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Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Q Does the discovery of a new species include the description of a new species?

A. "Discovery of new species" for this research grant broadly includes everything from the discovery of undescribed species to the description of new species. As stated in the call for applications, the grant will also support research not only on new species, but also on their ecology and functions, as well as new technologies and data science to facilitate their discovery in the ocean.

Q Who can apply? Can an individual apply?

A In principle, non-profit research institutions (foundations, incorporated associations, non-profit organizations, universities and other educational institutions, voluntary organizations for non-profit activities, etc.) are eligible as a representative research organization; for-profit companies and individuals are not eligible. Profit organizations are eligible to apply as joint research organizations. In all cases, any nationality is acceptable.

Q What do you mean by "organization from Japan"?

A. An "organization from Japan" here refers to any organization headquartered in Japan (whether for-profit or non-profit, academic research institution, etc.). As for how you specifically plan to involve persons affiliated with organizations from Japan or Japanese nationals affiliated with overseas organizations in your project, please provide details in "(11) Plan for Participation by Organization from Japan or Japanese Nationals" in the application form.

Q What is your fiscal year?

A. From April 1 to March 31.

The first phase will be contracted from November 2023 to the end of March 2025, but you will be required to submit an accounting report as of March 2024 as well as March 2025.

Q Is there a limit to the amount of grant I can apply for?

A The maximum budget is 3 million USD per project for a maximum of 3 years and 5 months (total for the three phases). In Japanese yen, the upper limit is about 400 million yen (Calculated at an exchange rate of 1USD = 133.53 yen). There is no set budget limit for each phase.

Q Can I receive funding from other organizations for the project I am applying for?

A Yes. However, they may not be used for the exact same subject. It is acceptable for multiple

proposals to complement each other in pursuit of a single theme.

Q Is it possible to prepare an application in a language other than English?

A No. The application form must be completed in English.

Q What should I keep in mind when preparing my project budget plan?

A In the budget plan, please record the expenses necessary for the implementation of the project by activity.

Q Can I use the grant money for personnel expenses or overhead costs?

A Yes. However, they must be related to the implementation of the project for which the application is submitted. As a result of the Evaluation, adoption may be at a lesser Grant amount than at the time of application.

Q Can I apply only for the first phase?

A No. Please plan up to the third phase.

Q Can I send the application form by mail or fax?

A Applications will only be accepted by e-mail. Applications will not be accepted by mail or fax.

Q When is the grant decided and when can I start using it?

A In principle, the screening results will be decided in October. Expenditures to which the grant will be applied will be those incurred after the project start date (scheduled for November 1), which is stated in the "Grant Agreement" to be concluded between the grantee and the Foundation.

Q How will the grant be paid?

A After the "Grant Agreement" is signed between the Foundation and the representative organization, the grant will be transferred to the designated account in two or three installments; in the case of two installments, the first payment will be made by the end of the month following the date of the agreement, and the second payment will be made after the interim report is submitted. In the first phase, the grant may be paid in three installments (the second payment is scheduled for April 2024, after the submission of the interim report). If the closing amount is lower than the remitted amount, the difference will be refunded.

Q Can I apply as a Feasibility Study (FS) proposal?

A We do not accept proposals in the FS category from the beginning. If a proposal is judged to be too

difficult to be adopted as a regular proposal, it will be adopted as a FS project. In such cases, the applicant will be asked to resubmit a plan and budget with a maximum of US$300,000 for the first phase.

Q Does the joint research organization also have a grant agreement with SPF?

A Only the representative organization signs the grant agreement with SPF. The representative organization will compile research reports and accounting documents. The representative organization is required to conclude individual agreements (joint research agreement, contract research agreement, etc.) with the collaborating organizations. There is no format or content specification for individual contracts.

Q How do I remit funds to a collaborating institution?

A The method of remitting funds to the joint research organizations will be decided by the representative organization and the joint research organizations in individual contracts after discussion. The SPF is not subject to exchange rate fluctuations during the research period.

Q How should I write the budget of a joint research institute in the cost estimate? If a team is formed by a Japanese and an overseas research institute, is it possible to make a total budget in two currencies?

A Please adopt the same currency (U.S. dollars or Japanese yen) and prepare separate sheets. Remittances from the Foundation to the representative organization will be made in that currency. However, this does not preclude the representative organization from remitting funds to the joint organizations in a different currency.

Q Are the interim/final report for administrative purposes and the (interim) report on research results separate?

A They are two different things. The interim/final report for administrative purposes is an administrative document that reports the state of progress/completion of the project and is required for payment and other administrative procedures. A report on research results is a substantive report on the results of the research.