

Information for Applicants

In applying for the NSFC funds in 2016, applicants and their host institutions should comply with the following provisions.

I. Eligibility for applicants

1. As the principle investigator, the applicant should comply with Article 10 Item 1 of the National Natural Science Foundation Regulations (here in after referred to as Regulations), the applicant has (1) the experience of undertaking basic research program(s) or other basic research activity; (2) a senior academic rank (title) or a doctoral degree, or recommendation from two researchers who are in the same research field and have a senior academic rank (title). Besides, those who apply for certain categories of programs shall satisfy other specific requirements (for more information, please refer to the text of this Guide).

When domestic and overseas applicant who is not employed full-time at the host institution submit the application, he or she should provide the copy of the employment contract from the host institution and the statement (with seal from the personnel department of the host institution) for his or her position, employment period and working hours per year together with the hard copy of application form.

The applicants for the Fund for Less Developed Regions should be full-time employees in the specified host institutions (for more information, please refer to the section on Fund for Less Developed Regions in this Guide), or the technical personnel following national policy and sent by the Central Organization Department a the 3-year aiding mission or longer in Xinjiang and Tibet, who should provide the supporting materials of the aiding mission issued by the organization department or the personnel department of the aided institutions. Part-time employees in the specified host institutions, technical personnel from the specified host institutions affiliated under Chinese People's Liberation Army or the excluded host institutions are not eligible to apply for the Fund for Less Developed Regions.

2. When a researcher conducting basic research satisfies the requirements as prescribed in the preceding paragraph but has no employer or doesn't work in a host institution, on the condition that he or she has obtained the consent from a registered supporting institution, he or she is eligible to apply for the General Programs and Young Scientists Fund, but not for other Programs.

Under this circumstance, the applicant shall fill in the authentic personal information in the basic information section of the proposal and research experiences in CV, together with the agreement signed with the supporting institution (for more information please refer to the Management Methods) in

the hard copy of the application form.

3. Students pursuing the postgraduate degree (degree not obtained by the deadline of NSFC program submission) cannot apply for any funds as the Principle Investigator. However, with the supervisor's consent, in-service personnel can apply for certain categories of programs through the employment institution. The applicant should submit the hard copy of application with the following attachments: signed certification of the supervisor's consent which explains the connection between the dissertation and the proposal, and the guarantee of working hours and conditions after the project starts, etc.

In-service personnel pursuing postgraduate degrees can apply for the following program types: General Program, Young Scientists Fund, Fund for Less Developed Regions and parts of the Programs of the Joint Funds (unless otherwise stated). But in-service personnel pursuing the master degree can not apply for Young Scientists Funds.

4. Researchers outside mainland China and not employed at the supporting institutions in the mainland cannot apply for NSFC programs. Those who are employed at the supporting institutions cannot apply for or participate in NSFC programs both as the international or regional collaborator and domestic researcher at the same time. If the researcher has the Joint Research Fund for Overseas Chinese Scholars and Scholars in Hong Kong and Macao projects, or the International (Regional) Joint Research project (including Key International (Regional) Joint Research Program and International (Regional) Joint Research Program under Agreements/MOUs) as the foreign Principle Investigator, he or she cannot apply for other types of program as the Principle Investigator before these projects are completed. Vice versa, if the applicant has on-going projects other than these two types, he or she cannot apply for the Overseas Chinese Scholars and Scholars in Hong Kong and Macao Program or participate in the International (Regional) Joint Research project (including Key International (Regional) Joint Research Program and International (Regional) Joint Research Program under Agreements/MOUs) as the foreign principle investigator.

5. Researchers employed at postdoctoral research centers can apply for the following programs only: General Programs, Young Scientists Fund and Programs of Joint Funds. In the process of applying for these funds, the applicant should present the supporting institution's written guarantee that within the funding period the applicant will continue the research before or after he or she leaves the postdoctoral research centers. The guarantee shall be attached to the paper proposal form.

6. Researchers with on-going National Social Science Funds as the principle investigator cannot apply for any NSFC funds other than the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars. Within the same year, applicant for the National Social Science Funds cannot apply for any NSFC funds.

II. About the proposal

1. Prior to the writing of the proposal, the applicant shall carefully read the Regulations, Guide to Programs, National Natural Science Funds' Management Methods, Management regulations on various programs, and relevant notice and announcements. In case of a conflict between the existing Management regulations and the Regulations or this Guide, the later shall prevail.

2. The proposal shall be prepared by the applicant in person and in accordance with the outline. The applicant and the main participants should fill in their CVs accordingly. Caution should be taken against revealing any content contrary to law or confidentiality. The applicant shall be responsible for the authenticity and legitimacy of the proposal submitted.

3. In accordance with program types, the applicant shall make correct choice of the "funding category", "subclass introduction" and "annotation". Content that requires "choosing" can only be chosen in the pull-down menu; content that requires "filling out" can be written in words; some program's annotation attachments should be written strictly in accordance with this Guide.

