

Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Sciences, Kochi University
“Kochi University Future Leaders of Marine Resources Development”
Application Guidelines for 2026 (Support starts from April 2026)

Kochi University has been selected by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) to be funded under its program “Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING)”, which is designed to support doctoral course students’ endeavors, and has launched the project of “Kochi University Future Leaders of Marine Resources Development”.

With this funding, we call for the doctoral participants of the project.

1. Aim of the Project

Through this project, Kochi University aims to nurture doctoral students to become “next-generation marine resource researchers” with an international and cross-disciplinary perspective, who are free, challenging, and fusion-oriented, and who will be active at the core of regional innovation in various fields as human resources with both advanced expertise and a high level of transferable skills. We aim to develop human resources with advanced expertise and a high level of transferable skills to play an active role as the core of regional innovation in a variety of fields.

To this end, we support doctoral students conducting research related to the ocean from a wide range of research fields, focusing on specialized areas such as marine life sciences, deep-sea resource science, materials science, coastal environment studies, health and medical sciences, and disaster prevention science.

2. Number of Places

Approximately 4 Students

3. Eligibility for Application

The project is open to the first-year students of the doctoral course at Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Sciences, Kochi University as of April 2026, and applicants who fall under the following application types.

(Application Types)

Type 1: Primarily Japanese students who lack stable, fixed income equivalent to living expenses (¥2.4 million/year or more) (excluding those falling under Type 2 or Type 3)

Type 2: Primarily those with “Student” status of residence

Type 3: Primarily those with stable, fixed income equivalent to living expenses (¥2.4 million/year or more)

※If you do not fall under any of Types 1-3, or if you fall under both Types, or if you

are unsure about your eligibility, please contact the administrative office before applying.

NOTE: Individuals who fall under any of the categories (1) to (4) below are not eligible for support.

- (1) Special researchers of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS).
- (2) International students receiving support under the government-funded foreign student program, or international students receiving support through projects implemented by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).
- (3) International students receiving government-funded research support through programs that assist doctoral students' independent, challenging, and interdisciplinary research, similar in objective to the "Next-Generation Researchers Challenging Research Program (SPRING)" by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST).
- (4) Individuals receiving scholarships or grants that do not allow them to receive other forms of financial aid.

4. Financial Support

Type1 Financial support for living expenses: 180,000 yen per month (2,160,000 yen per year)

Type1 and Type2 Financial support for research expenses: 560,000 yen per year

Type3 Financial support for research expenses: 400,000 yen per year

5. Funding Period

Up to three years from April 2026 (or for students in Medicine Program, up to four years)

NOTE: If the period of enrollment exceeds the standard length of study, any subsequent period will not be eligible for support.

However, the funding period may be canceled, extended (up to two years), or otherwise adjusted based on students' circumstances, including life events such as childbirth and responsibilities such as parenting and nursing care.

6. Requirements

The selected students must comply with all of the following requirements:

- (1) Concentrating on research activities according to the research plans they have submitted. At the end of each semester, the student should be mentored by a mentor group consisting of a primary supervisor and at least two secondary supervisors, and a research progress report should be prepared and submitted to the supervisor.
- (2) Students in Type 1 and Type 2 must participate in and take the following educational programs designated by the university.

- Participation in a job-based research internship or an internship or joint research deemed equivalent by the University (including pre-supervision and post-supervision reporting).
 - Attendance at the Teaching Fellow training course (after attending the course, the student will act as a Teaching Fellow as much as possible).
 - Participation in the "Hope Creation Study Group*" held by the Center of Education and Research for Hope-Emergence.
 - Participation in the "Young Researchers Exchange Meeting" held by the Project.
 - Participation in and presentation at the "Doctoral Course Exchange Meeting" held by the Project.
 - Attendance at designated sessions of "Advanced Course in Applied Natural Sciences I" offered by the Applied Science Program.
 - Planning and implementation of outreach activities (explanation of the field of specialization to the general public at open campuses, public lectures, etc.).
 - Attendance at other seminars, workshops, etc. as designated by the Project.
- (3) Complete a program on research ethics education designated by the University.
- (4) Students in Type 1 and Type 2 must register with the system operated by the National Council for the Promotion of Job-Based Research Internships.
- (5) When a decision is made on the course of study after completion of the program, it must be reported promptly.

