



COVID-19 RELIEF FOR SYLFF FELLOWS 2021

CALL for APPLICATIONS

In 2020, the Sylff Association secretariat announced COVID-19 Relief for Sylff Fellows to support fellows whose efforts to earn a degree or start their careers were negatively impacted by the pandemic. Because many restrictions on campus and research activities remain in place, we are once again offering financial relief to those needing support. COVID-19 Relief for Sylff Fellows 2021 will provide a lump sum to cover living expenses for up to six months to eligible fellows. Please apply and make the most of this opportunity to mitigate your financial anxieties during the pandemic.

1. Background

The resurgence of COVID-19 cases in many parts of the world has caused lingering financial problems for many fellows. Our surveys of Sylff fellows and steering committee members last year revealed that financial needs were still high among fellows working toward their degrees. We learned that those planning to enter the workforce faced difficulties as well, with some fellows being forced to extend their research. New graduates were unable to advance their studies due to admission suspensions at some universities. And many experienced difficulties finding job openings or had offers canceled or delayed.

The Sylff Association secretariat is most concerned about fellows not being able to advance their academic or career plans because of the global pandemic. We are committed to helping fellows pursue their goals in this time of turmoil, and we are offering new financial measures in 2021 so fellows may either continue their studies and research or transition smoothly to the labor market.

2. Eligibility

There are two categories of fellows who are eligible for financial support.

Category 1: Fellows who are currently enrolled in a degree program and:

1. Are current or past recipients of a Sylff fellowship.
2. Are currently working toward a master's or doctoral degree at any institution of higher learning (not necessarily a Sylff institution).
3. Need financial support to continue their studies and research for the degree or to find work opportunities.

(Note) *updated April 16, 2021*

Those who were working toward a master's or doctoral degree in 2019 or 2020 but **are currently taking a leave of absence from that degree program due to the difficulties caused by the pandemic are eligible to apply**. Please describe the circumstances that forced you to interrupt your studies, including

information on the exact period of leave, in the letter of reference (prescribed template downloadable from the website), which needs to be confirmed by your referee.

Category 2: Fellows who have already earned a degree and:

1. Are past recipients of a Sylff fellowship.
2. Earned a master's or doctoral degree **on or after March 1, 2020**, and are not currently enrolled at any institution of higher learning.
3. Need financial support to look for work opportunities or until the start of a new job or new degree program.

(Note)

Those who received COVID-19 Relief for Fellows in 2020 are eligible to apply (BUT those who earned their master's or doctoral degree **on or before February 29, 2020**, are NOT eligible).

3. Amount of Support

COVID-19 Relief for Fellows 2021 aims to provide up to six months of living expenses in the country where the applicant is based. The exact amount will be determined by the secretariat, based on the total number of successful applicants and the program budget.

The monthly living expenses of each country are calculated, in principle, on the information provided by the Sylff steering committee. For those who are studying in a country without a Sylff institution or have already graduated from the Sylff institution and have moved to a different country, the expenses are calculated based on the cost of living indexes of widely used external sources.

4. Schedule

Online application opens: mid- or late April 2021 (tba)

Application deadline: **11:59 p.m. May 24, 2021 (Japan Standard Time)**

Notification: Early June 2021

Disbursement of funds: Expected to start at the end of June 2021

(Note)

The disbursement of funds is expected to start at the end of June 2021. This may be delayed, however, if the information (including that for bank accounts) submitted by the applicant is either incomplete or inaccurate.

5. Application

Applications will be accepted starting in mid- or late April 2021. The exact date will be announced by email. Please note that only online applications will be accepted. Applications sent by email or those that are either incomplete or late will not be accepted. Please be sure to provide all required information by the deadline.

There are **two steps** in completing your application. First, provide basic information about yourself along with a letter of reference through the online application site. After submitting this information, proceed to the second step of providing your bank account information. You will receive instructions of how to notify us of your bank account by email.

The following is a list of what you need to submit. Before you apply online, please have available all the information requested. Once you submit your application, you will not be able to make any changes.

FIRST STEP: Provide basic information and a letter of reference

[Basic Information]

- ✓ Your name (first name, family name)
- ✓ Your country of residence
- ✓ Email address you regularly use
- ✓ Name of your home Sylff institution
- ✓ Your current academic or employment affiliation (if any):
- ✓ Address of your current affiliation above (if any):
- ✓ Expected date of degree (or date received)
- ✓ Type of degree (master's or doctorate, field of specialization)
- ✓ Your reason for applying

[Letter of Reference]

You will need to attach a letter of reference* (prescribed template downloadable from the website) when applying online.

* The letter of reference must be signed by a member of the Sylff steering committee if you are currently enrolled at the institution where you received your Sylff fellowship. If you are no longer enrolled there, the letter of reference must be signed by your academic supervisor.

SECOND STEP: Provide your bank account information

[Bank Account Information]

- ✓ Name and address of the account holder (The account must be in your name)
- ✓ Bank name, bank branch name, and address of bank branch
- ✓ Country where the bank is located

- ✓ Bank account (IBAN code in Europe)
- ✓ SWIFT code

(About recipient bank)

- * Please make sure that your account can accept international wire transfers.
- * In principle, funds will be sent in US dollars. Please confirm that your account can accept US dollars.
- * Please check with your bank if it can receive funds "directly" from MUFG Bank, LTD. (Swift code: BOTKJPJT). If it cannot, please ask your bank to designate an intermediary bank to receive the funds and let us know the name and Swift code of the intermediary bank.

(About amount of funds)

- * It is your responsibility to pay any tax-related fees required in your country.
- * Any gain or loss due to foreign exchange rates is not the responsibility of the secretariat.

(Important Note)

If any information or document provided by the applicant is found to contain false statements, the application will be unconditionally rejected. If false information is revealed after the funds have been disbursed, the applicant will be required to return the payment to the secretariat within 30 days of notification by the secretariat.

6. Screening and Notification

Applications will be screened based on eligibility by the Sylff Association secretariat. The results of the screening will be notified in early June 2021.

(Note)

Selected fellows are responsible for providing the information requested within the timeframe set by the secretariat.

7. Post-Support Requirements

Recipients are expected to actively cooperate with Sylff Association activities, such as by participating in surveys and follow-up activities. They are also encouraged to post their profiles on the Sylff website at <https://www.sylff.org/fellows/>.

For Inquiries:

Please read the FAQ of the Sylff website program page or send email with [COVID-19 Relief 2021: *name of your home Sylff institution*] in the subject line to:
sylff[a]tkfd.or.jp (replace [a] with @)