

Seven Billion Yuan for Basic Research in 2009

It is learnt from the Second Plenary Session of the Sixth General Assembly of the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) that the priority work for NSFC in 2009 will be focused on making a balanced and coordinated funding arrangement, so as to further strengthen the support for basic research. A budget of around 7 billion yuan is planned for the fiscal year of 2009 in accordance with the reform of the state financial budget system and the requirements from the development of basic research.

It is noted by Academician Chen Yiyu, President of NSFC, that the funding emphasis will be centered around the priority research areas, with a special focus on enhancing the support for key projects and strengthening the strategic planning for key basic research areas that bear direct influence on the national economy and major interests. Timely increase of funding will be planned for research fields such as agriculture, life and health care, new energy sources, new materials, information sciences, public security, etc.

At the same time, NSFC should play an active role in guiding strategically basic research by attaching greater importance to the top design for major projects and major research plans, with a view to providing knowledge reserves and S&T support for the nation's economic development reform and the reconstruction of industrial sectors. Based on the improvement of the joint funding mechanism, the National Natural Science Fund will play a key role in guiding and promoting the implementation of joint fund for research based on large-scale scientific facilities.

President Chen points out that greater efforts are to be made to enhance international cooperation in 2009 with the implementation of the Research Fellowship for International Young Scientists, which is intended to build up a favorable platform for the friendship and cooperation between Chinese and foreign young scientists. NSFC will promote unremittingly substantial cooperation with the U. S. , Japan, South Korea, Germany, the U. K. , France, Russia, the EU, etc. while exploring, expanding and strengthening collaborative partnerships with other foreign science funding agencies and international organizations.

It is reported that in 2008, NSFC, in line with the principle of "selecting the best to support", funded 17 283 projects conducted by 982 institutions across China, with a total budget of 6. 309 billion yuan.