

Funds for Talented Professionals

The fund for talented professionals is another important part of NSFC's funding system. It mainly includes the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars (including those with foreign citizenship), Joint Research Fund for Overseas Chinese Young Scholars, Joint Research Fund for Hong Kong and Macao Young Scholars, Fund for Creative Research Groups and National Fund for Talent Training in Basic Science. Please see the followings for details.

National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars

The National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars aims at speeding up the growth of young scientific talents, encouraging overseas Chinese scholars to work in China and fostering a group of prominent academic pacemakers in the forefront of world science and technology. The Fund specially supports excellent young Chinese scientists under the age of 45, who work domestically or abroad but plan to return soon, doing basic research in natural sciences.

Applicants need to meet the following requirements:

1. Love the socialist motherland and have good research style and scientific ethics;
2. Be younger than 45 by January 1 of the year of application;
3. Generally have Ph.D. degrees or professional titles of associate professor level (or above) or equivalent technical titles;
4. Have outstanding innovative achievements in natural sciences that are recognized by peers both in China and abroad, or have promoted the development of their own disciplines or relevant disciplines, have outstanding creative achievements in applied basic research areas that are recognized by peers both in China and abroad, or have major influence on the national economic and social development;
5. Have experimental facilities and human and material resources required to conduct research in China, and have sufficient time and energy to conduct the research proposed;
6. Have citizenship of China, employed by an organization in Mainland China (a fixed employer) with the employment period covering the period of proposed research, work in Mainland China for at least six months each year during the period of research. Mainland China hereinafter refers to all provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly governed by the State Council of China, excluding Hong Kong, Marco and Taiwan regions.

The National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars plans to fund about 160

people in 2007.

National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars (with foreign citizenship)

In order to take the advantage of overseas scientific and technological talents, attract young overseas Chinese professionals of high academic level and good potential for further development to conduct basic research in China, NSFC set up the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars (with foreign citizenship) in 2005, supporting Chinese scholars under the age of 45 and with foreign citizenship to conduct basic research in Mainland China on full time basis.

Mainland China hereinafter refers to all provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly governed by the State Council of China, excluding Hong Kong, Marco and Taiwan regions.

Applicants need to meet the following requirements:

1. Have the willingness to make contributions to the development of science and technology and the economic construction of China, and are able to work in China full time during the implementation of the project;
2. Be younger than 45 by January 1 of the year of application;
3. Have been officially employed by a host research organization (officially employed refers to as being employed by the host research organization before submitting the application) with the terms of employment covering the duration of funding. Applicant should have no fixed employment outside China, which means that the host organization is the only employer of the applicant;
4. Have Ph.D. degrees and have been awarded full professorship or equivalent technical titles by the host organization;
5. Have high academic level, strong organizational capability and are able to master research directions. Have experience of doing research in universities or research institutes outside China, and have been in charge of several important research projects, have rich research experiences and research achievements recognized by domestic and international peers, and are influential in specialized disciplines;
6. Research proposed has clear directions and important scientific meanings and prospects of development, belonging to international frontier areas and needed by China, and may promote the development of relevant disciplines and the fostering of talents;
7. The host organization has good research support and the environment, and can provide sufficient human and material resources and large experimental facilities, the host organization is limited to universities and research institutes in Mainland China.

The National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars (with foreign citizenship) plans to fund about 20 people in 2007.

The deadline for application is March 31 each year.

Joint Research Fund for Overseas Chinese Young Scholars

In order to attract excellent overseas Chinese young scholars to work in China, NSFC establishes the Joint Research Fund for Overseas Chinese Young Scholars to sponsor outstanding scholars under the age of 45 who are doing research abroad, can not return to China for the time being but may carry out basic research and applied basic research in natural sciences in China for a certain period of time every year.

Applicants need to meet the following requirements:

1. Love the socialist motherland and have good research style and scientific ethics;
2. Conduct research abroad, and can guarantee to work in China for more than two months every year;
3. Be younger than 45 by January 1 of the year of application;
4. Have professional titles of associate professor level (or above) in that country or assistant professor title but have outstanding achievements, be in charge of a laboratory or an important project (copies of certificate of professional title and awarded document of the project should be provided);
5. Have made innovative achievements in basic research of natural sciences that are recognized by international peers, or have achieved outstanding creative scientific and technological results in applied basic research areas. The proposed research is in international research frontiers and is urgently needed in China, and applicants should have some basis of cooperation with domestic partners who, in general, should be young scholars having high research level;
6. Have domestic cooperative institutions and have signed cooperative agreement in which the followings should be mutually agreed upon:
 - 1) Project title, research direction and proposed goals of research;
 - 2) The cooperative institution should promise to provide main experimental facilities, human resources and physical materials required for research;
 - 3) The applicants should work in the cooperative institution for more than 2 months every year.
7. The cooperative institution refers to the institution where domestic partner works, i.e., the institution that applies for this fund.

For the funding plan, please refer to the Joint Research Fund for Hong Kong and Macao Young Scholars.

Joint Research Fund for Hong Kong and Macao Young Scholars

In order to encourage excellent young scholars in Hong Kong and Macao to work in the mainland, NSFC establishes the Joint Research Fund for Hong Kong and Macao Young Scholars to sponsor those excellent young scholars under the age of 45 who are doing research in Hong Kong or Macao, can not return to the mainland for the time being but may carry out basic research and applied basic research in the mainland for a certain period of time every year.

