPY 650 million for the entire project period, including indirect costs, and its appropriateness will be evaluated in the selection process.

5. Application Period

From May 12, 2026 to June 30, Noon in Japan time

6. Project Research Period

Tentatievly from October 2026 to March 2029 (approx. 2.5 years)

7. How to apply

The Japan-based PIs are requried to submit the application documents and register the required information in the Cross Ministerial R&D Management System (e-Rad, https://www.e-rad.go.jp/).

8. Inquries about Call for Proposals

Department of Research Project (ARiSE group)
Japan Science and Technology Agency
E-mail: arise.koubo@jst.go.jp

END