



Application Guideline for Sophia SPRING Project in the spring semester of 2026

【Support Category 1】

We have opened applications for Sophia SPRING project. If you want to apply for this project starting in the spring semester of 2026, read this guideline carefully and submit the application documents within the application period.

[Important Notice]

Due to a review of JST's operational policies, this call for proposals will be divided into three support categories. Please note that the eligible applicants and support details differ for each category. This call pertains to **[Support Category 1]**. Please refer to the table below for the main eligible applicants and support details for each category.

On the other hand, the open call for [Support Categories 2 and 3] is scheduled for around March 2026. Those wishing to apply for [Support Category 2 or 3] should periodically check [the Sophia SPRING Project website](#).

Support Category	Primary Support Recipients *Be sure to check the application guidelines for details	Financial Support	Research Funds	Various Capacity Development Programs (Improving Interdisciplinarity, International, Humanity)
Category 1	Primarily Japanese Students (Those not falling under Categories 2 or 3)	Eligible *Research Grant (equivalent to living expenses)	Eligible	Eligible
Category 2	Primarily International Students (Those with “Student” residence status)	NOT eligible	Eligible	Eligible
Category 3	Primarily Working adult Students (Those with stable, fixed income equivalent to living expenses (¥2.4 million/year or more))	NOT eligible	Eligible	NOT eligible *Participation in various programs is permitted

1. Purpose and Outline:

Sophia SPRING Project (hereinafter referred to as the “This project”) is funded by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (hereinafter referred to as “JST”) under its "Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING)", which aims to foster human resources who will contribute to the advancement of science, technology, and innovation in Japan.

This project will provide the following support to the selected students (hereinafter referred to as “SPRING students”) with the aim of fostering global doctoral students who, based on Christian humanism, will embody Sophia’s educational philosophy “For Others, With Others,” and open the path to the future of sustainable society through the power of science, technology, and innovation.

- ① Financial Support: Research incentive fee (equivalent to student living expenses) and Research allowance
- ② Capacity building programs for doctoral students that enable them to apply their expertise in the various settings
 - Interdisciplinarity: Fostering interdisciplinarity by establishing networks through a community of young researchers, such as SPRING students and Postdoctoral Fellows within the university.
 - Internationality: Providing international research exchange opportunities.
 - Humanity: Enhancing transferable skills, such as presentation and communication skills, that maximize your abilities to utilize one’s doctoral expertise in the society.
- ③ Career support tailored to each student to realize diverse career paths

2. Recruitment details:

Recruitment numbers	Approximately 10 students (DC1 only)
Eligibility	• Primarily Japanese doctoral students enrolling in the spring semester of the 2026 academic year *1,2 * 1: Only applicants who meet the criteria marked with “Eligible” in the eligibility column of the “Category1 Support Target List” (see attached document) * 2: Those who have previously applied for this program are not eligible to apply. • Students who are affiliated with the following status after the beginning date of the support are excluded. ① Students who hold a status as a Research Fellow of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) *3

	② Students who have a stable income as a form of salary sufficient enough to cover the fixed cost of living expenses (based on 2.4 million yen/year) *4 ③ Students who have been enrolled for longer than the standard period of the doctoral degree completion ④ Students who are on a leave of absence • If you have any questions about the eligibility and requirements, please contact the SPRING Secretariat Office beforehand by e-mail. * 3: Students who are currently applying for JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowships are also eligible to apply, but will be asked to withdraw from this project if they are selected as Postdoctoral Fellows. * 4: Income from TA, RA, part-time jobs, etc. is not included in “stable income”.
Research incentive fees /Research allowance	① Research incentive fees (equivalent to living expenses): 185,000 yen per month *5 ② Research allowance : 200,000 yen per year (maximum) *6 * 5: Research incentive fees are treated as "miscellaneous income" under tax law. Since it is subject to both Income tax and Resident tax, it is necessary to file a final income tax return with the tax office. * 6: Additional research funds may be allocated based on research performance. ex) FY 2025 results: maximum of approximately 500,000 yen
Support period	Up to the end of standard term of completion for doctoral programs

3. Selection:

Method	A selection committee will be established within Sophia University to conduct the first selection (Document screening) and the second selection (Interview screening). Acceptance or rejection will be based on the results of the selection committee.
Perspectives	① Reasons for application (enthusiasm): The applicant must have the desire and enthusiasm to contribute to solving social issues through research, in order to practice Sophia's founding spirit, "For others, with others. ② Research execution ability: The research theme and content must be specific, the research methods and research plan must be valid, and the research must have potential for development. The applicant should have the necessary research skills and a clear vision. ③ Consistency with the project objectives: The applicant should understand the purpose of this project and have a clear vision for

	leading the future of a sustainable society through the power of science, technology and innovation, based on Christian humanism and Sophia's philosophy "For Others, With Others".
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4. Recruitment and Selection Schedule:

Information session	February 25 th (Mon) from 13:00 to 13:30 March 2 th (Mon) from 13:00 to 13:30 online via Zoom (Check My Sophia or Sophia SPRING Web site for Zoom information)
Application period	February 25th (Wed) to March 9th (Mon) 11:00
First selection (Document screening)	Applicants who pass the First selection will be contacted by March 19 th (Thu) for the Second selection.
Second selection (Interview screening)	March 27 th (Fri) *Tentative
Notice of results	End of March *Tentative *sent to the each student by E-mail.
Orientation for candidates	April 3 (Fri) *Tentative

- Applications past the deadline will not be accepted for any reasons. The date and time of application acceptance will be determined based on the log record of the time when the application was received at the designated email address. Even if there is a delay in application due to device malfunction, etc., the application will be judged based on the record of the application email's log only.
- No changes are allowed on your application documents after the submission. And the documents will not be returned.
- If there is any discrepancy on your application documents, the application will not be considered. Make sure all the information and statements are true and correct.
- Any inquiries about the selection process and results will not be accepted.

