



Ritsumeikan University Graduate School Research Proposal Contest

AY2017 Application Guidelines



Inquiries

Office of Graduate Studies at Kinugasa Campus

Telephone: 075-465-8195

Email: d-cp@st.ritsumei.ac.jp

Contest Entry Information～Communicating your research to others～

Your research achievements may form part of your theses, raise questions for society, or provide solutions to problems. However, you will first need to acquire the skills to properly design a research proposal. This is a great opportunity to challenge yourself to write a research proposal and see how other people evaluate it. All interested graduate students are encouraged to enter.

In addition, the content of the application format is almost the same as that for applying the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists. The JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientist are being adopted annually. The Research Proposal Contest is also positioned as a place of training before applying for the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientist. We hope applicants to proactively apply to the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists and to be adopted after this Contest.

Objective

- (1) To improve conceptualization skills for research.
- (2) To develop your ability to convey your specialist knowledge and research results to wider society.
- (3) To improve your generic writing skills.

Qualification Requirements

Graduate students who are currently enrolled in a master's program, doctoral program, 5-year doctoral program, or professional degree program at Ritsumeikan University are eligible to enter.

Field of Study

Humanities and Social Science / Science and Engineering

Entry Period

Tuesday, September 26, 2017 – Monday, October 23, 2017 by 5:00 p.m.

How to Enter

Submit the application data to the Office of Graduate Studies by email. d-cp@st.ritsumei.ac.jp

Announcement of Results

Late November, 2017. The results will be sent to the contestant's postal address.

Awards Ceremony

Mid-December, 2017.

The first-place winners will present their research proposal at the award ceremony.

After the ceremony, a small party will be held for all contestants.

Awards

Grand prize – 1 student from each field (Certificate & ¥30,000 worth of bookstore gift cards)

Excellence award – 2 students from each field (Certificate & ¥10,000 worth of bookstore gift cards)

Extra effort award – 3 students from each field (Certificate)

Hosted by

Graduate Students Career Path Support Center

Application Guidelines

Application

- (1) Only one application per person is permitted. (Joint research is not accepted.)
- (2) Applications must be completed by the applicant.
- (3) Applicants who have applied before cannot apply with the same research proposal. The contents this time must be improved including some progress.
- (4) Documents submitted in application will not be returned. Please ensure that you make copies of all documents you submit.
- (5) Applications that do not meet the requirements or do not abide by the rules for submission will not be processed.
- (6) If any falsification of research progress or results is found on the application, the applicant will be severely punished in accordance with Ritsumeikan University Student Disciplinary Regulations.
- (7) We cannot answer queries regarding screening process.
- (8) Please contact the Office of Graduate Studies if you have a visual or hearing disability and have difficulty indicating by figures.

Writing

- (1) Download the application form from the website of the Graduate Students Career Path Support Center. Please make sure to complete your application using the prescribed forms for this contest and type them using a font size of 10.5 point. If you change the prescribed format or **if you attach documents composed on paper other than the prescribed form, your application will not be accepted.**
Forms can be downloaded here: http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/ru_gr/g-career/eng/news/article.html/?id=168
- (2) Use diagrams (graphs, charts or other methods) to provide a general outline of your research in the "Research outline diagram" box. (Page 2 of the application form)
Refer to the diagrams of the last year's awardees:
 - ✧ AY2016 http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/ru_gr/g-career/news/article.html/?id=149
 - ✧ AY2015 http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/ru_gr/g-career/news/article.html/?id=125
- (3) Complete your application using a computer.
- (4) Applications should be written in Japanese or English.
- (5) Use graphs, charts, or other visual aids to make your research proposal understandable to readers, who may not necessarily be experts in, nor have previous knowledge of, your field. Do not use abbreviations.
- (6) The application data must be submitted in PDF format. (d-cp@st.ritsumei.ac.jp)

Evaluation

Criteria

The following examination items will be reviewed from the perspectives of (1) Consistency of argument and format (2) Readability and clarity of explanation (3) Creativity (4) Concreteness of research plan/proposal.

(1) Research outline diagram

Whether Research outline diagram keeps the main points of the proposal and explains the content clearly and attractive.

(2) Research objectives/details

Whether the objectives of the research are concretely and clearly indicated, whether methods and plans for achieving the research objectives are well thought-out, whether the argument and format are consistent and intellectually suggestive.

(3) Unique/creative features of the research

Whether the perspective of setting research topics are distinctive and inventive, whether there will be expected impact and future prospects when the research is completed, whether the argument and format are consistent and intellectually suggestive.

(4) Research background

Whether research background is explained with references based on the research situation so far, whether the argument and format are consistent.

(5) Research Achievement

Research Achievement will be evaluated in consideration of applicants' courses and grades.

Method

- (1) Applications will be evaluated by a screening committee established by the Graduate Student Career Path Support Center.
- (2) If any falsification of research progress or results is found on the application, the applicant will be severely punished in accordance with Ritsumeikan University Student Disciplinary Regulations.

[Handling of Personal Information]

Personal information obtained by the contest organizer as part of the Ritsumeikan University Graduate School Research Proposal Contest will be managed and handled in accordance with the Ritsumeikan Trust Basic Policy for the Protection of Personal Information. However, names, affiliations and research outline diagram of awardees will be posted at the awards ceremony and on the Ritsumeikan websites.

