

HIRAKU-GLOBAL
WORLD-CLASS RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT
THROUGH REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Home for Innovative Researchers and Academic Knowledge Users Driving Global Impact

Call for Applications for the 2nd HIRAKU-Global Researchers Cohort (FY2021)

Hiroshima University, Yamaguchi University, Tokushima University and Ehime University formed a consortium for the development of world-class researchers through regional collaboration in the area centered in the Chugoku and Shikoku regions of Japan (hereafter referred to as HIRAKU-Global). The HIRAKU-Global program (the Program) aims to develop world-class researchers who are leading unique and exceptional research and are recognized as innovative, influential and impactful in the global community. The Program provides various kinds of support to early career researchers who are proactively promoting international collaborative research, such as start-up research funding, travel and accommodation expenses for medium- to long-term research visits overseas, advice from mentors, relevant opportunities for career and skill development, to name a few.

For more details about the Program, please visit the HIRAKU-Global website via the link below:
<https://www.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/en/hiraku-g>

The Program will select promising early career researchers from newly or recently appointed tenure-track faculty members at Hiroshima University, Yamaguchi University, Tokushima University and Ehime University, who possess high aspirations to promote international collaborative research while utilizing this Program (further details to be outlined below).

1. Number of Openings and Research Fields

Hiroshima University:	3 (Any field)
Yamaguchi University:	1 (Civil and Environmental Engineering)
Tokushima University:	1 (Life Science)
Ehime University:	1 (Any field)

*The number of openings listed above is the number that can be provided with financial support for start-up research funding and travel and accommodation expenses for research visits overseas, to be described later, using MEXT's Grants-in-Aid for the "Strategic Development Program for World-Class Researchers" Program. In addition, this Program will accept candidates with sufficient research accomplishments and qualities from the above-mentioned universities or other partner institutions, only if they can secure their necessary funds independently.

2. Eligibility (applicants must satisfy both criteria):

- Possess research experience of less than 10 years after obtaining their doctoral degree, or equivalent (under 40 years of age)
- Hold a recently acquired tenure-track faculty position* at Hiroshima University, Yamaguchi University, Tokushima University or Ehime University.

*Please note that a “recently acquired tenure-track faculty position” will be defined as a position that has been attained within the past two years (or thereabouts), and will also include those who will attain a position at the beginning of the new Academic Year from April.

We are particularly seeking researchers who, as the HIRAKU-Global Researchers, are motivated to strengthen the collaboration between the domestic universities within the Program and the international partner institutions, as well as to improve their competencies as researchers and increase their visibility in the global community through conducting international collaborative research, and to play leading roles in developing the Program.

Primary duties as HIRAKU-Global Researchers

In addition to their regular faculty duties at their respective institutions, the HIRAKU-Global Researchers will be engaged with the following duties during the Program development period (up to 5 years):

- Promoting international collaborative research, and publication of their research outputs/achievements, etc.
- Attending the Starter Course Training and Annual Conference of the Program
- Submitting materials required for the evaluation of the progress and completion of the Program
- Actively participating in the initiatives, projects, and management of the Program
- Proactively participating in promotional activities of the Program within/outside of Japan

3. Method of Application

Download and complete the “Application Form for the 2nd HIRAKU-Global Researchers Cohort (FY2021)” document from the URL below, and submit the complete set of required application documents to the HIRAKU-Global Office via e-mail, (which can be found below within “6. Contact Information”).

<https://www.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/en/hiraku-g/news/63610>

<Required Application Documents>

- ① Application Form (please prepare the documents in English)
- ② Letter of Recommendation from your affiliated graduate school or center (securing more than 50% of research effort)

4. Application Deadline

Friday, April 16, 2021 at 11:59 a.m. (Japan Standard Time)*

*If you do not receive an e-mail acknowledging that your application has been received from the HIRAKU-Global Office by Monday, April 19, 2021, please contact the Office via the information supplied below within “6. Contact Information”.

