

Mie University Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation Program
(MU-SPRING) Project
Application Guidelines for Student Support (for April 2026 Term)

MU-SPRING, selected by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), aims to provide financial support for living and research expenses to doctoral students with excellent qualities and abilities so that they will not let an opportunity go by for financial reasons, and to foster human resources who can contribute to science, technology and innovation in Japan by providing career development and growth contents. To promote the “TOKOWAKA project to nurture doctoral students by taking advantage of the value of Mie prefecture,” we will recruit students hoping to receive support as described below.

Please note that the notice of new SPRING screening results (dated March 13, 2024) we received from JST states that the program will be reviewed each year from fiscal 2027 based on various situations, including program administration, program implementation at university, and university fund profits and other budgetary conditions.

In connection with the review of the SPRING program*, international students who start receiving support in the fiscal year 2026 will receive support under the new program in the fiscal year 2027 and thereafter. Under the new program, financial research incentive (equivalent to living expenses) will not be granted to international students, so please keep this in mind when you apply.

1. Human Resources We Seek

Those who seek to make their dreams reality by taking advantage of their expertise and who are eager to take on the challenge of shaping the future of the world and Japan by demonstrating their creativity and out-of-box thinking while promoting cooperation and collaboration with other researchers and practitioners

2. Number of Students to be Recruited

April 2026 Term: 10 students (planned)

3. Eligibility for Application

Those who are currently enrolled (within the standard term of study) in a doctoral program of a graduate school or the Medical Life Sciences Program of the Graduate School of Medicine at Mie University as of October 2025, who have excellent qualities and abilities, and who meet all of the following requirements

(If a student no longer falls under any of the requirements, the student's status of being a support recipient will be revoked.)

- (1) An individual who is not a JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science) Research Fellow for Young Scientists
- (2) An individual who has not received a scholarship that is sufficient to cover his/her living expenses (¥2.4 million or more a year)
- (3) An individual who has not received a steady income (¥2.4 million or more a year), such as salary and executive compensation, from the University or the company, etc. he/she belongs to
- (4) An individual who is not an international student receiving support under the Japanese

government-sponsored scholarship program for foreign students.

4. Amount of Financial Support, etc.

- (1) Financial research incentive (equivalent to living expenses): ¥2.16 million a year (¥180,000 a month)

*No financial research incentive (equivalent to living expenses) will be granted to international students in the fiscal year 2027 and thereafter.

- (2) Research funding: ¥300,000 a year
- (3) Payment period: Three years within the standard term of study (four years for those enrolled in the Medical Life Sciences Program of the Graduate School of Medicine) [which may be subject to change]
- (4) Employment after completion: Those who were selected for SPRING in and before the fiscal year 2024 have been employed as assistant professors of the University; however, it is uncertain whether those who have been selected for SPRING in and after the fiscal year 2025 would be employed as assistant professors.

*To receive the financial support, international students must have come to Japan at the time of admission to the University.

[Financial research incentive]

The financial research incentive (equivalent to living expenses) is subject to taxation as miscellaneous income. Recipients need to file an income-tax return and make a tax payment in the following year when they received the financial research incentive. When a recipient obtains support from a person under a duty to provide support (parent, etc.), it is necessary to contact the company, etc. the support obligor is working for and tell the person in charge that the financial research incentive is treated as miscellaneous income.

5. Obligation of Support-Receiving Students (*In the case of failure to fulfill any of the following requirements, the student's status of being a support recipient may be revoked.)

Support-receiving students are required to:

- (1) Have a consciousness of receiving financial support and concentrate on studies and research;
- (2) In implementing their research, comply with relevant laws and regulations as well as the University's rules and regulations;
- (3) With regard to the treatment of intellectual property arising from the results of the research they engaged in, comply with the University's rules and regulations;
- (4) Participate in support programs that are implemented under this project;
- (5) Submit a performance report by the prescribed date of the fiscal year when they receive financial support;
- (6) Take the course(s) in research ethics designated by this project;
- (7) Register their profiles in the Japan Graduates Database (JGRAD) of the National Institute of Science and Technology Policy (NISTEP) and update their information even after completing their doctoral programs;
- (8) Cooperate in a more than 10-year follow-up survey regarding post-doctoral career that is conducted by the Japan Science and Technology Agency;
- (9) Register their profiles in a dedicated system operated by Coop-J consortium; and

(10) Agree to the releasing their names and research contents on the website, etc.

6. Selection Method

From among applicant students recommended by graduate schools, the selection committee, which has an independent initiative and perspective of project coordination, will make a selection through a review of the documents submitted and, if necessary, an interview, based on the following viewpoints:

- (1) Aspiration to take the lead in the future of Japan in terms of science, technology and innovation
- (2) International perspective
- (3) A balance of industry and academia from a regional viewpoint
- (4) Expansivity and social application of research
- (5) The ability to see things from a broader and higher perspective
- (6) Research in consideration of solving social issues for regional co-creation
- (7) Acceptance from various countries and regions, which fosters the value of diversity

7. Submission Documents

- MU-SPRING Application Form for Student Support (Form 2) (in either English or Japanese)
- Letter of Recommendation (Form 3) (Japanese language only)
- Research Plan (Form 4) (in either English or Japanese)
- Documents designated by graduate schools

8. Submission Deadline

April 2026 Term: MMM DD, 2026

9. Where to Submit

Please submit the required documents to the person in charge at the XXXX Office.

*About the review of the SPRING program:

- (i) Financial research incentive (¥180,000 a month) will be granted only to Japanese students, and not to international students.
- (ii) Eligible recipients of research funding (¥300,000 a year) will also include working students with stable income, in addition to Japanese students and international students.
- (iii) Weight will be placed on the support for excellent students.