



Sylff Research Grant (SRG)

Call for Applications for FY2024

Sylff Research Grant (SRG) is a support program for fellows who are currently enrolled in a doctoral program or are within three years of having earned a PhD and are at an early stage in their careers.

The grant aims to encourage Sylff fellows to engage in rigorous academic research that will become valuable assets for their future career development.

1. Eligibility

The applicant must meet the following conditions:

- (1) He/she is a current or past recipient of a Sylff fellowship.
- (2) He/she is currently enrolled in a doctoral program at any institution of higher learning or received a doctorate **on or after April 1, 2021**.
- (3) He/she has never received or has only once received an SRG award. (Those who have already received the award twice are not eligible.)
- (4) He/she is at an advanced phase of research implementation at the time of application, having completed a literature review, established a research design and methodology, investigated precedents, and has a clear plan for the use of the SRG grant.
- (5) He/she is engaged in high-quality research with high potential for advancing academic discourse and can clearly explain its significance in the application.

2. Research Activities

SRG supports research activities whose primary objective falls into one or several of the following categories:

- Data collection
- Hiring of one or more research assistant(s)
- Domestic fieldwork by the applicant
- International fieldwork by the applicant
- Outsourcing of tasks requiring special knowledge or skill that the applicant does not possess (software analysis / large-scale or remote data collection / language translation / honoraria for interview with experts)

This grant supports research activities conducted during the period between November 1, 2024, and October 30, 2025.

3. Award

An award of **up to US\$5,000** is provided per successful applicant.

(1) Eligible expenses:

- Category (A): Data collection
 - Data, database access fee
 - Database subscription
- Category (B): Hiring of one or more research assistant(s)
 - Salary, wages
 - Transportation
 - Lodging
- Category (C): Domestic fieldwork by the applicant
 - Transportation
 - Lodging
- Category (D): International fieldwork by the applicant
 - Transportation
 - Lodging
 - Wi-fi
 - Insurance
- Category (E): Outsourcing
 - Software analysis
 - Large-scale or remote data collection
 - Language translation
 - Honorarium for interview with experts

(2) An SRG award cannot be used to cover expenses not listed above.

(3) Even when included in the above list, all expense items must be accompanied by a description of their necessity, unit price, number of items required, name of service, etc., in the application. The Sylff Association secretariat reserves the right to exclude unexplained or unreasonable expenses from the proposed budget. Awardees will be notified of the amount of the approved budget when they are informed of the selection results.

(4) An SRG award can only be used to cover expenses incurred by the applicant personally or by persons directly involved in the activities described in the proposal, such as research assistants.

(5) Applicants may seek additional funding from other sources. When such funds are used, please provide the name of the funding institution and the amount received in the application.

4. Application

Applications should be completed in English. Descriptions of your proposed research should be written in a way that can be readily understood by readers outside your field of specialization.

In principle, applications must be submitted via the online system, which can be accessed only during the application period. Please be sure to submit all required information by the respective deadlines, which are indicated in Japan Standard Time (JST). Applications sent by email or those that are either incomplete or late will not be considered. All applicants are required to read “5. Screening and Evaluation Criteria” carefully prior to submitting their applications.

There are **two steps** in completing the application process.

FIRST STEP: Preliminary registration

The first step is preliminary registration. The applicant should provide basic information about himself/herself and answer some eligibility questions via the online form. The form will be available on the SRG page between **May 15, 2024, and June 13, 2024, 11:59 p.m. JST.**

SECOND STEP: Application submission

After screening the information provided in the first step, eligible applicants will be informed of a web link enabling them to proceed to the second step to submit their formal applications via an electronic application system.

The Sylff Association secretariat strongly encourages applicants to prepare a draft of their application and recommendation letter in advance, as explained below. Your application will be evaluated on the quality of the written responses and relevance to the information requested. Access to the system will be limited to the period between **August 16, 2024, and August 30, 2024, 11:59 p.m. JST.**

[Applicants Must Submit the Following]

(1) Online Form

- ✓ Summary of Application (200 words)

Please provide a clear and compelling summary of your “Detailed Proposal” and “Budget Proposal and Research Activities.”