5. Documents to be submitted:

- ① [Category 1] Application form Sophia SPRING Project in the spring semester of 2026 (Form 1)
- ② [Category 1] Recommendation form Sophia SPRING Project in the spring semester of 2026 (Form 2) *7
- ③ [Category 1] Pledge form Sophia SPRING Project in the spring semester of 2026 (Form 3)

*7: The recommender should ask your academic advisor (Including the prospective) to complete the form and submit it from your academic advisor to the Center for Research Promotion and Support (see 6. How to submit the form below).

<Policy on use of personal information>

- Sophia University will not use the personal information on the application forms for

any purpose other than the internal selection and necessary procedures of the Sophia SPRING Project.

6. Instructions for Submitting the Application Documents:

Please send a set of application documents by email to the address below, with the subject line 「Application for SPRING Project in the spring semester of 2026 (Name of Graduate School _Your Name)」 by the submission deadline.

Application documents are to be submitted in PDF format.

Email Address for Submission: sophia_spring-co@sophia.ac.jp

7. Submission deadline:

March 9th , 2026 (Mon) 11:00 (punctual)

8. Other/ Notes in case of adoption:

SPRING students must:

- ① Concentrate on your research activities with self-awareness and responsibility as a SPRING student.
- ② Report the status of research activities to the project director by the designated deadline.
- ③ Be sure to participate in career development programs and any other events/seminars in this Project (Absences for personal reasons will not be accepted).
- ④ Complete the research ethics education provided by Sophia University.
- ⑤ Maintain high ethical standards in accordance with the Sophia University Guidelines for 'Academic Research Ethics' in order to facilitate honest and responsible research activities. Research misconduct is strictly prohibited.
- ⑥ Properly execute the research expenses in accordance with the Sophia University Guidelines for Appropriate Use and Management of Research Funds.
- ⑦ If selected, information of the selected students and this project will be announced to the public on the University's website. In addition, the submitted deliverables, reports, etc. may be made open to the public for the purpose of publicizing the University's research activities.

9. Contact us:

SPRING Secretariat Office (the Center for Research Promotion and Support)

Office : 4th floor, Building #13 (office hour: 9:30-11:30/12:30-17:00)

Email : sophia_spring-co@sophia.ac.jp

(Attachment)

〈Category1 Support Target List〉

Category	Applicable Persons	Period of Stay	Eligibility
① Persons with Japanese nationality	Japanese nationals, naturalized foreigners	-	Eligible
② Special Permanent Residents	Persons residing in Japan as statutory special permanent residents under Article 3 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act	Indefinite	Eligible
③ Permanent Residents, Spouses of Japanese Nationals, etc., Spouses of Permanent Residents, etc.	Permanent Residents (Individuals granted permanent residence by the Minister of Justice)	Indefinite	Eligible
	Spouse, Child, or Special Adopted Child of a Japanese National	5 years, 3 years, 1 year, or 6 months	Eligible
	Spouses of Permanent Residents, etc. (Spouses of Permanent Residents and Special Permanent Residents, and children born in Japan who continue to reside here)	5 years, 3 years, 1 year, or 6 months	Eligible
④ Permanent Residents	Certain categories of Indochinese refugees, certain categories of Vietnamese refugees, third-generation Japanese descendants, spouses of permanent residents, biological children of naturalized Japanese citizens, permanent residents, special permanent residents, or permanent residents, Japanese nationals stranded in China and their children, foreign parents supporting biological children of Japanese nationals, etc.	5 years, 3 years, 1 year, 6 months, or a period individually designated by the Minister of Justice (Within 5 years)	NOT eligible
	Among the above, those deemed to have the intention to permanently reside in the future		Eligible
⑤ Family Stay	Children dependent on individuals residing under the following statuses: Professor, Artist, Religious Activities, Journalist, Highly Skilled Professional, Business Management, Legal/Accounting Services, Medical Services, Research, Education, Technical/Humanities/International Services, Intra-company Transferee, Nursing Care, Entertainment, Skilled Labor, Specified Skilled Worker Type 2, Cultural Activities, or Student	A period individually designated by the Minister of Justice (Within 5 years)	NOT eligible
	① Among the above, individuals meeting all of the following criteria ・Those born in Japan or who first entered Japan by the end of the school year in which they reached age 12 ・Those who graduated or completed elementary school through high school in Japan ・Those who, after graduating or completing university, are recognized as having the intention to work and settle in Japan		Eligible

	②Those who, based on a comprehensive consideration of their period of stay in Japan and other circumstances, are recognized as equivalent to those listed in ①		Eligible
⑥ Persons residing under the following status of residence	(1) Diplomatic, Official, Professor, Artist, Religious, Journalist (2) Highly Skilled Professional, Business Management, Legal/Accounting Services, Medical, Research, Education, Technical/Humanities/International Services, Nursing/Care, Intra-company Transferee, Entertainer, Skilled Labor, Technical Intern Training (3) Cultural Activities, Short-Term Stay (4) Student, Trainee (5) Designated Activities	Periods ranging from 15 days to 5 years depending on the category (Unlimited for some Highly Skilled Professionals)	NOT eligible