4. Code should be chosen in accordance with the research direction or research field and the "National Natural Science Foundation Application Code" in this Guide's appendix and extra attention shall be paid to:

- (1) When choosing the code, try to select the full code including the last digit (six or four digits);
- (2) The first application code is reference for deciding NSFC's accepting department and selecting the panel experts. The second application code is supplementary. For some programs, the first or the second application code is designated;
- (3) In 2016, NSFC furthermore carries forward the standardization of "application code", "research direction" and "key word". Applicants should accurately select "application code 1" and the corresponding "research direction" and "key word" when filling out the proposal form;
- (4) For any questions, please contact departments concerned.

5. The hard copy of application should be signed by the applicant and major participants. For participants outside the supporting institution (including post-graduates), their work places are seen as cooperative research institutions whose information shall be included in the proposal's basic information form and whose official seal should be included on the sign and seal page. The name of the institution and that on the seal shall be identical. The registered seal should be used, if the institution is registered at NSFC, and the corporate seal should be used if otherwise.

The foreign researchers as the major participants shall be seen as individual participants and their foreign work places should not be seen as collaborative research institution. If the researcher is unable to sign in person, a paper

document with the signature and stating his or her consent to participate and perform the related responsibilities shall be sent via mail or fax and submitted with the paper form proposal as attachments.

The number of one proposal's cooperative institutions shall not exceed two.

6. In the proposal, the applicants and the major participants with a senior academic rank (title) shall indicate in the CV if:

- (1) They have more than one supporting institution when applying or participating in NSFC projects in one year;
- (2) They have different supporting institutions for on-going NSFC projects.

7. If the research has received funding through other sources, the applicant should specify the funding details and their difference and connection with the current proposal. Applying for funding from different funding agencies for the same research content should be avoided.

If the applicant applies for different types of NSFC programs during the same year, he or she should specify in the application the other NSFC program applications, their titles and information, and the connection and difference to the current application.

8. The start time shall be January 1, 2017, the finish time shall be December 31, 201x, depending on the funding periods (unless otherwise specified in this Guide). Researchers at postdoctoral research centers as the applicant should fill out the closing date as the December 31 of the year the project is completed with written guarantee from the supporting institution.

9. The applicant and the major participants should use the same and only identification for application.

Applicants and major participants should use the same identification for application. If they have received funds using other identification as the applicants or major participants, they should explain in the proposal. If not, they will be treated as misconduct and their supporting institutions are responsible for verification.

10. All program costs consist of direct cost and indirect cost. The applicant only fills in the direct cost while the indirect cost and the total will be automatically calculated. For more information on budget making, please refer to the Funding Management Methods. The funding intensities for 2015 and 2016 in this Guide both refer to direct cost.

III. About the supporting institutions' responsibilities

1. The supporting institutions should strictly abide by the Regulations, the Guide to Program, the Working Management Methods for Host Institutions, other relevant notices and management methods about application reception and relevant program management and Funding Management Method.

2. The supporting institution is responsible for the proposal's authenticity and integrity, and the qualification of the applicant. No confidential content should be included in the proposal.

3. If the supporting institution allows the applicants without work or whose work place is not registered to apply for funds as listed under Regulation Article 10 Item 2, it shall bear the Regulation's relevant responsibilities as listed in Article 13, sign the written contract and attach it to the paper form proposal.

4. The supporting institution should provide written guarantee for researchers in postdoctoral research centers that the applicants will continue the research before and after he or she leaves the research center. Each written guarantee should have the institution's seal and be attached to the proposal.

IV. Limit on the principle investigator's accumulated number of Fund for Less Developed Regions projects

In order to support the technical personnel in the Fund for Less Developed Region Program, lead and encourage the above mentioned personnel to participate in the competition in General Program, etc., and increase the region's basic research level, beginning from the year 2016, the applicant's accumulated number of Fund for Less Developed Region projects can't exceed 3. Projects approved before (including) 2015 are not counted.

V. About application reception conditions

According to the Regulations, the application for NSFC funds shall not be accepted in case of any of the following circumstances:

1. The applicant does not comply with the Regulation and Guide's conditions;
2. The application materials do not comply with the Guide's conditions;
3. The number of proposals does not comply with the Application Limit's conditions.

VI. Special notice

To prevent academic misconduct and repeated funding, it is important that applicants shall not:

1. Use the identical or similar proposal and apply for different programs from the same or different science departments;
2. Use the identical or similar proposal and apply from different supporting institutions if the applicant is employed at more than one supporting institutions;
3. Use the identical or similar proposal and apply by different applicants;
4. Use the granted project content and apply for repeated funding from the same or different science departments.

NSFC will use computers for proposal comparison. If the above condition is verified, treatments shall be in accordance with the circumstances. Those with academic misconduct shall be made handled by the Supervisory Committee.