

Announcing the 2024 Academia Sinica Scholar Award

The Academia Sinica Scholar Award is established by Academia Sinica (AS) in accordance with its mission of "guiding, coordinating, and rewarding academic research." It aims to elevate the overall academic research standards of Taiwan and to strengthen collaboration and interaction between AS and universities, by encouraging and rewarding original research initiatives among Associate Research Fellows or Associate Professors and above from AS and local universities. Awardees will be recognized as "Academia Sinica Scholars" during the Award project implementation period, and those employed at universities will be jointly appointed to AS.

1. Applicant Eligibility

- (1) Full-time Associate Research Fellows or Associate Professors and above from AS and local universities, under the age of 55 (as of Dec 31 of the application year).
- (2) Awardees are allowed to apply for competitive renewal once, by submitting a project proposal for the following year within the same year that the previous grant expires. Only one extension request is permitted.
- (3) Current grantees of other major research awards or large-scale individual research program grants such as the NSTC Academic Summit Program, Frontier Science Research Program, Science Vanguard Research Program, Emerging Young Scholars, or International Outstanding Young Scholars, are ineligible to apply if the overlap with the duration of this Award project exceeds three months.

2. Application

- (1) **Award Project Type:** The Award supports individual research projects in the fields of physical and mathematical sciences, life sciences, and humanities and social sciences. Applicants are required to submit a project proposal based on their research expertise.
- (2) **Application Period:** Applications are accepted from now until November 30, 2023.
- (3) **Announcement of the Awards:** Tentatively scheduled for March 2024.
- (4) **Execution Period:** From April 1, 2024 to December 31, 2028 (a five-year duration).
- (5) **Application Process:**
 - a. Applicants from local universities must be on a recommended list of up to three candidates submitted by their affiliated universities to AS by Oct 31, 2023. AS will additionally select 3 AS candidates from applicants for the 2024 AS Investigator Award.
 - b. Recommended applicants from local universities must submit their applications through the "Academic Services Management System" of AS (<https://asms.sinica.edu.tw/>) by the application deadline. Late applications will not be accepted.

3. Review Process

- (1) Experts and scholars in relevant fields will be invited to serve as review panel members for different subject groups. The selection of projects for Award funding will be based on the review results and budget considerations. When necessary, applicants may be requested to give presentations.
- (2) Review Criteria:
 - a. The significance of the problem, innovativeness, international competitiveness, and potential for future development of the research content.
 - b. The projected outcomes and deliverables, well-justified budget allocation and manpower, and feasibility of the research methods.

- c. The research achievements of the applicant in the past five years and their proven ability to execute the proposed project.

4. Joint Appointment

- (1) Applicants from local universities may indicate their preferred AS Institutes or Research Centers for joint appointment in their applications. AS will initiate the process for the awardees.
- (2) The terms and regulations for the joint appointment will follow those of AS for all joint appointments.
- (3) Funding support will be discontinued in the event that the awardees terminate their joint appointments due to job transfers or other reasons.

5. Funding

- (1) A maximum annual budget of up to 8 million NTD will be provided to awardees based on the evaluation results of their submitted proposals. Up to five Academia Sinica Scholar Awards will be awarded to applicants from local universities. The actual approved budget for each year will depend on budget availability and progress made in the previous year.
- (2) Once the project grant amount is approved, no additional expenses related to the project may be added. Applications that are not funded will not be considered for appeals.
- (3) The budget may cover operational expenses, equipment costs, and student stipends, but not supplemental allowance for the awardees. For grants awarded externally to investigators from local universities, an additional 10% of the approved total budget will be provided to defray the local administrative cost. The allocation of funds should be based on the research needs of the project, and the disbursed funds for each year must be used within the same fiscal year.
- (4) Written justification must be provided when requesting funding for the next year if the current year's utilization percentage of the disbursed funds (actual amount used/ allocated amount) is below 70%. Reduced funding for the next year may apply accordingly.
- (5) The aforementioned budget items can be flexibly reallocated among different categories, but not to be transferred to the separately allocated budget for administrative costs.
- (6) To facilitate collaborative research to be carried out at AS by jointly appointed awardees, compensating hourly lecture fee will be provided by AS to their affiliated universities. This entitlement to request for a reduction in teaching workload is limited to one credited course per semester.

6. Execution and Evaluation

- (1) Prior to commencing the Award project, the awardee, serving as the Principal Investigator (PI) of the Award project, is required to sign an execution agreement with Academia Sinica. The regulations pertaining to Award project execution and assessment should be carried out in accordance with the content of this agreement.
- (2) The PI should submit an annual report three months before the end of each project year. AS will invite scholars and experts to evaluate the progress and outcomes. The evaluation results will serve as the basis for decisions regarding the continuation or termination of the grant, adjustments to the grant amount, and project modifications.

7. Fund Disbursement and Final Report

- (1) For awardees from within AS, the fund management should adhere to the accounting regulations of AS.

(2) For awardees employed at local universities:

- a. This Award covers a five-year period, with grant funds to be requested and reported annually
- b. The PI should submit the necessary documents for fund disbursement within one month of receiving the disbursement notice from AS.
- c. Any surplus funds from the grant for each year must be fully returned.
- d. The PI should submit financial settlement statements, original receipts, and surplus fund checks to AS for the annual fiscal year-end report, which should be done within one month prior to the end of each fiscal year.
- e. The PI is required to return certain income generated from the execution of the Award project, except for interest income, based on the following principles:
 - (i) Income generated from the research and development results and intellectual property rights of this Award project, including patent licensing, technology transfer, copyright licensing, equity distribution, and service income should be distributed to AS (the funding agency) according to the governing regulations
 - (ii) Income from penalties for contractor breaches and other derived income resulting from procurement should be fully returned or returned according to the original grant funding ratio. However, income that has already been incorporated into a university's endowment fund can be exempted from returning, and be handled accordingly.

8. Others

- (1) In cases where the Project PI is found to be in violation of academic ethics or conflict of interest regulations, the relevant AS regulations shall apply.
- (2) In case of ambiguity or other matters not explicitly addressed, the relevant AS regulations and related laws, or interpretations by AS shall apply.