* "Hope Creation Study Group": Please review the following website.

<https://www.kochi-u.ac.jp/kibou-souhatsu/>

7. Application Procedures

Applicants must obtain approval from the supervisor at Kochi University to participate in this project and submit (1) the application form (FORM 1) prepared and converted to a PDF file and (2) the Recommendation letter through the Application Form website below.

Application Documents:

- (1) Application Form for "Kochi University Future Leaders of Marine Resources Development" (FORM 1)
- (2) Recommendation letter from the supervisor (FORM 2)

Application Period: Monday, April 6, 2026 - Friday, April 10, 2026 (12:00 noon)

Application Form website: <https://forms.office.com/r/Cs2mWidzCM>

NOTE: Please log in with your Microsoft account issued by Kochi University.

8. Selection and Notification of Results

- (1) Screening Procedure

Applicants who pass the first screening (documentary screening) will be selected for the second screening (interview screening). The second screening (interview screening)

is to begin online on April 28. Eligible applicants will be notified of the details shortly. Changes to the designated interview time cannot be accommodated, so please secure your schedule.

(2) Perspectives of Selection

In the first screening, the application and research plan will be reviewed based on the characteristics of the research as it relates to the ocean, its novelty and challenge, its importance and cross-disciplinary aspects, and its contribution to solving social problems. In the second screening, the applicant's initiative, cooperativeness, and motivation will be evaluated.

(3) Notification of Selection Results

All applicants will be notified of the results of the first screening by April 22, 2026. The applicants of the second screening will be notified of the results by April 30, 2026.

9. Cancellation and Suspension of Financial Support

Financial support will be suspended in any of the following cases:

- (1) When the student has been expelled, removed, or transferred.
- (2) When the student has been subjected to disciplinary action.
- (3) When the student's academic performance becomes poor.
- (4) When the student is judged to be inadequate in fulfilling the obligations of "6. Students' Requirements".
- (5) When there is a reason why the student does not need financial support.
- (6) When the student falls under any of the conditions (1) through (4) of "3. Eligibility for Application" during the period of receiving the financial support.
- (7) In addition to (1) through (6) above, when it has revealed that the student is inappropriate as a selected student.

10. Return of Financial Support

In the event of misuse of research expenses or improper receipt of research incentive funds, all or part of the amount already paid should be returned to Kochi University.

11. Obligations after Project Completion

Since the Project is implemented under the auspices of the JST "Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation" (SPRING), the selected students may be required to cooperate with a survey of their employment and other current conditions for approximately ten years from the project completion.

The selected students should inform Kochi University of any changes in their contact address, place of employment, e-mail address, etc.

12. Handling of Personal Information

The personal information of applicants will be handled as follows:

(1) Personal information such as names and other personal information provided in the application documents will be used for screening of documents and interviews, as well as for the performance of duties related to this project.

(2) The names, affiliations, etc. of the selected students will be posted on the University's website from the viewpoint of ensuring transparency.

(3) Personal information will be managed by the University to conduct teaching-related (academic guidance, curriculum improvement, etc.), support-related (internships, etc.), and survey/research (improvement of selection methods, survey/analysis of application trends, etc.) for supported students. The information will not be used for any other purpose or provided to anyone other than those involved in this project. If work related to personal information obtained is outsourced, it will be managed appropriately by KU's rules for handling personal information. Please refer to the following URL for more information on the handling of personal information at Kochi University.

https://www.kochi-u.ac.jp/outline/jouhou_koukai/ko_kisokusyuu.html (Japanese)

13. Contact Information

In charge of KU-MR, Educational Affairs Division, Kochi University

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