

**Earthquake Research Institute
The University of Tokyo**

**Joint Usage/Research Program
Q&A**

(Frequently Asked Questions)

September 10, 2026

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To Users

This Q&A has been prepared mainly to answer frequently asked questions concerning applications for and use of the Joint Usage/Research Program of the Earthquake Research Institute (ERI), The University of Tokyo, and to supplement the information provided in the call for proposals and application guidelines. We hope it will help you use the program more efficiently. Please note that the contents are subject to change without prior notice.

Questions on Research Teams and Eligibility

Q-1 Please explain the composition of the research team (Principal Investigator, Researchers, etc.).

A-1 The research team for Joint Research Project consists of the “Principal Investigator,” “Researchers,” “Research Assistants,” and an “ERI Faculty Contact.” The ERI Faculty Contact must be selected from faculty members whose primary affiliation is ERI. Please obtain the faculty member’s consent in advance and enter their name and other information in the research-team section. If some participants cannot be identified by the research start date, enter their institution, position, number of persons, and other information to the extent known. Please contact the Joint Usage Office as soon as the participants have been determined.

Example: Three Research Assistants planned / Three graduate students planned as Researchers.

Q-2 Can students participate in the research?

A-2 Graduate students may participate in all categories, with the permission of their academic supervisor, as persons equivalent to Researchers. They may also apply as Principal Investigators for use of data and equipment (excluding Designated Equipment) and for the Challenging Research category of Supercomputer Joint Research Project. As a rule, undergraduate students may not participate in any category. However, when applying for a project to be adopted in the following fiscal year, an undergraduate student who is expected to enter graduate school the following April may be included as a prospective graduate-student participant. State in the application that the student is expected to enter graduate school, and submit a Letter of Consent signed by the head of the student’s institution after enrollment. Undergraduate students may nevertheless be paid an honorarium for assigned work (see Q-35), or may be added to the research team as a “Research Assistant” at the request of the Principal Investigator and receive travel expenses (see Q-3).

Q-3 What is a “Research Assistant”?

A-3 A “Research Assistant” is a person who performs assigned supporting tasks, such as analysis or surveys, under the direction of the Principal Investigator. Unlike Researchers who conduct research independently, technical staff, technical assistants, and undergraduate students may be included in the research team as Research Assistants. The Principal Investigator should apply to add such a person only when their assistance is judged necessary for carrying out the research. The Research Assistant category was introduced in FY2017 to improve the usability of ERI Joint Research Project, and travel expenses may be paid from Joint Research funds. If the person’s name or other details have not been determined at the time of application, state this in the application and be sure to notify the Joint Usage Office once the details are confirmed. The same applies when a Research Assistant is added after the research period has begun. A Letter of Consent signed by the head of the Research Assistant’s institution is also required.

Q-4 Can a person in a fixed-term position apply as a Principal Investigator?

A-4 Yes. Regardless of whether the position is fixed-term, anyone who meets the eligibility requirements may apply as a Principal Investigator. If your institutional affiliation changes, please submit a new Letter of Consent signed by the head of your new institution.

Q-5 Can I apply if I have no institutional affiliation? What should I do about the Letter of Consent?

A-5 As a rule, persons without an institutional affiliation may not apply, except for emeritus professors. If an emeritus professor can obtain a Letter of Consent from the institution that granted the emeritus title, please submit a Letter of Consent signed by the head of that institution. If such a letter cannot be issued, a separate form signed by the applicant or the Principal Investigator must be submitted. Please contact the Joint Usage Office.

Q-6 If I change my institutional affiliation while participating in Joint Research Project, do I need to resubmit the Letter of Consent?

A-6 Yes. If the researcher changes institutional affiliation, please promptly submit a new Letter of Consent signed by the head of the new institution.

Q-7 If the head of my institution changes, do researchers at that institution need to resubmit the Letter of Consent under the name of the new head?

A-7 No. If the researcher's own affiliation has not changed, there is no need to resubmit the Letter of Consent solely because the head of the institution has changed.

