(Revised 2026/1/30)

Kobe University's 'Next-Generation AI Outstanding Doctoral Human Development Project based on Collaboration & Co-Creation in Different Fields' Academic Year 2026 Application Guidelines

About Technology Agency (JST)'s Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation AI Human Resource Development Program (BOOST) Program, Kobe University is inviting applications for this project for Kobe University's 'Next-Generation AI Outstanding Doctoral Human Development Project based on Collaboration & Co-Creation in Different Fields.'

1. Aim

The project aims to encourage talented students in various fields to participate in the field of next-generation AI and, as a result, contribute to the layering and multilayering of young researchers who will lead Japan's future science, technology, and innovation, particularly in the field of next-generation AI, We will nurture "Next Generation AI Excellence PhDs" who can contribute to the next generation AI field while utilizing their high level of expertise in other fields.

2. Funding

Those selected for this project will receive a research incentive grant and a research grant (totaling 3,900,000 JPY/year). In addition, to give them the opportunity to improve their research skills, we will provide the support program shown in Appendix 1 as a comprehensive support package for Kobe University doctoral students.

3. Period:

From April 1, 2026, until course completion （however, this funding will not exceed the standard course completion period）

* Depending on the enrollment period and screening results, support may start from October 1, 2026.

4. Number of Nominees

Maximum of 5 students

※ However, there is a possibility that no 2nd to 4th year students will be selected based on screening results.

※ Only students enrolled in the Graduate School of Medicine are eligible for the 4th year positions.

5. Eligible Graduate School

All graduate schools at Kobe University.

6. Application Requirements

The applicant must fall under all.

1) The applicant will be enrolled as a doctoral student at one of Kobe University's graduate schools as of AY 2026 (Including prospects, 1st through 4th year students may apply, but fourth-year students are limited to the Graduate School of Medicine).
2) Those who have the ability to promote and lead research in the field of next-generation AI.
3) Those who are expected to complete their degree within the standard completion period.

4) The applicant should be affiliated with a laboratory that can manage the project's budget (including a prospective laboratory).
5) Those who have the will and ability to be directly involved in science, technology, and innovation in the field of next-generation AI in Japan after completing the doctoral program, and whose career path after completion of the program is in line with this.
6) Applicants who have applied for the 2026 Kobe University SPRING or who applied to Kobe University SPRING in FY2025 or earlier (including those provisionally selected in the preliminary recruitment).

However, students to whom the following applies at the time of application cannot apply:

- Students who have exceeded the standard course completion period.
- MEXT scholarship students (including prospective students), and international students receiving scholarships from their home country. (However, some support may be available under certain conditions, so please contact the office for more information.)
- Students who are receiving income (over 2,400,000 JPY per year) that meets their living expenses.

7. How to Apply

1) Application Deadline : 2026/2/27 (Friday) 12:00 noon
2) Please complete R8-BOOST Form 1 and convert it to a PDF file, and submit it using the application form.

*Application to BOOST requires application to SPRING. Applicants who have never applied to SPRING must first apply to SPRING for FY2026 and then enter the receipt number sent by email (a number beginning with SC08) in the BOOST application form. Applicants who applied to SPRING in FY2025 are not required to apply to SPRING again; however, they must enter the receipt number sent at the time of application (a number beginning with SC07 or SP08) in the BOOST application form. Applicants who applied to SPRING in FY2024 or earlier are not required to apply to SPRING, and no receipt number needs to be entered in the BOOST application form.

*When sending files, keep the total file size under 2MB.

*You can write your answers to sections 2 ~ 4 of Form 1 in English

*Obtain approval to apply from your supervisor.

*If you do not receive an email receipt after submission, please contact the office.

*If you are unable to submit an application using the application form, please contact the office.

Application Form:
https://forms.gle/Qaue4LMigJwrokCi7

8. Selection Process:

- Candidates will be chosen by the project's steering committee.
- Selections will be made by judging how well the information submitted in R8-BOOST Form 1 corresponds to the review criteria in Appendix 2.
- Interviews will be carried out as required during the selection process.
- Selection results are due to be published on the Career Center website by around early April 2026.

9. Recipient's responsibilities

1) Submit a research progress report every year
For the year in which you complete your doctorate, you may use your degree thesis as the report.
2) Participate in the Core C^3 Research Progress Management Program (held approximately twice a year) or the Cross-disciplinary C^3 Research Progress Management Program (held approximately twice a year).
3) The recipients are required to actively participate in the doctoral student support package programs (Appendix 1) and participate in the program equivalent to 2 credits of lessons (1 credit is 45 hours of study) per year. However, the programs offered in this package may not be regular courses with credits.
4) Actively disseminate the research results via academic papers and/or academic conference presentations.
5) Attend events specified by the steering committee.
6)Respond to various surveys, such as a follow-up survey on your career 10 years after graduating.

*Please be aware that credit numbers and course names mentioned in this document are subject to change.

10. Disqualification or suspension of support, and return of the grant fund

If any of the following conditions apply, we may revoke or suspend the eligibility of the project participants or request the return of the grant funds.

