

## Funding System

### System Introduction

In accordance with the development trend of science and national strategic needs, NSFC has established its funding system which provides three categories of programs in terms of their orientations of research promotion, talent training and research supporting.

### I. Research Programs

#### 1. General Program

To promote a balanced, coordinated and sustainable disciplinary development, the General Program provides grants to scientists to do innovative researches on topics they freely select within the funding areas defined by NSFC.

#### 2. Key Program

The Key Program provides financial supports for scientists to conduct in-depth, systematic and innovative researches, which are integrated with the national demands and cutting edge issues in science, focused on the important research issues and new disciplines where Chinese scientists have already compiled certain knowledge. It provides more focused funding with the principle of limited research targets, concentrated research areas, focused important issues, and encourages the interdisciplinary research, the effective utilization of the facilities in national basic research bases, and substantial international cooperation and exchanges.

#### 3. Major Program

The Major program is set up to support multidisciplinary and comprehensive research on strategic key scientific issues through collective efforts for serving the major and critical needs from the development of science and technology and the nation's eco-social development, with a view to promoting China's capacity of original innovation in basic research.

#### 4. Major Research Plan

Focusing on China's major strategic needs and grand challenges in the scientific frontiers, the Major Research Plan aims to make focused deploy in research areas where China possesses a sound basis and strength in line with the general working policy of "fulfilling integrated upgrading, and great-leap-forward development through sustained funding with defined objectives". Based on top-down design of priority research objectives by a steering expert group, it includes an integrated cluster of projects with unified objectives or orientations to be carried out concertedly by excellent research teams. With an emphasis on in-depth integrated research on key scientific issues, it is intended to realize breakthroughs in a number of key research areas and orientations, so as to provide scientific support for China's national economy and socio-economic development.

#### 5. International (Regional) Joint Research Programs

To encourage Chinese scientists to join international cooperation in order to enhance the innovation capability of the country, NSFC has developed a funding scheme for international (regional) cooperation to promote bilateral and multilateral collaborations. It is encouraged that Chinese scientists initiate international (regional) research plans, and participate in large-scaled international collaborations of the mega-science projects. NSFC would like to further promote international (regional) cooperation to stimulate the training of Chinese talent and the utilization of foreign human resources, enhance high quality implementation of the on-going funded projects and improve the ability in basic research and the impact in the international science communities. Funding schemes include the Key International (Regional) Joint Research Program and the International (Regional) Joint Research Program under the framework of MOUs/ Agreements between NSFC and its partners



## II. Talent Training Programs

### 1. Young Scientists Fund

The objective of the Fund is to initiate the independent research career of young scientists and forest outstanding young scientists with research potential. The Fund is aiming at providing support for young researchers, training talented researchers, supporting independent research, and encouraging innovation.

### 2. Excellent Young Scientists Fund

As one of the talent training programs, the Excellent Young Scientists Fund functions as a key link between the Young Scientists Fund and the National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars and plays a key role in nurturing young talents with innovative potential. It aims to support young researchers with a track record of 5-10 years of basic research and a certain amount of research achievements. It encourages young researchers to conduct basic research on topics chosen at their own discretion.

### 3. National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars

The National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars aims to support young scholar, who has achieved excellent contribution in basic research, to conduct innovative research, speed up the growth of young talented scientists, encourage and draw on Chinese scholars abroad to work in China, and foster a group of prominent academic pacemakers in the forefront of science and technology of the world.

### 4. Science Fund for Creative Research Groups

The Science Fund for Creative Research Groups is established to provide steady support for research groups, which is composed of excellent young researchers, to conduct innovative research on the focused area.



### 5. Fund for Less Developed Regions

The Fund aims at supporting and fostering scientists in the remote areas and minority regions to conduct innovative scientific research, as well as fostering and supporting S&T talents and outstanding researchers in such regions for the coordinated development of the regions and the construction of regional innovation system. The regions are identified as: Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Qinghai Province, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Tibet Autonomous Region, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Hainan Province, Guizhou Province, Jiangxi Province, Yunnan Province, Gansu Province, Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in Jilin Province, Enshi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefectures in southwest Hubei Province and west Hunan Province, and Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province.

### 6. Joint Research Fund for Overseas Chinese Scholars and Scholars in Hong Kong and Macao

The Joint Research Fund for Overseas Chinese Scholars and Scholars in Hong Kong and Macao supports high level cooperation between overseas Chinese scholars and scholars in Hong Kong and Macau and their partners in mainland China so as to make full use of S&T resources in other countries and regions for the promotion of related scientific disciplines and the establishment of research teams in mainland China.



