

Major Improvements to the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research Program Made in Recent Years

【Fiscal 2003】

- In an effort to establish a fairer and more transparent evaluation system for screening and evaluating the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research, MEXT has increased the number of scientific investigators and JSPS has established the Research Center for Science System where the evaluation system has been improved by activities such as surveys on academic trends and so forth.
- The Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research have been registered as a carrying forward budget.
- To support female research scientists who are forced to halt their research funded by the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research because of maternity leave, MEXT and JSPS have agreed on a following female researchers to resume their research after one year's leave of absence and have promoted flexible applications of the Grants-in-Aid for the Scientific Research Program.

【Fiscal 1998 to Fiscal 2002】

Fiscal Year	Description
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research in Priority Areas was replaced with the new categories of the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research in Priority Areas (A) and (B) in an effort to designate research areas that are expected to contribute to the development of the Japanese economy, society, and culture in the 21st century and to facilitate fluid and effective research in such areas.
1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Grant-in-Aid for International Scientific Research was consolidated into the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research. As a result, spending restrictions, such as for overseas trips, were eased significantly. ● An extension of the research period was allowed under the Grant-in-Aid for Specially Promoted Research and the Grant-in-Aid for COE Research for projects that promise further development and successful results. ● Responsibility for application screening and grant awarding in certain research areas was transferred from the former Ministry of Education, Science, Sports and Culture (the present MEXT) to JSPS.
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The amount of the Grant-in-Aid for Specially Promoted Research was increased from about ¥300 million to about ¥500 million. ● To realize fluid and effective implementation of research in specific areas, the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research in Priority Areas (C) was established. Quotas for young researchers were also set.
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To ensure a sufficient research duration and adequate funding to allow steady implementation of projects, a new category of the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (S) was established. ● To further cultivate fruits obtained from highly creative scientific research conducted on especially important themes in highly promising research areas under the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research and other research programs, the Grant-in-Aid for Creative Scientific Research was established. ● Research institutes were allowed to use part of the grant to employ research-support personnel needed to carry out the subject research project. ● Funds were provided to cover management and other indirect costs incurred by research institutes in the implementation of grant-funded projects in the following categories: Grant-in-Aid for Specially Promoted Research, Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (S), Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (A), and Grant-in-Aid for Creative Scientific Research. ● To enable as many researchers as possible to apply for grants, the eligibility criteria for research institutes were revised extensively.
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To further promote research by promising young researchers, two new categories, Grants-in-Aid for Young Scientists (A) and (B), were established. ● To further encourage research in pioneering areas, a new category, Grant-in-Aid for Exploratory Research, was established. ● Subcategories of the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research in Priority Areas (A), (B), and (C) were abolished with a view to simplifying the system. ● To ensure uninterrupted research funding, researchers were allowed to apply for their next grant a year before the end of the current project (Grants-in-Aid for Specially Promoted Research and Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research) ● Another enhancement is the provision upon request by non-selected applicants of their approximate ranking in the first screening and the averaged scores for their "research details" and "research plan," which are evaluation factors used in the first screening. ● Moreover, a thorough revision was made of the Table of Research Fields and Subfields so as to promote interdisciplinary research between different scientific domains. (The revised table will be adopted from fiscal 2003). ● To assist in the research implementation of Specially Promoted Research and Scientific Research in Priority Areas, the reviewed comments are provided for the research representative of Specially Promoted Research and the area representative of Scientific Research in Priority Areas. ● To allow for the employment of research-support personnel at the end of the fiscal year, the deadline for submission of research progress reports has been extended.