
Special Funds

Special funds are set up by NSFC to support or strengthen research in certain areas or aspects, and currently include the Tianyuan Fund for Mathematics and the National R&D Program for Major Research Instruments.

Tianyuan Fund for Mathematics

Tianyuan Fund for Mathematics is a special fund to collect the collective wisdom of mathematicians, explore funding method, which suits the features and laws of development in the area of mathematics, and promote the establishment of a strong country in mathematics. The fund supports researchers to conduct studies according to the features and needs of mathematics, foster young talents, promote academic exchange, optimize research environment, spread mathematical culture and thus strengthen creativity of the country in mathematics. The fund in 2014 provides funding mainly for the following six types of funding:

1. Tianyuan Youth Program

The main objective of the Tianyuan Youth Program is to encourage young people to devote to mathematical research and applications, and foster more mathematical talents. The qualifications for the applicants are as follows: the host institution should not be the university supported by the National Program for Key University Construction in short "985 program", applicants should be under the age of 33 for man and 35 for woman by January 1 of the year of application and have their Ph.D. degrees for less than three years (please make sure to state the graduation time in the resume), and have not been a PI of NSFC's project (not including international or regional cooperation projects). Post-doctors working at the post-doctor station are not qualified to apply for this program. The funding for the Tianyuan Youth Program is 30,000 to 50,000 yuan per project for 1 year.

2. Program for Mathematical Summer Schools and Training Workshops for Young Teachers

The summer schools funded by this program offer high quality core basic courses for mathematical postgraduate students and young teachers so as to consolidate

mathematical basis of postgraduate students and young teachers. Summer schools will be organized by three types of theme, namely, basic mathematics, applied mathematics and statistics. One summer school will be funded in each theme.

The training workshops are for young teachers in the western and northeastern regions of China for improving their capability in mathematical research and teaching. Training workshops will be focused on two themes, one for teachers with mathematical major and another for teachers with non mathematical major. Either of teachers training workshops may be organized in the west or the northeast, but may not exceed two.

The training workshop should be conducted by contract and decided by the Academic Steering Committee of the Tianyuan Fund for Mathematics in consultations with relevant schools and research institutions.

3. Program for Special Lectures on Mathematics, High-level Workshops and Important Academic Meetings

Special lectures are organized for postgraduate students focusing on one or several related themes so as to introduce frontier topics in mathematical research. Lectures could include basic courses and special courses with large audience lasting for 4 weeks. Special lectures will be accepted through free application or through contract by invitation. Application should provide teaching outline, teaching contents and name list of the lecturers. Each special lecture will be funded with up to 150,000 yuan.

Program for High level workshop mainly support research groups of high level and excellent mid aged and young mathematicians to sponsor workshops on clear topics and important international mathematical issues. The funding is up to 100,000 yuan per workshop.

Academic meetings will not be supported by this program in principle except a few annual meetings of national professional societies.

4. Program for the Publication of Mathematical Books and the Development of Information Resources in Network Environment

This program mainly supports the import and introduction of excellent foreign monographs and text books of mathematics and mathematical information resources in network environment. The funding is provided by contract only and decided through consultations between the Academic Steering Committee of the Tianyuan Fund for Mathematics with relevant publishers or units in accordance with the needs of mathematical development.

5. Program for Mathematical Culture, Mathematical Knowledge Dissemination and Mathematical Education Programs

This category of funding provides supports for the following 4 types of activities:

- (1) Publications: the publication of popular mathematical books, including domestic and translated foreign books, so as to raise the interests of primary and middle school students on learning mathematics and understanding of mathematics by the public. Applications should be made by book editors.
- (2) Journals: the publication of national influential journal related to mathematical culture, dissemination of mathematics, mathematical education and mathematical modeling, so as to improve journal quality and impact on the public. Applications should be made by journal editors.
- (3) Activities of mathematical dissemination: the important national activities of mathematical dissemination by universities, research institutes, science associations and mathematical society above provincial level. Applications should be made by organizers.
- (4) Website of mathematical dissemination: the website of disseminating mathematics and mathematical culture to the public. Fund is given through contract by invitation.

6. Program for Seminar on Problem driven by Applied Mathematical Topics.

This category of program aims at building a platform for mathematicians to encourage and promote them to cooperate closely with actual users to develop applied mathematical workshops which are closely related to other areas, so as to find out hidden mathematical problems, discover and foster research focus and growth points, enhance capabilities of mathematicians to conduct applied mathematical research according to major national needs, and encourage mathematicians to undertake national tasks.

The funding is given by contract for one year, which may be extended up to 4 years. Funding will be up to 200,000 yuan per year.

Timing of application and requirement: application to the Tianyuan Youth Program is the same as Young Scientists Fund of NSFC. Applications to other types of programs may be submitted to the Department of Mathematics and Physics 3 month before projects commence, but not later than the 31st of July 2014.

National R&D Program for Major Research Instruments

The National R&D Program for Major Research Instruments (formerly the Special Fund for Research on National Major Research Instruments and Facilities) is aiming to encourage and foster the exploratory R&D of research instruments with creative ideas, and in particular for major original research instruments and equipment, which should be based on frontier of science and national needs and driven by scientific targets, so as to provide new means and tools for scientific research and increase indigenous innovation of China.

In 2014, the Special Fund for Basic Research on Scientific Instruments is merged into the National R&D Program for Major Research Instruments

In 2013, 50 projects were funded by the Special Fund for Basic Research on Scientific Instruments with funding of 150 million yuan. Average funding was 3 million yuan per project, and the funding rate was 10.42%.

In 2013, 247 proposals were accepted and 40 of them were funded by the Special Fund for Research on National Major Research Instruments and Facilities accepted with funding of 300 million yuan. Average funding was 7.5 million yuan per project, and the funding rate was 16.20% on average.

In 2014, the National R&D Program for Major Research Instruments is planning to arrange 450 million yuan for funding. Application is limited to 10 million yuan per project for 5 years in general.

1. Funding scope

- (1) R&D on indigenous scientific instruments and equipment with original creation and important roles for exploring research frontier;
- (2) R&D on scientific instruments for discovering new phenomena, revealing new laws, verifying new principles and acquiring new data on the basis of breakthroughs in core technology and integrated innovation;
- (3) R&D on the new scientific instruments and components having potentials of application in broad areas

2. Eligibility

Applicants should meet the following requirements:

- (1) Have the experience of conducting basic research;
- (2) Have senior professional position (title).