Q-8 Can technical staff and similar personnel participate in Joint Usage/Research?

A-8 Yes. Technical staff, technical assistants, and undergraduate students may participate as "Research Assistants." Research Assistants perform research-support and auxiliary tasks under the direction of a Researcher listed in the research team. When adding such persons to the research team, submit a Letter of Consent signed by the head of each person's institution to the Joint Usage Office. A Confirmation of Research Ethics is not required for them.

Questions on Applications

Q-9 May the Letter of Consent be submitted after notification of acceptance?

A-9 The Letter of Consent confirms the head of the institution's approval not only for participation in Joint Research Project but also for submitting the application. Therefore, the Principal Investigator must submit it at the time of application (within two weeks). The letter should state the applicant's position and year of study (for students) as of the application date. Participants other than the Principal Investigator may submit their Letters of Consent after acceptance. No Letter of Consent is required, either at application or after acceptance, for the "Workshop/Symposium" category. If your affiliation changes after submission, obtain the consent of the head of your new institution and submit a new Letter of Consent (see Q-6).

Q-10 Who is meant by the "Head of Institution" on the Letter of Consent?

A-10 This means the president, chairperson, or other head of the legal entity, or, when authority to grant consent has been delegated, the person to whom that authority has been delegated (e.g., dean of a graduate school or director of a research institute).

Q-11 Must the Letter of Consent and the Confirmation of Research Ethics be submitted for each application?

A-11 A Letter of Consent must be submitted every fiscal year for each application/project. ERI members are exempt. A Confirmation of Research Ethics is not required from persons who submitted one within the past five years, members of The University of Tokyo, or undergraduate students, technical staff, and technical assistants participating as Research Assistants.

Q-12 Can the official institutional seal be omitted from the Letter of Consent?

A-12 Yes. Since FY2022, the official institutional seal may be omitted. If the seal is omitted, obtain the necessary internal approval at your institution and submit the letter with an official document number.

Q-13 For what purposes may ERI facilities, laboratory equipment, observation equipment, data, and materials be used?

A-13 They may be used only for educational and research purposes. Use for commercial purposes is not permitted.

Q-14 What procedures are required to use ERI facilities, laboratory equipment, observation equipment, data, and research materials?

A-14 Applications are accepted for items listed in Appendix F (Facilities, Observation Equipment, Laboratory Equipment, etc.), Appendix D (Data and Research Materials), and Appendix M (Designated Equipment). These lists are available on the ERI website page for “Use of Facilities, Data, etc.” Before applying, discuss the proposed use with the person responsible for the facility or item (the ERI Faculty Contact). Then access the “Application Form for the Use of Facilities, Equipment, Data and Research Materials” from “Details of Application Procedures” on that page, complete the required fields, and submit the form. If you do not know how to contact the ERI Faculty Contact, please contact the Joint Usage Office.

Q-15 Can facilities, laboratory equipment, observation equipment, data, and research materials be used across fiscal years?

A-15 Yes, use may extend over multiple fiscal years, but a separate application is required for each fiscal year. Example: For continuous observation from March 2 to April 30, submit separate applications for March 2–31 and April 1–30.

Q-16 Some research categories may be continued for up to three years. What procedures are required to apply for continuation?

A-16 As with ordinary applications, an application is required each fiscal year. For “Specific Joint Research Project (B)”, register the project by around the end of July each year, submit participation applications by around the end of October, and submit the research plan by around mid-November. For “Joint Research Project on the Elucidation and Prediction of Earthquakes and Volcanic Eruptions”, submit the application by around the end of October each year.

Q-17 Can I revise the information in my application or replace uploaded files?

A-17 During the application period, you may log in to the Web Application System and revise the application or replace files from “Application Status” on the top page. After the application period closes, revisions and file replacements are not possible. Please refer to the Web Application System manual for detailed instructions.

Q-18 What should I do if I wish to add new researchers or other participants after submitting the application?

