

Application Guidelines for RARA Student Fellow (RARA x SPRING)
(For 2nd-year Doctoral Students in the Spring Semester of AY2025)
Ritsumeikan Advanced Research Academy (RARA)

I. Objectives

One of the pillars of Ritsumeikan University's mid-term plan for 2030 ("R2030 Academy Vision: Ritsumeikan University Challenge Design") is to "foster innovative human resources capable of creating social symbiotic value." As a concrete measure, the Ritsumeikan Advanced Research Academy (hereinafter "RARA") was established to fundamentally enhance the research environment according to the career paths of researchers, from early-career researchers including graduate students to core researchers who lead the University.

Based on this RARA program, the University has been promoting the "RARA Student Fellowship Program" (RARA x SPRING) to foster "T-type Doctoral Impact Makers" who, as doctoral students, can not only deepen their own specialized research fields but also demonstrate social impact through collaboration with other researchers and other professionals in different fields. In addition to the RARA x SPRING, we have also been implementing the "RARA Student Fellowship Program in the Field of Next-generation AI" (RARA x BOOST) to foster doctoral students in the field of next-generation AI who are capable of resolving social issues by making maximum use of next-generation AI technologies (Note: RARA x BOOST is not eligible for this round).

In AY2025, we will again select and adopt particularly outstanding doctoral students as "RARA Student Fellow." Through these programs, we aim to develop them into doctoral candidates who can take a leadership role in resolving social issues by co-creating with others and making maximum use of comprehensive knowledge.

***Ritsumeikan Advanced Research Academy (RARA)**

The RARA is a group of core researchers (Academy) who are expected to take a leadership role in creating a leading and advanced research center at the University. The researchers gathering at the RARA will become the nucleus of the University and involve other researchers in the promotion of advanced research.

The RARA consists mainly of "RARA Fellows" who are core researchers leading advanced research at the University, "RARA Associate Fellows" who are building up their track record to become core researchers, and "RARA Student Fellows" who are expected to become active researchers of the next generation.

For more information, please visit <https://rara.ritsumei.ac.jp/>

II. Program content

This program supports “RARA Student Fellows” in the following three main frameworks, aiming to develop “T-type Doctoral Impact Makers.” In principle, the program will be conducted in Japanese.

- (i) At the “RARA Colloquium,” an opportunity for research exchange, we will hold lectures by top researchers such as RARA Fellows and promote collaboration among RARA Student Fellows who are affiliated to various Graduate Schools to hone their ability to view their own research fields comparatively and objectively from multiple perspectives.
- (ii) At the “RARA Commons,” an opportunity for presenting research achievements, we will promote outreach activities to the pupils and students of the Academy (one elementary school, four junior high schools, four high schools, 16 Colleges and 21 Graduate Schools, and 400,000 alumni (graduates)) to develop RARA Student Fellows’ ability to convey the significance and enjoyment of their own research to a diverse, intergenerational audience.
- (iii) We will develop and expand problem-resolving and cross-disciplinary research and education programs such as PBL, Overseas Immersion Program, internships, etc., which are organized by utilizing Research Organizations within the University, overseas offices, and diverse collaborative networks of industry, academia, and government. Through these programs, we will evaluate and verify the experience and abilities nurtured by RARA Student Fellows.

Moreover, the RARA Office (Secretariat of the Graduate Student Career Path Support Center), which serves as the program’s promotion secretariat, assigns coordinators to RARA Student Fellows, who provide appropriate guidance and advice so that the RARA Student Fellows can perceive their own personal growth.

In addition, doctoral students adopted as RARA Student Fellow will receive a research grant and a research activity support grant (equivalent to living expenses).

III. Application details

Name of program	RARA Student Fellow
Number of positions to be made available	Approx. 7 students for the RARA x SPRING
Appointment period	The support will be provided from April 2025 until the end of the standard period of degree completion. (E.g.) For D2 students in the spring semester of AY2025: from April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2027
Eligibility	One of the following conditions shall be met. (i) Those who will be in the second year of doctoral courses in the spring semester of AY2025 (including those who enrolled the doctoral course in September 2023) (ii) Those who will be in the fourth-year equivalent of the integrated doctoral program in the spring semester of AY2025