Comments by the Award Winner

~To become JSPS Research Fellowships for Young Scientists~

Minoru Nomura AY2014 Grand Prize Winner

DC2 JSPS from AY2016

Q.1.What made you participate in the research proposal contest?

I thought participating in this contest would be one of the good opportunities to output my research achievements. Also, I kind of thought that what I write on the application forms of this research proposal contest could be useful when I apply for scholarships or JSPS. When I applied for this content, I was still in my Master's program and was not used to make presentations at academic conferences, nor writing academic papers. In that sense, it was a great opportunity for me to become aware of the problems I had and to establish research purposes.

Q.2.Tell us the parts you especially worked hard with your application.

I tried not to put too much effort to create schematic diagrams. I believe that whether the drawing clearly represents the purpose/ significant components of my research or not is more important than drawing the diagram well. Therefore, what I did at first was writing down the details of my research I conducted by that time and also the research plans I had. Then, I specified and organized positional relationships between social issues and academic issues raised from my research by using the diagrams.

Q.3.How did participating in the Research Proposal Contest affect the JSPS application (for being selected)?

I was never good at creating diagrams, so I experimented so many different things to make better diagrams for this contest and I learned a lot. This actually helped me and affected me in a good way when I created diagrams for the JSPS application. However, as I mentioned before, when working on your applications for JSPS or Research Proposal Contest, if you take too much time and put too much efforts to create diagrams, you won't be able to expand your story in a way you want it to be. In my case I concentrated on the following 5 points when I worked on my JSPS application: (1) What (social or academic) issues do we have? (2)What kind of research have I been conducting in order to solve those issues? (3)What is still lacking in order to solve those issues? (4)What other research should I going to conduct from now on? (5)How is the research different from the research which has been already conducted in similar fields? (Does my research have an originality?) These frameworks I used for JSPS application was actually similar to the frameworks I used on my application for this contest.

Q.4. Do you have any advice to graduate students who are planning to apply for JSPS in conjunction with the experience you gained through the Research Proposal Contest?

Making presentations at academic conferences or writing academic papers are of course important. However, I sometimes get advice from mostly younger instructors that having the ability to create this kind of application is also very important when applying to gain competitive research funds or to become research fellows. From this point of view, I suggest you take this opportunity as a good opportunity to acquire skills to create sentences “to have someone read” and skills to create schematic diagrams, and suggest to apply for the contest. Also, after reviewing your grades on each section of the application and reading the feedbacks you received, you will be able to fix the parts you need to work harder when you create the JSPS application. That is also one of the methods to you should try to utilize this contest.

Yasutomo Kanetsuki AY2015 Excellence Award Winner

DC2 JSPS from AY2016

Q.1. What made you participate in the research proposal contest?

I first knew about the Research Proposal Contest when someone sent me the information by E-mail and recommended me to participate in the contest. The application forms were very similar to what JSPS uses for their application, so I did not need to add new items that much. This fact also gave me a boost to apply for the contest.

Q.2. Tell us the parts you especially worked hard with your application.

Five major things I have tried when I worked on my application are as follows:

- I tried to use diagrams as much as I could to explain something.
- Instead of using the free materials I could get on the internet, I made my original diagrams as much as I could.
- I followed the instructions (e.g. Write about the following item) precisely and described the content properly.
- I tried not to use too many different character styles to emphasize the words.
- I also explained an example of a practical application of my research to an actual problem.

I also analyzed the past application documents of the JSPS, as well as checking my application forms and see if I followed the required instructions precisely, or if I used the designated application format correctly.

Q.3.How did participating in the Research Proposal Contest affect the JSPS application (for being selected)?

In my case, the application for JSPS affected my participation in the Research Proposal Contest very much. By participating in the Research Proposal Contest, I found many parts that require improvements in my other applications. For example, in my research expense application documents, I found some parts that need to be reviewed. Also, because of this contest, I was able to learn a method and acquire skills to create posters which I hardly ever done before.

I think this Research Proposal Contest is not just a contest to compete students' research skills, but it also gives students an opportunity to acquire writing skills, the self-designing ability and the self-scheduling ability, which are probably required when you start working in the society.

Q.4.Do you have any advice to graduate students who are planning to apply for JSPS in conjunction with the experience you gained through the Research Proposal Contest?

In order to get ideas for your application and make it better one, you should observe your fellow students or other researchers constantly and should find out what kind of presentations or effort they are making. If you can collect ideas of many other people and utilize them in your application, it would probably be much better than creating designs or application on your own.

To apply for JSPS Research Fellowships for Young Scientists

We hope graduate students to proactively apply to the JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists, which starts calling for applicants around May. Graduate Student Career Path Support Center will provide support for students who are applying for JSPS Research Fellowships for Young Scientists as follows. We expect applicants to review the feedback of this contest, refine the research plan, and apply for JSPS Research Fellowships for Young Scientists.

Sept. 26, 2017- Oct. 23	Entry Period for Research Proposal Contest
Late November, 2017	Announcement of Results (with feedback)
Mid-December, 2017	Awards Ceremony of Research Proposal Contest
Around February, 2018	Application for 2019 JSPS Research Fellowships for Young Scientists will be disclosed
Early in April, 2018	Application Guidance and Seminar for JSPS Research Fellowships for Young Scientists
May, 2018	Advice & correction on applications for JSPS Research Fellowships for Young Scientists
※ About JSPS	http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/ru_gr/gcareer/fellow/doctor/article.html?id=23

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