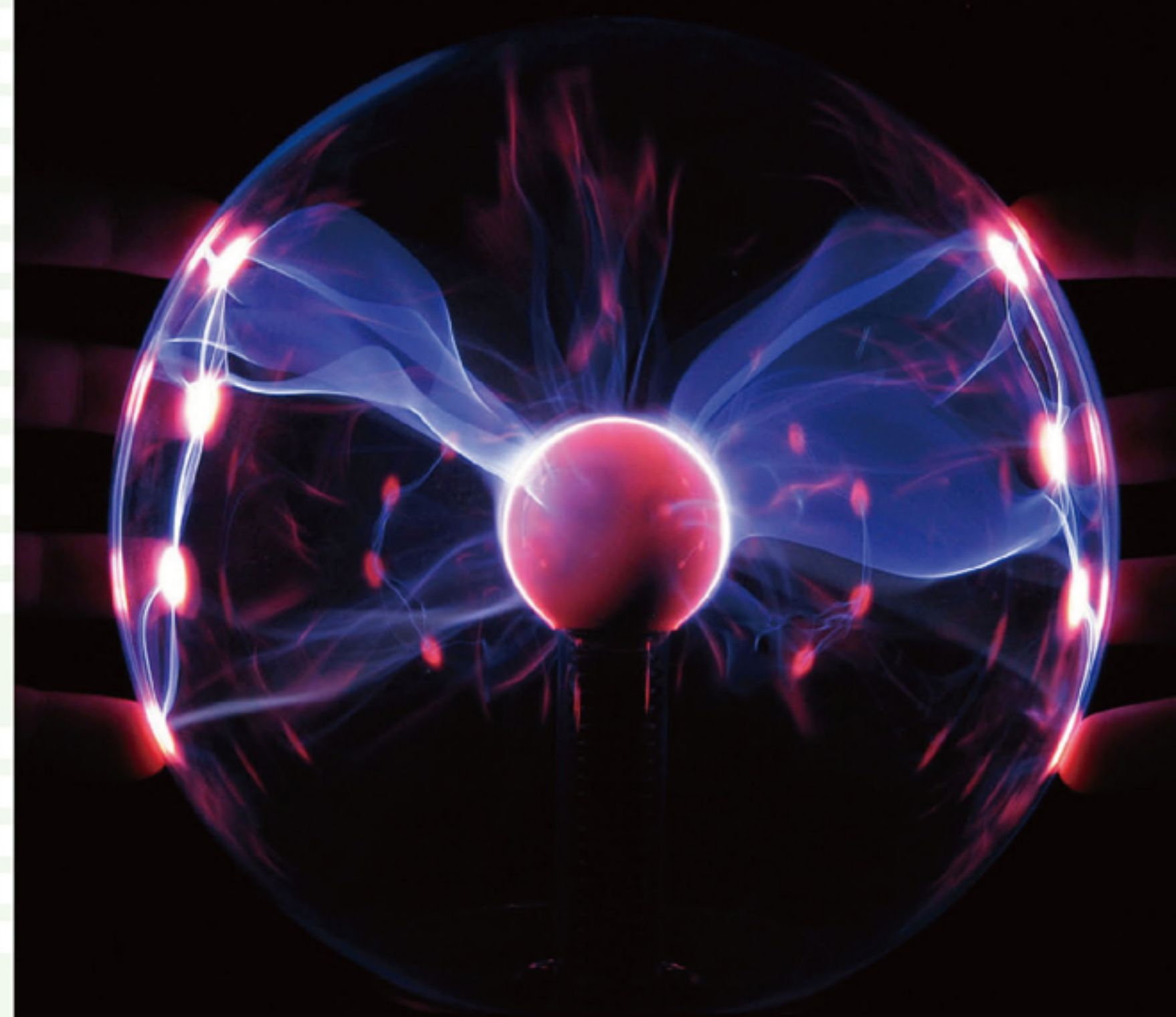
### III Research Supporting Programs

#### 1. International (Regional) Cooperation and Exchange Program

The objective of the International (Regional) Cooperation and Exchange Program is to provide necessary supports for the researchers involved in NSFC funded on-going projects to participate widely in international cooperation and exchange activities. Up to now, NSFC has already established international cooperation and exchange relationship with 70 science funding organizations and research institutions in 35 countries and regions. Funding schemes include international academic conferences held in China and international (regional) exchange programs.

#### 2. Research Fund for International Young Scientist

The Fund encourages international young scientists to conduct basic research in mainland China and promotes the joint research and academic exchanges between scientists at home and abroad. Only those foreign young scientists who, under the age of 35, hold PhD degrees and have research experience are eligible to apply for this fund to conduct basic research in natural sciences in mainland China for 6 or 12 months.



#### 3. Research Program of National Major Research Instruments and Facilities

The Program targeted original innovative research and development of research instruments and major research facilities, so as to provide new approaches and tools for scientific research and enhance China's capacity in original innovation.

#### 4. Programs of Joint Funds

In order to play a guiding role and further the linkage between knowledge innovation and technological innovation by boosting diversified investment, inter-sector cooperation, and sharing of resources, NSFC has set up with relevant departments, local governments and industries a series of joint funds to support basic research in special areas in line with national demands.