	<p>(iii) Those who will be in the second year of four-year doctoral courses in AY2025.</p> <p>*However, Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho: MEXT) Scholarship recipients, Foreign Government Scholarship recipients, those with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Research Fellowship for Young Scientists, recipients of scholarships that do not permit dual reception, and those who are recognized as earning a stable income at a level sufficient to cover living expenses (based on the annual income of 2.4 million yen) shall be excluded. If you have any questions about the ineligible conditions, etc., please contact the RARA Office in advance.</p> <p>*In the event that a student adopted as RARA Student Fellow is unable to satisfy the requirements above as of April 1, 2025, however, his/her RARA Student Fellow status shall be revoked.</p>
Obligations	<p>(i) Engage in research activities with awareness and responsibility as RARA Student Fellow.</p> <p>(ii) Participate in and make presentation at programs, seminars, etc. organized or designated by the Division of Research, including RARA Colloquium and RARA Commons.</p> <p>(iii) Maintain high ethical standards in accordance with the Ritsumeikan University Research Ethics Guidelines, engage in research activities, and refrain from committing misconduct.</p> <p>(iv) Properly execute research expenses in accordance with the “Ritsumeikan University Regulations on the Management of Public Research Funds.”</p> <p>(v) Have meeting with Coordinators.</p> <p>(vi) Undergo an extension review (to be conducted by the Division of Research) at the end of the academic year.</p> <p>(vii) Apply for a JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship.</p> <p>(viii) Disseminate your research achievements on the Ri-search and through other means.</p> <p>(ix) Complete the course within the standard period of degree completion.</p>
Support and research funds*1	<p>(i) Research activity support grant: 185,000 yen per month (2,220,000 yen per year) (taxable)*2</p> <p>(ii) Research grant: 340,000 yen per year (maximum amount)*3</p>
Other	Be a role model for other students and be proactively involved in providing learning and research support to pupils and students of the Academy.

*1 The support period for those admitted in September will be until the expiration of the standard period of degree completion (September).

*2 The research activity support grant shall be provided every other month in odd-numbered months (i.e. May, July, September, November, January, and March).

*3 Payment shall be made in accordance with internal regulations.

IV. Application and screening schedule

Application Information Session: To be held online from 12:15 to 12:45 on Monday, November 11, 2024

	Additional Call for AY2025
Program	RARA x SPRING
Application Period	Between Monday, November 11 and 13:00 on Monday, November 25, 2024
Announcement of Adoption/Rejection	Wednesday, December 18, 2024

Announcement of adoption/rejection will be notified to the applicant via manaba+R.

V. Application documents

(i) Application Form for the AY2025 RARA Student Fellow (Form 1)

*In addition, current students of Ritsumeikan University are required to submit their research achievements output from the [“Ri-SEARCH \(Ritsumeikan University Search Engine of Academic Record and Career History of Young Researchers\).”](#)

(ii) Letter of Recommendation from your supervisor for the AY2025 RARA Student Fellow (Form 2)

*Ask your supervisor to provide a Letter of Recommendation.

(iii) Self-promotion video (any format)

Please create a video of no more than two minutes in length that includes the following two points.

- What you hope to achieve as a member of the RARA Academy after you become a RARA Student Fellow (enthusiasm)
- Your career path (future vision)

[Points to note]

*Ensure that your face is clearly visible while presenting the material.

*Recording methods are optional; please devise a method most suited to you such as recording via Zoom or recording a slide show in PowerPoint while being aware of the file size.

*The video should be no larger than 30 MB in principle, and the total data size, together with other application documents (Application Form, Letter of Recommendation from your supervisor, etc.), should be no larger than 100 MB.

*Video format must be mp4 (mov format cannot be accepted since it may not be playable).

†Please refer to the “Application Checklist” for details and make sure that all details are correct.

†Application documents and other submitted materials will be used for screening purposes only. Submitted materials will not be returned.

†Personal information obtained from the application documents, etc. will be used for screening purposes only.

VI. Submission method/deadline

(1) Submission method

(i) Step 1

Please access the URL below to click the “入力はこちら(Select here to apply)” button and you will be redirected to the submission screen for your application documents.

<https://cw.ritsumeai.ac.jp/campusweb/SVA40D0.html?key=LNG20241030091859010134314>

(ii) Step 2

Please fill in the required information on the application screen, upload the application documents [(1) Application Form (to be saved as PDF), (2) Self-promotion video, and (3) Letter of Recommendation from your supervisor (to be saved as PDF)] to the designated attachment boxes, and click “申請内容確認へ進む(Proceed to application verification).” Click “申請内容提出 (Submit application)” on the next screen to complete the application.

(2) Submission deadline

As prescribed in “IV. Application and screening schedule” above.

*Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted for any reason.

*The date and time of application will be determined based on the log of the time when the application is completed on the Application Form. Even if there is a delay in application due to a device malfunction on the applicant’s side, Internet environment problems, etc., the decision will be based solely on the application log; so, please submit your application well in advance of the deadline above.

VII. Screening

(1) Procedures

The Screening Committee will be established within the University to review and select the fellows. The committee will be chaired by the Program Supervisor of the RARA Student Fellowship Program and vice-chaired by the Executive Director of the Graduate Student Career Path Support Center, and will be composed of the Deans of the Division of Research, the Division of Academic Affairs, and the Division of Career Services, as well as internal and external experts appointed by the Chairperson. The committee will conduct a documentary screening based on the evaluation criteria. The adoption/rejection will be determined based on the screening results by the Screening Committee.

Please note that points may be deducted or applicants may be excluded from consideration if it is deemed that they did not follow the instructions in Application Guidelines or Application Form regarding the number of words or pages in the Application Form, the length of the video or its format, etc.

(2) Evaluation criteria

- (i) Reasons and purposes of the application for RARA Student Fellow (enthusiasm)
- (ii) The relevant student’s ability to conduct research based on the research activities to date.
- (iii) Appropriateness and future growth potential of the research plan, and a prospect of obtaining a degree within the standard period of degree completion
- (iv) The relevant student’s future goals and their conformance with the objectives of the program

VIII. Other

Those who are currently applying for the “JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists” are also eligible to apply, but must choose “JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists” if they are selected for both programs (i.e. you must decline the RARA Student Fellow status).

