**Call Guidelines for Research Fund for International Scientists in 2024**

Aiming at providing more research opportunities for and contributing to the career development of researchers at different academic stages, the Research Fund for International Scientists (hereinafter referred to as the RFIS) is set up by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) to support international scientists with foreign citizenship who are ready to conduct basic research in China’s mainland. The RFIS will also enhance the long-term, sustainable academic collaboration and exchange between Chinese and international scientists.

**I. Program Description**

**1. Types of Grant**

    The RFIS consists of three sub-types:

    (1) The Research Fund for International Young Scientists (RFIS-I)

    (2) The Research Fund for International Excellent Young Scientists (RFIS-II)

    (3) The Research Fund for International Senior Scientists (RFIS-III)

**2. Funding Areas**

The funding areas include: Mathematical and Physical Sciences(A), Chemical Sciences(B), Life Sciences(C), Earth Sciences(D), Engineering and Material Sciences(E), Information Sciences(F), Management Sciences(G), Health Sciences(H), and Interdisciplinary Sciences(T).

(1) When selecting the application code, please choose the secondary application code (in 4 digits);

(2) When filling in the application form, please enter accurate “key words”;

(3) The applications in interdisciplinary sciences can only be submitted to the Research Fund for International Excellent Young Scientists (RFIS-II) and the Research Fund for International Senior Scientists (RFIS-III). For the applicants of interdisciplinary sciences, please first choose from the division codes T01~T04, and then select at least two application codes from A-H according to the research content when filling in the application form. For detailed guidance on application codes, please refer to the “NSFC Guide to Programs 2024”.

**3. Funding Amount**

(1) For the **RFIS-I**, the direct cost is 200,000 RMB per year (per project) .

(2) For the **RFIS-II**, the direct cost is 400,000 RMB per year (per project) .

(3) For the **RFIS-III**, the direct cost is 800,000 RMB per year (per project) .

**4. Project Duration**

Applicants can apply for either one-year or two-year RFIS project. The one year project is expected to last from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025, while the two year project is expected to last from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2026.

**II. Eligibility**

The**RFIS**is aimed at international scientists who are ready to work at Chinese host institutions. The host institution must be based in China’s mainland and have registered at NSFC. Specific requirements for each sub-type of the **RFIS** are as follows:

**1. RFIS-I**

(1) Doctoral degree obtained within the past 6 years (Doctoral degree was obtained after January 1, 2018);

(2) Experience of conducting basic research or postdoctoral research;

(3) Commitment to work for no less than 9 months each year (calendar year) at the host institution during the implementation of the project;

(4) Compliance with Chinese laws and NSFC’s relevant rules and regulations while conducting research in China.

**2. RFIS-II**

(1) Doctoral degree completed within the past 15 year (Doctoral degree was obtained after January 1, 2009);

(2) Senior academic title;

(3) Experience of conducting basic research projects as Principal Investigator (PI);

(4) Commitment to work for no less than 9 months each year (calendar year) at the host institution during the implementation of the project;

(5) Compliance with Chinese laws and NSFC’s relevant rules and regulations while conducting research in China.

**3. RFIS-III**

(1) Senior academic title;

(2) Outstanding academic achievements and significant international influence;

(3) Commitment to work for no less than 9 months per year (calendar year) at the host institution during the implementation of the project;

(4) Compliance with Chinese laws and NSFC’s relevant rules and regulations while conducting research in China.

**III. Additional Requirements for Eligibility**

1. The applicant can only be granted for each sub type of the RFIS once.

2. The PI of an on-going grant of the RFIS cannot apply for a new RFIS project. The total number of application for the RFIS shall not exceed 1 for each year. If the applicant has submitted an application for any of the sub-types of the RFIS, the application shall not apply for the following programs in the same year:

Ø  Young Scientists Fund (YSF)

Ø  Excellent Young Scientists Fund (EYSF，including EYSF for scholars in Hong Kong and Macao)

Ø  National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars (NSFDYS)

Ø  Science Fund for Creative Research Groups (SFCRG)

3. An applicant shall not apply for the RFIS-I if the applicant has been the PI of an on-going or completed project of the RFIS-II, the RFIS-III, the YSF, the EYSF, the NSFDYS and the SFCRG.

4. An applicant shall not apply for the RFIS-II if the applicant has been the PI of an on-going or completed project of the RFIS-III, the EYSF, the NSFDYS and the SFCRG.