A-18 If you wish to add researchers or other participants due to personnel changes or similar circumstances, the Principal Investigator must submit a Notification of Change. When adding a new member to the research team of Specific Joint Research Project (A), (B), or (C) after acceptance, a separate participation application is not required. Newly added members must submit a Letter of Consent signed by the head of their institution (not required for ERI members) and a Confirmation of Research Ethics (not required if submitted within the past five years, for members of The University of Tokyo, or for undergraduate students, technical staff, and technical assistants serving as Research Assistants).

Q-19 What is the definition of “open” and “closed” in the Workshop/Symposium application form?

A-19 A meeting is “open” when participation is permitted to members of the general public as well as members of the research team, and “closed” when participation is restricted. In principle, Workshops/Symposia should be open. If special circumstances require a closed meeting, consult the Joint Usage Office in advance.

Q-20 Can publication fees and travel expenses for attending academic conferences be requested and paid from the project funds?

A-20 Yes, but only when the expense is necessary for carrying out the research and presentation of the results contributes to further development of the research. The need for publication fees or conference travel expenses must have been stated in the original research plan.

Questions on Expenditure of Funds

Q-21 Can travel expenses or other costs be paid to researchers or others who are not listed in the research team?

A-21 No. Travel expenses and other costs cannot be paid from these funds to persons not listed in the research team. If it becomes necessary to pay such expenses to a new researcher or other participant, submit a Notification of Change to the Joint Usage Office in advance, explaining why the person must be added to the research team. After the Joint Usage Committee approves the change, submit a Letter of Consent signed by the head of that person's institution.

Q-22 If a joint research project with an allocated budget is accepted, are the research funds transferred to the Principal Investigator's institution?

A-22 No. Research funds are not transferred to the Principal Investigator's institution. The funds are managed by ERI and are spent through the ERI Faculty Contact designated in the application. For "Specific Joint Research Project (A-01)" and "Joint Research Project on the Elucidation and Prediction of Earthquakes and Volcanic Eruptions", the ERI Faculty Contact is the Planning Division of Council for Advancing Earthquake and Volcano Research. After acceptance, administrative staff will provide information on the contact point and expenditure procedures.

Q-23 Can travel expenses be paid in advance?

A-23 As a rule, advance payment of travel expenses (payment before travel) is not available. However, exceptions may be made, for example, when cash must be provided during the trip to a traveler coming from overseas, including an invited visitor.

Q-24 Can I claim reimbursement for out-of-pocket payments such as rental-car expenses?

A-24 Yes. However, reimbursement of out-of-pocket payments is permitted only when the expense is minor and advance payment is necessary and unavoidable, such as when failure to make the advance payment would seriously hinder the execution of the work. Depending on the expense, documents in addition to a receipt may be required. Always consult the ERI Faculty Contact or the relevant administrative staff in advance. No delegated inspection procedure is required for reimbursement claims.

Q-25 Can equipment be purchased?

A-25 No. Equipment cannot be purchased. An item with a useful life of one year or more and an acquisition cost (including tax) of JPY 100,000 or more per item or set is treated as equipment. However, batteries, reagents, analytical gases, software, and similar items may be treated as consumables even when they cost JPY 100,000 or more.

Q-26 Can consumable supplies be purchased?

A-26 Yes, if the accepted project is in a category for which consumable purchases are permitted: Specific Joint Research Project (B), General Joint Research Project, Joint Research Project on the Elucidation and Prediction of Earthquakes and Volcanic Eruptions, or Joint Research Project on High-Energy Particle Geophysics. Batteries, reagents, analytical gases, software, and similar items may be treated as consumables even if they cost JPY 100,000 or more; consult us in advance if uncertain. As a rule, however, basic software that should be provided by the applicant's institution, such as security software, office software, and operating systems, cannot be purchased.

Q-27 Can basic items such as a PC costing less than JPY 100,000 and treated as a consumable be purchased?

A-27 Yes, if the application states why the purchase is necessary and the review determines that it is required to carry out the research. If the need is not stated in the application, a PC, like a desk or similar item, is regarded as basic infrastructure for the research environment rather than an item whose use is limited to the accepted Joint Research Project, and therefore cannot be purchased. Please have your institution provide such items.