[Contact]

Attn: PIC of RARA Student Fellow at the RARA Office

Email: rara@st.ritsumei.ac.jp

Tel: 075-813-8560

RARA Student Fellowship Program (RARA x SPRING)

FAQ

1. Eligibility

Q1-1. Can I apply for the RARA x BOOST in this additional call?

A1-1. No, you cannot. Only RARA x SPRING positions will be made available for this round.

Q1-2. Even though I am not being supervised by a RARA Fellow, can I still apply for this program?

A1-2. Yes, you can apply. We accept applications from a wide range of doctoral students, including those who are not being supervised by RARA Fellows.

Q1-3. Do I need to obtain a recommendation from my supervisor to apply?

A1-3. Yes, you do. Doctoral students need to obtain a recommendation from their supervisor. In this program, RARA Student Fellows are aimed to improve individual research competences and to develop into a PhD holder equipped with the qualities and abilities to play an active role in the international community. Accordingly, RARA Student Fellows are obligated to participate in programs embedded in the RARA Colloquium and conduct seminars at affiliated schools, etc. as part of the dissemination of research achievements. As the doctoral students are required to fulfill their responsibilities as RARA Student Fellows while conducting their own research activities, their supervisors are requested to give them a recommendation and approval for their participation in this program in advance. However, if you are unable to procure a Letter of Recommendation from your supervisor, please consult with the RARA Office.

Q1-4. [For Supervisors] Can I recommend multiple students whom I supervise?

A1-4. Yes, you can. There is no limit on the number of students who can be recommended by a supervisor.

Q1-5. The eligibility states that “those who are already receiving support from another program or who are recognized as earning a stable income at a level sufficient to cover living expenses from the University, a private enterprise, etc. are excluded.” Which specific programs are regarded as such?

A1-5. From the viewpoint of providing fair support to as many doctoral students as possible, those who are receiving support from the programs listed in the examples are not eligible for this program. If you are not sure whether or not the support you are receiving affects your eligibility for this program, please contact the RARA Office before applying.

Q1-6. I am currently working as a research assistant (RA). Can I still apply for this program?

A1-6. You can apply for this program even if you are working as a research assistant (RA). Please confirm in advance, however, that you are not receiving support from any of the programs listed in the “Eligibility” section.

Q1-7. Are those who were enrolled at the University in September 2024 eligible to apply for this call?

A1-7. Those enrolled in September 2024 are not eligible for this round of applications; they should apply for the regular second round of applications scheduled for February 2025.

Q1-8. Is it possible for international students who are receiving tuition fee reduction or exemption under the “Ritsumeikan University Regulations on the Tuition Fee Reduction and Exemption for International Students” to apply?

A1-8. Yes, it is possible to apply.

Q1-9. Is it possible to apply if I am currently on a leave of absence for AY2024 but plan to come back as a D2 student in April 2025?

A1-9. Yes, you are eligible.

2. Application documents and submission

Q2-1. The Application Form (Form 1) asks that the research plan be described from the perspective of resolving social issues, but is there any specific social issue or research field set?

A2-1. We do not limit the research plan to specific social issues or research fields, such as environmental or population issues. In addition to issues that are widely discussed in society, for example, in the research fields of literature and history, we expect research plans that will lead to the solution of various social issues according to the various research themes of RARA Student Fellows, such as the possibility that research results will be recognized by people as social issues in the future and could be a solution to such issues.

Q2-2. May I submit a self-promotional video longer than two minutes because I have so much enthusiasm for the RARA Student Fellowship Program and so many things I would like to work on after being adopted that I cannot make a self-promotional video shorter than two minutes?

A2-2. Please create and submit a self-promotional video of no more than two minutes in length as specified.

3. After adoption

Q3-1. If a RARA Student Fellow takes a leave of absence, how will the research activity support grant and research grant be handled?

A3-1. When a RARA Student Fellow takes a leave of absence, the research activity support grant, etc. will be suspended for the semester in which the leave of absence occurs. The period of suspension will not be included in the stipend period, but if the total period of leave of absence exceeds one year, the period exceeding one year will be included in the stipend period. In addition, the research grant cannot be executed during the period of leave of absence.

Q3-2. What kind of cooperation would be required as an adoptee for the Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING) of the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)?

A3-2. Those who have been adopted as RARA Student Fellow are required to cooperate with the following activities by JST. The details will be notified to the successful applicants.

(i) Participation in doctoral student networking events

This is a cross-university exchange event for doctoral students participating in the SPRING, where they can interact with fellow students from other universities to promote mutual inspiration and networking among them.

(ii) Student monitoring survey

JST will directly follow up with the supported students so that they can ensure access to them, directly receive their opinions, etc., and utilize the results straight away in the evaluation of each doctoral student support project.

(iii) Evaluation and follow-up of fostering effects of the program

We will conduct follow-up surveys on the subsequent careers of the graduates of this program for more than 10 years and provide the information to JST.