1) The application requirements have not been met.
2) The execution of the research plan, or the funded student's performance of their duties, is deemed to be unsatisfactory.
3) The applicant submits a withdrawal notice.
4)The university president, the project director, or the project's steering committee determines that there is cause for disqualification or suspension.

11. Precautions:

・Applicants who receive government-funded research support intended to enable students to devote themselves to independent, challenging, and interdisciplinary research—similar in purpose to BOOST (e.g., SPRING, DC, JICA, NEXUS, etc.)—are also eligible to apply; however, if selected, concurrent receipt of such funding is not permitted.
・A final income tax return where research support funds are taxed as miscellaneous income is required.
・Recipients are permitted to earn remuneration from teaching assistant/part-time job positions, internships, or prizes from academic societies, as long as these do not hinder their research activities.
・Your name will be published on the University website if your project is selected.

12. Inquiries:

Kobe University Main Office for Doctoral Student Support TEL: 078-803-5217
Email Address : crct-hakase@edu.kobe-u.ac.jp

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(Appendix 1)

Next-Generation AI Outstanding Doctoral Human Development Project
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Comprehensive Support Package for Kobe University PhD students

A. Mid- to Long-term Internship Program
B. Mathematics/Data Science Education Program
C. Career Support Program for PhD

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(Appendix 2)

Next-Generation AI Outstanding Doctoral Human Development Project
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Review criteria and contents

Common screening items with the project for fostering the Next-Generation Outstanding Doctoral Human Development Project based on Co-creation in Different Fields

Review criteria	Contents
Research Achievements	Do the applicant's research achievements show future potential?
Positioning of Research	Does the applicant explain the background behind their chosen research theme, and is the idea outstanding?
Research aim/contents	Are the research aim, methodology, and contents clearly indicated? Does the research method show originality, and does the applicant indicate how they will develop their research topic?
Research Competency	Are the applicant's 'strengths in relation to research' and 'factors considered necessary for further development' concretely explained, and are they able to sufficiently self-analyzed their own research performance? In addition, do they fully expect to become an outstanding researcher who bears responsibility for the future of academia?
Mathematics/Data Science	Does the applicant have a strong desire to acquire data science training?
Development into multidisciplinary co-creation research	Does the research plan or future plan contain aspects that are expected to be developed into multidisciplinary co-creation research?
Development of challenging research	Does the research plan or future plan contain aspects that are expected to be developed into pioneering/challenging research?
Development of new research fields	Is the applicant not only eager to contribute towards the development of their current specialized field but also to break into and develop new research fields?
Capacity to resolve social issues	Has the applicant paid attention to social issues? Have they acquired the skills via their doctoral research to contribute towards resolving these issues? How to contribute to science, technology, and innovation in Japan in the future.
Future Plan	How to contribute to science, technology, and innovation in Japan in the future

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(Appendix 3)

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Review criteria	Contents
Positioning of AI Research	Is the background leading to the establishment of the AI research problem presented, and is the conception of the problem excellent?
Purpose and Contents of AI Research, etc.	Are the objectives, research methods, and research content of the AI research specific and beyond the level of simply using general AI technology?
Next Generation AI Research Competency	Do you have the competencies to promote and lead research in the field of next-generation AI?
Contribution to next-generation AI research	How to contribute to science, technology, and innovation in the field of next-generation AI in Japan in the future

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(Appendix 4)

Mathematics/Data Science Education Program

Students are required to take at least 2 credits from among the programs scheduled to be offered mainly by the University's Center for Mathematical and Data Sciences. For your reference, the programs offered in 2025 are listed below. Depending on the graduate school, some of these programs may not be regular credit courses.

Course Title	credit	Contents
Advanced Data Science 1	1	In Advanced Data Science 1, students learn about the technical aspects of artificial intelligence and machine learning, which are the foundation of data science. In Advanced Data Science 2, problem-solving workshops are held on the practical applications of data science based on case reports from companies on the user side of artificial intelligence technology and companies that provide technology (companies on the seed side).
Advanced Data Science 2	1	
Exercise in Practical Data Science, A	1	Learn data analysis methods and acquire basic knowledge to solve problems. Also, learn how to operate the system through hands-on exercises using actual data.
Exercise in Practical Data Science, B	1	PBL (Project Based Learning) through group work, in which data that may be relevant to actual issues is provided by the local government, with the aim of setting and solving issues through data analysis and analysis.
PBL Exercises in Data Science (contest type)	1	Practical learning of how to handle data, classification and regression problems using Python through PBL (Project Based Learning) exercises modeled after data science competitions.
JRI-Kobe Open innovation Workshop Financial Business and Information System Engineering	1	Through PBL (Project Based Learning) group work, students will learn how the basic technologies of information systems engineering, such as algorithms, data structures, cyber security, information communication networks, and artificial intelligence, are used in actual financial businesses and how they are deeply related to each other.
Theory of Stochastic Processes	2	Students will understand the rudiments of stochastic analysis based on Brownian motion. Students will also be exposed to Black-Sholes theory, which has applications in financial engineering. *Advanced knowledge of mathematics is required as the level is quite high.
Topics in Applied Mathematics 3a	1	Learn the basic concepts of various statistical methods and how they are used in real life.
Topics in Applied Mathematics 3b	1	