Excellent Young Scientists Fund

In order to further implement the National Program for Medium and Long-term Talent Development (2010-2020), strengthen fostering of creative young talents and improve talent funding system of the National Natural Science Fund, NSFC decides to establish Excellent Young Scientists Fund starting from 2012.

As one of the program categories in the talent-training program, Excellent Young Scientists Fund is a good link between the existing the Young Scientists Fund and the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars, so as to promote fast growth of creative young talents. It mainly supports young scientists having 5 to 10 years research experience and obtained certain research achievements with creative ideas and active in frontiers of science to conduct basic research in directions of their own choice.

I. Eligibility

1. Applicants should meet the following qualifications:
   (1) Have Chinese citizenship;
   (2) Be less than 38 years old (man) by January 1 of the year of application (born on or after January 1 of 1974), and less than 40 years old (woman) by January 1 of the year of application (born on or after January 1 of 1972);
   (3) Hold senior professional position (title) and Ph.D. degree;
   (4) Do not have official employment relations with foreign institutions;
   (5) Guarantee to work in home institutions for at least 9 months every year.

Young overseas Chinese scientists not having Chinese citizenship may apply if meeting conditions of (2)-(5) listed above.

2. The following people may not apply:
   (1) Do not have employer or employer is not home institution;
   (2) Have on-going or have been awarded the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars.
II. Evaluation and approval

1. Key considerations in evaluation
Key considerations in evaluation of applications to Excellent Young Scientists Fund include basis of applicant's research and creative potential. For basis of research, the creativity and scientific merits of research results of the applicant will be mainly evaluated. For creative potential, the creative ability in previous research and creativity in proposed research will be focused.

2. Procedures of evaluation
The procedures of evaluation of applications to Excellent Young Scientists Fund include peer review by correspondence and panel review.
(1) Review by correspondence: each application will be reviewed by 5 peers, returned review comments per application not less than 5.
(2) Panel review: more than 9 panel members present at the meeting, and applicant should give presentation at the meeting in person. Funding recommendations made by unanimous vote, simple majority wins.

3. Approval
Final approval is made by NSFC's council meeting.

III. Notification
(1) Limitations on number of applications by senior title holders apply to Excellent Young Scientists Fund.
(2) “Funding category” should be “Excellent Young Scientists Fund”, and “research area” rather than specific title of the research project is required in the project title section of the application form.
(3) Do not list “main participants” as the Excellent Young Scientists Fund mainly reviews the research ability and creative potential of the applicant only.
(4) The funding for outstanding youth obtained by the applicant from the central government agencies or local government should be mentioned in the application form.
(5) Applicant may only obtain funding from the Excellent Young Scientists Fund for once.
(6) Applicant can not apply for Excellent Young Scientists Fund and the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars at the same time. PIs of ongoing projects of Excellent Young Scientists Fund may not apply for the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars unless the former terminates in that year.

(7) PI could not be changed during the implementation of the project of the Excellent Young Scientists Fund.

IV. Application and submission

Please follow instructions for preparing applications of the Excellent Young Scientists Fund and provide accurate information and relevant supplementary documents. The home institution should check carefully and verify the information provided by the applicant, and submit the application to NSFC in accordance with relevant requirements.

In 2012, the Excellent Young Scientists Fund plans to support 400 projects, each for 3 years, with funding of 1 million yuan per project.