*This is subject to change depending on the situation of the Program.

5. Selection Process and Notification of the Results

- Scheduled Date of the First Screening (Screening of the Application Documents): Mid- to Late April 2021
- Scheduled Date of the Second Screening (Screening by Interview): Early to Mid- May 2021
- Scheduled Date of Selection Results Notification: Late May to Early June, 2021

The first round of screening will be undertaken on the “Required Application Documents”. Those who pass the first screening process will be notified of the date, time and venue of the second screening (interview) by e-mail. For the second screening, the interviews will be conducted mainly in English, and comprehensive evaluations will be made on academic uniqueness and achievements (including overseas research experience, etc.), motivation, communication skills (highly proficient in order to conduct international collaborative research), personal qualifications, etc. Please note that we will not be able to respond to individual inquiries in regard to applications.

6. Contact Information

HIRAKU-Global Office
(Office of Research and Academia-Government-Community Collaboration, Hiroshima University)

E-mail: hiraku-global@office.hiroshima-u.ac.jp

<Features of the HIRAKU-Global Program>

1. Support Period of the Program

Up to five years, or until the HIRAKU-Global Researchers acquire tenure at their respective institutions.

*During the support period, an environment where research activities can be performed independently and a research effort of 50% or more as a PI, must be secured.

*If the HIRAKU-Global Researcher acquires tenure during the support period, the Program may continue to provide support to the individual as a HIRAKU-Global Researcher.

*If the HIRAKU-Global Researcher is considered to have reached the level of achievement specified by the Program, they shall graduate from the Program earlier than planned.

2. Main Support Provided by the Program

(1) Start-Up Research Funding

For a duration of up to two years from the start of the support period, a maximum amount of 2 million yen^(Note) will be provided to each HIRAKU-Global Researcher.

(Note) Tenure-track faculty members who have already been selected under the "HIRAKU" program or those selected under the JSPS Leading Initiative for Excellent Young Researchers, and who have already received start-up research funding through those programs, will not receive an additional payment from the HIRAKU-Global Program.

(2) Support for International Research Exchange (a maximum amount of 2 million yen over three years)

For a duration of up to three years from the start of the support period, a maximum amount of 2 million yen, will be provided to cover the costs involved with undertaking collaborative research or research exchange with institutions overseas, (including travel and accommodation expenses). At least one or more medium- to long-term (minimum of a few weeks) international trips must be conducted. This financial support can also be used for multiple international trips, including short-term trips as well as inviting overseas researchers. The host organizations for these international trips will be selected from overseas organizations that the HIRAKU-Global Program intends to strengthen collaborations with and/or organizations that the HIRAKU-Global Researchers choose based on their preference. The HIRAKU-Global Researchers will be able to seek advice from the Program Mentors about overseas research exchange opportunities and preferences.

(3) Support for the Skill Development of the HIRAKU-Global Researchers

Various kinds of support will be provided to improve the abilities of the HIRAKU-Global Researchers, depending on their individual expertise and needs, such as: collaboration with domestic and overseas researchers, management of research teams, guidance for research, mentoring, acquisition of external funds, submission of papers to top journals, etc. The Program will also support the development of their vision and medium- to long-term career development from a global perspective.

(4) Support by Multiple Mentors

During their support period, multiple mentors will be assigned to the HIRAKU-Global Researchers to provide advice on their action plans, progress against their objectives, tenure acquisition, career development, etc.

- HIRAKU-Global Program Mentors: Assigned by the Program with the view of helping to develop leading ECRs in the global community.
- Organizational Mentor: Arranged by the organization that the HIRAKU-Global Researcher is affiliated with.
- Overseas Mentor/s: Independently explored by the HIRAKU-Global Researcher.

(5) Support from the HIRAKU-Global Office

University Research Administrators (URAs) will provide the HIRAKU-Global Researchers with support for external funding acquisition and promotion of international collaborative research, etc., as well as various support to match them up with overseas research collaborators and to enhance their international visibility.