Q-28 What procedures should I follow for travel expenses, service contracts, or purchasing consumables for the research?

A-28 Contact the ERI Faculty Contact or the relevant administrative staff once the travel dates are fixed, or once the scope of a service or the consumables to be purchased has been largely determined. Administrative procedures may take time, so please consult well in advance.

Q-29 When purchasing consumables, can they be delivered directly to the institution of the Principal Investigator or another participant (i.e., outside ERI)?

A-29 Yes. However, if ERI faculty cannot directly inspect the delivered items and cannot verify delivery by photographs or other means, a procedure must be completed in advance to delegate the inspection to a person at the receiving institution. A notice concerning delegation of inspection duties will be sent together with the acceptance notice. If you wish to have items delivered directly, follow the procedures described in that notice.

Q-30 For a workshop/symposium, can Joint Research funds be used for food and beverages such as tea, coffee, or social-gathering expenses?

A-30 As a rule, no. Expenses for food and beverages, including water and tea, cannot be paid from Joint Research funds. If necessary, consider using other available funds, such as ERI operating funds (including the ERI Faculty Contact's basic research funds) or external funds. The same applies to meetings held under categories other than Workshop/Symposium. If there are special circumstances, consult the Joint Usage Office in advance.

Q-31 Can Workshop/Symposium funds be used for meeting-operation costs other than travel expenses?

A-31 Yes. Payments may be made for honorarium for simple labor and service fees (excluding lecturer honoraria) necessary for the operation of workshops/symposia. Examples include: creating the meeting website; managing advance registration and operating the website during the event; reception services and pre-event venue setup; responding to inquiries; arranging airline tickets for invited speakers; and providing visa support services. Venue fees may be paid only when the application clearly states the need to hold the meeting outside ERI and the proposal is accepted on that basis. Multiple companies may be contracted for services when necessary.

Q-32 Can Workshop/Symposium funds be used to prepare an electronic report?

A-32 Yes. Printing-related expenses may cover not only printing and delivery of paper copies but also service fees for preparing electronic reports and similar materials.

Q-33 Can a Workshop/Symposium be held online?

A-33 Yes, if the application clearly states that the meeting will be held online and the proposal is accepted. If you wish to use a microphone/speaker system or camera required for online meetings, contact the Joint Usage Office. Workshop/Symposium funds cannot be used to purchase microphones, cameras, or similar devices for individual participants. For other research categories, such items may be purchased only when the application states the need and the purchase is approved at the time of acceptance.

Items available for loan: YAMAHA YVC-R1000 microphone/speaker system.

Q-34 Can honoraria be paid for instruction, advice, or lectures?

A-34 No. Honoraria for instruction, advice, lectures, or similar activities cannot be paid. Only honoraria for simple labor maybe paid from this research funding. (see Q-35).

Q-35 Can honoraria be paid to students or others at the Principal Investigator's institution for tasks such as analysis?

A-35 Yes. Students and others who perform tasks such as analysis may be paid honoraria for simple labor within the limits specified below. A Letter of Consent is not required in this case. If the person is listed in the research team as a "Research Assistant" (see Q-3), travel expenses may also be paid. Advance procedures are required for the payment of honoraria. Please contact the ERI Faculty Contact or relevant administrative staff at least one

month before the planned work is carried out.

Limits: work must be no more than 8 hours per day and 30 hours per week, except for field experiments and similar work; no more than 22 days per month and 60 days per fiscal year; and the maximum continuous period for the same person is six months when working 10 days or fewer per month, or two months when working more than 10 days per month.

Q-36 Can researchers based outside Japan use project funds, for example to purchase supplies?

A-36 Yes. Travel expenses to ERI may be paid for researchers and others affiliated with institutions outside Japan who are listed in the research team. Equipment cannot be purchased, but consumables costing less than JPY 100,000 when converted into Japanese yen may be purchased. Batteries, reagents, analytical gases, software, and similar items may in some cases be purchased as consumables even if they cost JPY 100,000 or more (see Q-26). If ERI faculty cannot verify delivery by inspecting the actual item or photographs, a delegated inspection procedure is required. Because this procedure takes time, consult the Joint Usage Office no later than one month before the planned purchase date.

