July 25, 2023

FY 2023 UTEC-UTokyo FSI Research Grant Program Application Guidelines

1. Objective

The University of Tokyo Edge Capital Partners Co., Ltd. (UTEC) is a venture capital firm investing in venture companies which effectively use the excellent intellectual properties and human resources of universities and research institutions including the University of Tokyo. Since its inception back in 2004, UTEC has made venture capital investments in 5 limited partnerships with the commitment of approximately JPY 85 billion as of June 2023, and has supported the activities of start-ups pioneering the science and frontier technologies developed by the University of Tokyo and other institutions.

In February 2020, the UTEC-UTokyo FSI Foundation (hereinafter referred to as the "Foundation") project was established with donations to the University of Tokyo Foundation from UTEC. The UTEC-UTokyo FSI Research Grant Program was subsequently created and calls were made for applications to support researchers conducting leading-edge research at the University of Tokyo. The UTEC-UTokyo FSI Research Grant Program is now calling for new applications in the 2023 fiscal year.

The main features of the program are as follows.

(1) The need for reporting following the awarding of the grant has been removed so that the grant recipients can concentrate on their research as much as possible.

(2) The grant recipients' main obligation is to submit research papers to prominent academic journals. However, in the fields of humanities and social sciences, academic research publications that are highly evaluated internationally are also deemed to meet the program's requirement.

(3) Fundamental research is emphasized, but short-term practical or commercial viability of the research project is not required.

2. Target Research Field

This grant program is for research in the fields of natural/applied/social sciences or humanities.

3. Outline of the Grant

(1) Aim for use of the Grant

Subsidy to cover expenses to develop fundamental research areas and fundamental technology, which will become the cornerstone of future academic research.

(2) Grant Amount and Duration

Type A: Around JPY 20 million per project for a duration of two years (FY 2024 and 2025).

Type B: Around JPY 5 million per project for a duration of two years (FY 2024 and 2025).

*Adopted applications for FY2021: Type A: 10, Type B: 7

(3) Number of Research Projects to be Selected

Around 10 projects.

4. Eligibility

(1) Researchers who have an employment relationship with the University of Tokyo as of April 1, 2024. A recommendation from a professor or associate professor of the University of Tokyo is required only if the applicant is not employed by the University of Tokyo at the time of application.

(2) There is no age limit for application, but preference is given to young researchers (generally within 15 years of receiving their degrees). Any interruptions in your research career due to life events such as childbirth or childcare should be indicated in the remarks column of the application form. Open to all nationals.

(3) It should be noted that an absence of excessive concentration through the acquisition of other competitive funds shall be assumed.

5. Application Method

(1) Those who wish to apply for the grant program should submit the prescribed application form (a maximum of 7 pages of A4 paper in total) through the designated online system by the deadline. The title of the application form should be "Date of Submission (8 digits in western style (YYYYMMDD)), Name". The application form should be written in Japanese or English.

(2) The application form can be downloaded from/submitted using the following links.

<Application Form>

https://www.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ja/research/systems-data/utec-utokyo_fsiresearchgrant.html

<Submit to>

https://webfs.adm.u-tokyo.ac.jp/public/qSonwQ-JkfBK40QbvgD_9is_fTjU-Hh_nzq_-q1mWbos

6. Application Period

Opens: Wednesday, July 26, 2023 @ 12:00 (noon) (JST)

Closes: Friday, September 1, 2023 @ 15:00 (JST)

7. Selection Process

Following the screening of applications by the selection committee members, the UTEC-UTokyo

FSI Research Grant Program Steering Committee will interview candidates to determine the grant

recipients. The detailed schedule will be provided only to those who proceed to the interview

selection.

Application Screening Period: September 2023 (tentative)

Interview Selection Period: mid-November 2023 (tentative)

8. Results Announcement

The applicant and recommender (where applicable) will be notified of the results.

9. Selection Criteria

The steering committee will screen applications by focusing on the following criteria.

(1)   Academic importance of the research topic

(2)   Validity of the research method

(3)   Appropriateness of the ability to conduct research

(4)   The research project demonstrates development of internationally high-standard fundamental

       research areas and fundamental technology which in the future will have a great impact on

       solving worldwide problems or problems facing the human race.

(5)   The research project demonstrates originality created by the program applicant or the

       applicant's group member(s).

(6)   The research project demonstrates feasible approach to realize the research plan.

10. How the Grant will be Awarded

The grant will be awarded to the grant recipients by transferring the funds to their affiliated graduate school/institute from the Foundation.

Also, it is the donor's intention that the grant shall be used solely for the recipients' research.

11. Points to Consider about the Grant Recipient's Obligations and Other Responsibilities

(1) Grant recipients shall submit research papers to prominent academic journals. However, in the fields of humanities and social sciences, academic research publications which are highly evaluated internationally are also deemed to meet the program's requirement. If the grant recipients intend to publish an existing academic book published in Japan or an existing series of articles or papers as an English-language book, the content should be developed on the assumption that it will be widely referenced internationally.

(2) Grant recipients shall contact the Foundation officers about the selection of the academic journals and relevant matters with before submitting a paper to the journal.

(3) Grant recipients shall specify that the grant was awarded by the Foundation when publicizing the research findings in oral, written or social media presentations.

(4) Grant recipients shall submit the paper's reprint or the academic book to the Foundation officers when submitting research papers to journals or publishing an academic book.

(5) Grant recipients do not have to submit any progress or final report of the research project once the grant has been awarded.

(6) Grant recipients may be asked by the Foundation about the progress of the research.

(7) Grant recipients shall submit a grant usage report within one month after the end of the grant period.

(8) Grant recipients shall promptly notify the Foundation when the content described in the application form changes.

(9) The affiliation of the granted project representative, their position, name and the research theme may be released on the program website or other media.

【Contact Details】* In principle, response to inquiries will be by email.

About the program:

Planning and Coordination Team, Academic Promotion Planning Group, Research Promotion Department, The University of Tokyo

About the use of the grant and obligations of the grant recipients:

Office for University Development, Division for External Relations, The University of Tokyo

Email: utec_fsi.adm@gs.mail.u-tokyo.ac.jp