Applicants need to meet the following requirements:

1. Love the socialist motherland and have good research style and scientific ethics;
2. Conduct research in Hong Kong or Marco, and can guarantee to work in the mainland for more than two months every year;
3. Be younger than 45 by January 1 of the year of application;
4. Have professional titles of associate professor level (or above) in that region or assistant professor title but have outstanding achievements, be in charge of a laboratory or an important project (copies of certificate of professional title and awarded document of the project should be provided) in Hong Kong or Marco;
5. Have made innovative achievements in basic research of natural sciences that are recognized by international peers, or have achieved outstanding creative scientific and technological results in applied basic research areas. The proposed research is in international research frontiers and is urgently needed in China, and applicants should have some basis of cooperation with domestic partners and the domestic partners in general should be young scholars having high research level;
6. Have domestic cooperative institutions and signed cooperative agreements. In the agreement the followings should be mutually agreed upon:
 - a) Project title, research direction and proposed goals of research;
 - b) The cooperative institution should promise to provide main experimental facilities, human resources and physical materials required for the research;
 - c) The applicant should work in the cooperative institution for more than 2 months every year.
7. The cooperative institution refers to the institution where domestic partner works, i.e., the institution that applies for this fund.

The deadline for application is March 31 each year.

The Joint Research Fund for Overseas Chinese Young Scholars and the Joint Research Fund for Hong Kong and Macao Young Scholars plan to fund 80 people in 2007. The funding is for three years, with 400,000 yuan per person.

Science Fund for Creative Research Groups

In order to provide steady support to frontier research topics in basic science and to foster and bring up researchers and research groups with innovative ability, NSFC launched the pilot program of Science Fund for Creative Research Groups in 2000.

The Science Fund for Creative Research Groups supports research groups which carry out basic research or applied basic research in China focusing on key research orientations and which have prominent young scientists as pacemakers or backbones.

Candidates are recommended by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Education, China Association for Science and Technology and NSFC scientific departments. Free applications will not be accepted.

The Fund plans to finance about 20 groups in 2007. The funding is 5 million yuan per group, and 3.5 million yuan per group for mathematics and management sciences. The funding is for 3 years.

National Science Fund for Talent Training in Basic Science

The National Science Fund for Talent Training in Basic Science is mainly for national bases of science for basic research and education (i.e., science bases) and special disciplinary points, supporting the construction of science bases and fostering of backup talents of basic science. In 2006, the Fund approved 31 projects of facilities and construction, 35 projects of capability enhancing (including 4 for the construction of field practice bases), 7 projects for special disciplinary points, and 20 projects of studies on models and laws in talent fostering and textbook database construction. 67 science bases and special disciplinary points received support. In addition, the Fund supported 3 teachers training programs. The total funding is 114.6 million yuan.

In 2007, NSFC will continue to accept applications for projects of the support conditions for talent fostering, projects of capability enhancing and projects of studies on models and laws in talent fostering. From 2007, the deadline will be set for applications. Eligible applicants for science bases should read carefully relevant notices and this guide, and submit applications through host institutions according to requirements.

1. Project of support conditions for talent fostering

This type of projects supports in priority the science bases to improve their support conditions for talent fostering, and by using fostering practical capability as the starting point, to build platforms for fostering innovative talents with unique characteristics in order to promote the coordinated development of knowledge, capability and quality and

to provide strong support of high quality scientific talents for the building of an innovative country. Applications from the west and northeast parts of China will be given priority.

Twenty-nine projects are to be funded and each lasts three years with a funding of 1.2 million yuan per project.

2. Project of capability enhancing

Capability enhancing project has two parts: one is the scientific training of undergraduate students in basic disciplines and the other is for enhancing fieldwork capabilities of undergraduate students in earth science and biology.

1) Project of scientific training

It aims at promoting the integration of research and education, strengthening the training of scientific research capability and improving the comprehensive quality. Universities should make full use of the existing research platforms at national, provincial and ministerial key labs, teaching experimental centers, etc., to encourage teachers, especially key teaching staff, through research projects and integration with SRT projects in universities, to strengthen scientific research training of undergraduate students in basic scientific disciplines and improve their research capabilities, so as to achieve the coordinated development of knowledge, capability and quality of the students.

Thirty-one projects are to be funded and each lasts three years with a funding of 1.8 million yuan.

2) Project of enhancing fieldwork capabilities

Set up for earth science and biology, the project aims at establishing a national and shared network of fieldwork practice, improving the capabilities of students in fieldwork and solving real problems. This project encourages sharing resources among universities, and making effective use of regional strength and the strength of individual university. Joint application is allowed, but the number of units in each joint application may not exceed three. The principal application unit should have the capability of receiving students from other units to participate in practice.

Four projects are to be funded (2 each in earth sciences and biology) and each project lasts three years with a funding of 1.8 million yuan per project.

3. Project of research on models and laws of talent fostering

The project aims at exploring and studying, on the basis of summarizing the work in the Tenth Five-Year Plan, the models, evaluation systems and laws of fostering talents in

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different types of universities in order to play a better role of the Fund, speeding up the integration of talent fostering and social economic development, improving the quality of talent fostering, summarizing and exchanging the experience and disseminating best practices in implementing the project. In 2007, only applications from science bases in chemical sciences will be accepted.

Only one project is to be funded, which lasts for 2 years with a funding of 200,000 yuan.