5. An applicant shall not apply for the Research Fund for International Senior Scientists (RFIS-III) if the applicant has been the PI of an on-going or completed project of the NSFDYS and the SFCRG.

6. This program does not count towards the maximum number of projects applied and undertaken at the same time from NSFC.

7. Other restrictions on the eligibility of applicants in the NSFC Guide to Programs 2024.

**IV. Submission Instructions**

**1. Submission by the Applicants**

(1) Before completing the online application form, all applicants should read through this call guidelines as well as the relevant contents of the “NSFC Guide to Programs 2024” in detail. Proposals failing to meet the above mentioned requirements will not be accepted.

(2) Submission path: Log in to the NSFC’s Internet-based Science Information System (https://grants.nsfc.gov.cn/), select “Application & Receipt”, and use the role of “Applicant for RFIS, ICFCRT”, then select “Application and Acceptance”-“Application” in the menu bar. Click on “New Proposal” to enter the page of Application(s) in Preparation, choose the “Research Fund for International Scientists”, then choose sub-type (RFIS-I, RFIS-II or RFIS-III) and select the research area of the applied project: “Application codes A-H” or “Division code T” to enter the application page. Please note that the call for RFIS-I is not open to applications in Interdisciplinary Sciences (T). **The proposal language is** **English**, **but the Title, Abstract and Keywords should be written in both English and Chinese**.

(3) For budget preparation, the applicant shall carefully read the budget preparation requirements specified in the *Instructions on Application*of the *NSFC Guide to Programs 2024*, and *the Funds Management Measures for NSFC-Awarded Project*(https://www.nsfc.gov.cn/publish/portal0/tab475/info81899.htm) and *Instruction of Budget Table Preparation 2024*, and prepare the budget table truthfully based on the actual needs.

(4) On completion of filling out the online application form, the applicant shall submit it along with the attachments through the NSFC’s Internet-based Science Information System. No hard copies are required by NSFC. After being awarded, the signed and sealed page of the application form should be attached to the Research Plan and submitted to NSFC together. Please ensure that the signed and sealed information should be consistent with the electronic application form.

    (5) Attachments required:

    a. The **Agreement** signed by the applicant and the host institution. (Please see the appendix for the template) signed by the applicant and the host institution. The agreement should be signed by the applicant in person and the legal representative of the host institution in person or with signature stamp, and affixed by the official seal of the host institution. (The seals of the scientific research management department or the second-level colleges are invalid).

    b. The**employment contract**signed between the applicant and the host institution. The contract shall include provisions that meet the eligibility requirement, the applicant shall commit to work for no less than 9 months per year (calendar year) at the host institution during the implementation of the project. If an employment contract has not yet been signed or the signed and submitted employment contract does not meet the above requirements during the application window, the applicant must provide the compliant employment contract when submitting the Research Plan if the proposal is approved by NSFC for funding; otherwise NSFC shall withhold allocating the approved funds, or terminate the award.

c. If the proposed research involves issues related to scientific research ethics and scientific and technological security (such as biosecurity, information security, etc.), the applicant shall strictly follow relevant national laws, regulations and codes of ethics, and upload corresponding supplementary review and certification documents.

**2. Submission by the Host Institution**

The authenticity, completeness and compliance of the application materials and the objective relevance, policy compliance and reasonability of the proposed budgets should be reviewed by the applicant’s host institution.

The host institution is required to upload the annual *Letter of Commitment for Research Integrity of Host Institution for National Natural Science Fund Projects 2024* via NSFC’s Internet-based Science Information System before submitting all the application materials, and confirm and submit all proposals and necessary attachments via the information system on a case-by-case basis before the specified deadline. Please be sure to submit **a list of all the applications**via the information system within 24 hours after the specified deadline, and no hard copies are required by NSFC.

Please refer to the *Notice on Application and Conclusion of National Natural Science Found Projects in 2024*for the above requirements for the host institutions.

**3. Deadline**

The application system of this program will open after February 3, 2024. The proposal online submission window opens on March 1, 2024 and closes on March 20, 2024 at 16:00 Beijing time.

**Note: Applicants are requested to prepare and submit the application materials in strict accordance with the requirements specified in this call for proposals. Applications failing to meet the above requirements will not be accepted. If you have any questions, please reach us via the following contacts.**

**Contacts**

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[Appendix: Agreement to Support the Application of RFIS](https://www.nsfc.gov.cn/Portals/0/fj/fj20240126_02.docx)

Department of International Programs

National Natural Science Foundation of China

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