Q-37 When are payments made for consumables, services, travel expenses, and other costs?

A-37 For consumables and services, payment is made on the 25th of the month following the date of delivery and inspection. For travel expenses paid by invoice to a travel agency or similar provider, payment is made on the 25th of the month following receipt of the invoice. Payments to travelers are generally made every Wednesday (payment may take about one month after receipt of the travel report). Honoraria are paid on the 17th of the month following the month in which the work is completed.

Q-38 Can the budget breakdown of an accepted joint research project be changed?

A-38 Yes. If a change is necessary to carry out the research and does not depart from the research objectives or the intent of the research plan described in the research proposal or application document, the budget breakdown may be changed with the approval of the ERI Faculty Contact. As a rule, however, overseas travel expenses or purchases of high-cost consumables not included in the original application are not permitted. Annual membership fees for academic societies cannot be paid.

Q-39 Is there a deadline for using the funds?

A-39 Funds must be used within the fiscal year for which the project was accepted. If there is an unspent balance during the fiscal year (around December or February), you may be asked to provide information on your planned use of the remaining funds.

Q-40 Can travel expenses be paid to emeritus professors and researchers who are not affiliated with universities or public research institutions?

A-40 Yes. Travel expenses may be paid to persons listed in the research team, including emeritus professors. They cannot be paid to persons who are not listed in the research team (see Q-21).

Q-41 Are there restrictions on paying travel expenses to participants in a Workshop/Symposium?

A-41 Travel expenses may be paid only to researchers and others who meet ERI's eligibility requirements for participation in Joint Usage/Research Program. If travel expenses are paid to an undergraduate student, the student must actively participate in the Workshop/Symposium, for example by giving an oral or poster presentation.

Q-42 Can postage and shipping expenses, such as courier charges, be paid?

A-42 Yes, but only for shipping documents, receipts, samples, equipment, and other items related to the joint research. When claiming the expense, submit a list stating the destination and purpose of each shipment together with the quotation, delivery note, and invoice.

Q-43 Can movable-property insurance premiums for observation equipment used in field surveys be paid?

A-43 Yes, if the insured equipment is owned by The University of Tokyo and is used for the Joint Usage/Research project concerned.

Q-44 Can unused funds be carried over to the next fiscal year?

A-44 No. Funds cannot be carried over to the following fiscal year. They must be used within the fiscal year for which the project was accepted.

Other Questions

Q-45 How should the support be acknowledged when publishing research results?

A-45 When publishing research results obtained through Joint Usage/Research Program, you must state in the acknowledgments or equivalent section that the work was supported by ERI Joint Usage/Research Program, together with the project code “20XX-X-XX.” When publishing results of Supercomputer Joint Research Project, also refer to the Information Technology Center’s guidance regarding acknowledgment of the Center.

Reference: <https://www.cc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/faq/general.php#RESULT>

Example (Project Code. 2009-G-01)

English: This study was supported by ERI JURP 2009-G-01 at Earthquake Research Institute, the University of Tokyo.

Japanese: 本研究（研究集会）は、東京大学地震研究所共同利用（2009-G-01）の支援を受けました。

Q-46 If it becomes difficult to continue the research, is it sufficient to report this in the final report?

A-46 No. As soon as it becomes difficult to continue the research, promptly contact both the ERI Faculty Contact and the Joint Usage Office.

Q-47 What should I do if equipment is damaged or lost while in use?

A-47 If equipment or accessories are damaged or lost, promptly contact both the ERI Faculty Contact and the Joint Usage Office. As a rule, the person responsible for use must arrange for repair or replacement at their own responsibility. If a malfunction is identified after the equipment has been returned, you may be required to bear the repair costs. Insurance coverage through the user's institution is recommended to protect against possible damage to or loss of borrowed equipment.