- ✓ Detailed Proposal (total around 800 words)

- Research title (around 10 words)
- Research question (concise statement of around 50 words)
- Research objective (200 words)
- Proposed research plan/activities (300 words)
- Relevance and significance of the proposed research (100 words)
- Expected outcomes (150 words)
- (For previous SRG recipients only) Brief explanation of how the proposed research differs from or advances earlier study (up to 200 words)

- ✓ Budget Proposal (use prescribed form) and Research Activities

For which research activity or activities will the SRG award be used? Check all that apply.
*Refer to the SRG page (https://www.sylff.org/support_programs/srg/) for a definition of each activity.

- Data collection
- Hiring of research assistant(s)
- Domestic fieldwork
- International fieldwork
- Outsourcing

(2) Letter of Recommendation

The applicant should request a letter of recommendation from an academic authority with a good understanding of the applicant's area of research (academic supervisor, expert, etc.) (use prescribed form). The letter should be scanned and submitted in PDF or JPEG format and have the digital or physical signature of the referee. Only those sections of the letter referring to the significance of the applicant's research project will be reviewed.

5. Screening and Evaluation Criteria

The Sylff Association secretariat will first screen applicants' eligibility following preliminary registration. Only those confirmed to be eligible for the program will be invited to submit their formal applications.

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Research question, objective, and outcomes are clearly articulated.
- Research methodology and approach adhere to generally recognized doctoral standards.
- Research plan is feasible in terms of schedule and methodology.
- Significance of research is evident through comparisons with the existing literature.
- Budget proposal has direct relevance to research plan.
- Budget proposal satisfies criteria for SRG expenses outlined above, with the amount and necessity of each item being explained in the application.

Note: The "Summary of Application" plays an important role in the evaluation process. It should provide a succinct, compelling, and well-reasoned summary of your research plans.

The Sylff Association secretariat will not consider applications if they:

- Are turned in late
- Are not accompanied by required documents
- Raise ethical concerns (use of slurs or other inappropriate expressions)

6. Schedule

- Announcement of a Call for Applications: May 15, 2024
- Preliminary registration: May 15, 2024, to June 13, 2024, 11:59 p.m. IST
- Eligibility notification: July 31, 2024
- Application submission: August 16, 2024, to August 30, 2024, 11:59 p.m. IST
- Notification of selection outcomes: November 1, 2024
(Successful applicants may start their proposed research after receiving this notification.)
- Disbursement of funds: End of December 2024

<IMPORTANT>

- An agreement shall be signed between the awardee and the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research (Sylff Association secretariat) for award disbursement.
- The award will be remitted by the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research to the bank account designated by the awardee, which should be able to accommodate foreign transfers in US dollars.
- The awardee is responsible for clearing any legal requirements in receiving the award and for covering any associated costs.

- The award will NOT be remitted for any reason to a third party, such as a research assistant, family member, outsourcing company, etc. The award may be cancelled if it cannot be remitted to the awardee's account for technical reasons.

7. Post-Support Requirements

- (1) All awardees must submit narrative and financial reports, along with associated receipts **within 30 days** after the completion of the proposed research. Please obtain receipts or other forms of financial proof for all expenses. If part of the SRG budget has been used to hire research assistant(s), for example, a bank transfer record can serve as a receipt. When official documents cannot be obtained, use the prescribed "receipt substitute" form. You will be asked to refund expenditure items in the financial report that are not accompanied by proof of payment or a receipt substitute.
- (2) Recipients are asked to cooperate with the Sylff Association's public relations activities by agreeing to have their names, photos, and narrative reports (either in full or in part) published on the Sylff website and/or in print publications. They are also asked to promptly submit or update their Sylff profiles through a designated web link upon request from the Sylff Association secretariat, since links to recipients' profile pages will be included in the announcement of SRG awardees, scheduled to be published by February 2025.

Inquiries:

Please read the FAQ of the Sylff website program page or send email with
[SRG] in the subject line to:
sylff[a]tkfd.or.jp (replace [a] with @)