

Twelve Billion Yuan RMB for NSFC Programs in 2011

In 2011, the Central Government will continue to make a remarkable increase funding for the National Natural Science Fund. The planned amount of funding reaches 12 billion RMB with an increase of over 16% of that of the last year.

At the 4th Plenary Session of the 6th NSFC General Assembly held on March 23rd, NSFC President Chen Yiyu said that the Central Government would increase the funding of NSFC in 2011 and the total amount of NSFC funding will reach 12 billion RMB. At the same time, some adjustments will be made to NSFC funding portfolio, e. g. there will be an extension of funding duration and an increase of average funding per project.

President Chen said that NSFC will adjust its funding amount and duration during the Twelfth Five-Year Plan in accordance with the principle of “attaching higher priority to the most fundamental scientific disciplines, research frontiers and fostering talents”: for the General Program, the duration will be extended from 3 years to 4 years, and, from 4 years to 5 years for the Key Program. Average funding per project for the General Program will be raised from 347,000 yuan of 2010 to 600,000 yuan and for the Key Program from 2.21 million yuan to 3 million yuan. Average funding per project for the Young Scientists Fund program will be increased to 250,000 yuan. For the Fund for Less Developed Regions, average funding per project will be increased to 500,000 yuan.

He also mentioned that the evaluation for around 119,000 applications were organized in 2010 and 26,580 of them were funded according to their scientific merits. The total amount of funding reached around 9.653 billion RMB, including 13,030 General Program projects with 4.5 billion RMB, 436 Key Program projects with 0.97 billion RMB, 14 Major Program projects with 0.14 billion RMB, and 444 Major Research Plan projects with 0.486 billion RMB.

During the period of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan, NSFC utilized government funding of around 30.04 billion RMB, funded over 92,000 research projects, and supported about 633,000 person-time research talents.

NSFC was founded in 1986. It is responsible for the organization, implementation and management of NSFC programs, and financially supporting basic research and applied basic research across the country in line with the national strategy, policy and trends of science and technology. NSFC's funding comes mainly from the Central Government.

By types of projects, NSFC's funding programs are categorized into Key Program, Major Program, Major Research Plan, National Science Fund for Distinguished Young Scholars, Joint Research Fund for Overseas, Hong Kong and Macao Scholars, Science Fund for Creative Research Groups, National Science Fund for Fostering Talents in Basic Science, Special Fund, Joint Funded Projects and International (Regional) Joint Research Program. As the central government keeps increasing the investment in basic research, the funding of NSFC has grown from 80 million RMB in 1986 to 9.5 billion RMB in 2010.