

Administrative Notice

22 February 2023

To: The staff responsible at universities and institutions

Overseas Fellowship Division
International Policy Planning Department
Headquarters for International Affairs
Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)

Trial Implementation of System to Allow Divided Stays
for FY2023 JSPS Invitational Fellows Who Suspend Their Fellowships

※This document consists of two parts, one written in Japanese and the other in English. If any differences in wording or interpretation should occur between two parts, Japanese part will take precedence.

1. Outline

Under the current fellowship system, Fellows must continuously stay in Japan during the period of their fellowship tenure. They are not allowed to divide or split their stays. When Fellows take temporary leave from Japan for unavoidable reasons, they cannot extend their tenure and their allowances will be reduced for the period of that leave.

Toward easing this policy, a trial implementation of a system is launched to allow Fellows to more flexibly suspend their fellowship and to extend their tenures for the suspended period. The system is made available for invited Fellows who for unavoidable reasons wish to suspend their fellowships.

The trial implementation of this system is not scheduled to be carried out in FY 2024 as a test to verify its operation will be conducted that year. Changes may be made to the system in FY 2025 and after based on the results of the test.

2. Objective

To increase the flexibility of the fellowship system and make it more conducive to advancing Fellows' research activities, sidestepping current policies regarding fellowship shortening, temporary leaves of absence, and fellowship refusal.

3. Eligible Researchers

Fellows invited under the FY2023 JSPS Invitational Fellowships for Research in Japan (Long-term, Short-term)

4. Periods and Number of Times of Suspensions

Periods of suspension are counted in one-day units. Only one suspension is allowed. The suspended period may be changed; however, the period from the start to the end of the fellowship including the extended period equal to the number of days that the fellowship is suspended must not exceed one year. That is, the aggregate period of the fellowship period equal to the number of months or days stipulated in the award letter and the extended period equal to the number of days that the fellowship is suspended must not exceed one year. If it exceeds one year, the period of the Fellow's tenure is shortened accordingly.

Fellows are eligible to use the suspension after two months or longer for Long-term Fellows, and 14 days or longer for Short-term Fellows after the start of the fellowship.

The number of days of the extended period is added on to the last day of the fellowship period.

If Fellows leave Japan when starting their fellowship suspension, the day of their departure and the day of their arrival back in Japan will be included in their period of suspension.

Example 1: Period of the fellowship including the suspended period is one year

Period of fellowship: 1 April 2023 to 31 January 2024 (10 months)

Suspended period: 1 June 2023 to 30 July (60 days)

Remaining days of tenure: 245 days

Date that fellowship restarts: 31 July 2023

Ending date of fellowship: 31 March 2024 (day 245 from 31 July 2023)

Example 2: Period of the fellowship is shorted because it exceeded one year from the start to the end including the suspended period

Period of fellowship: 1 April 2023 to 31 January 2024 (10 months)

Suspended period: 1 June 2023 to 31 July (61 days)

Remaining days of tenure: 245 days

Date that fellowship restarts: 1 August 2023

Ending date of fellowship: 31 March 2024 (day 245 from 1 August 2023; 1 April 2024 is cut)

5. Handling of Allowances

Regardless of whether the Fellow is residing in or outside Japan during the suspended period, allowance will not be paid during that period. During the period until they restart their fellowship, Fellows are to take proper charge of the allowances (etc.) paid to them up to the time they suspended their fellowship.

Regardless of whether the Fellow is residing in or outside Japan during the suspended period, they will not receive JSPS's overseas travel insurance during the period of their fellowship suspension.

JSPS does not bear any costs related to the suspension of a Fellow's fellowship or to related emigration from or immigration to Japan (including flight tickets).

Invited Fellows will be responsible to pay any costs added to their roundtrip air fares that may result from their fellowship suspension. When Fellows need to return their flight tickets, JSPS will provide them with separate instructions.

6. Release from the Obligation for Fellows to Concentrate on Their Research

During the suspended period, invited Fellows are exempt from the obligation to concentrate on their planned research. As, however, they retain their status as JSPS Invitational Fellows during the suspended period, this does not release them from observing the fellowship's rules and procedures.

7. Suspension Procedure (Forms and Submission Deadline)

(1) When starting suspension

Invited Fellows who wish to suspend their fellowships must first contact their host researcher and host institution. As a rule, they should fill out the form "Suspension-1 Application for Fellowship Suspension" and submit it via their host institution to JSPS one month prior to the date that they wish to suspend their fellowship.

(2) When changing the period of suspension

Invited Fellows who wish to change their already-approved period of suspension must first contact their host researcher and host institution. In both the cases of lengthening and shortening the suspended period, the invited Fellow should fill out the form "Suspension-2 Application for Changing the Period of Fellowship Suspension" and submit it via their host institution to JSPS. As a rule, the form should be submitted one month before starting a longer suspended period and one month before ending a shorter period.

(3) When restarting the fellowship

Invited Fellows who wish to restart their fellowship must first contact their host researcher and host institution. As a rule, they should fill out the form “Suspension-3 Notice of Fellowship Recommencement” and submit it via their host institution to JSPS one month prior to the date that they wish to restart their fellowship. If this form is submitted late, it may cause a delay in the payment of allowances. Also, if the form is not submitted by the end of the fellowship period (a period of one year from the start of the fellowship including the extended period), the fellowship will be considered shortened and ended.

8. Points to Bear in Mind

- Suspensions will only be approved when JSPS judges them to be unavoidable.
- Suspensions will not be approved that entail a significant difference in the content of the Fellow’s research vis-à-vis his/her initially submitted research plan.
- There are cases when a Fellow leaving Japan will be required to obtain permission from the immigration bureau to reenter Japan. Fellows should inquire about this requirement with the immigration bureau in advance. JSPS does not assist Fellows with immigration processing.
- In the approach to the one-year upper limit of the fellowship period including the extended period, JSPS does not issue notices to Fellows. Host institutions are asked to manage Fellows’ schedules up to the last day of their fellowship periods including the extended period. Fellows who will not restart their fellowships after suspending them and who will shorten and end their fellowships, should submit Form 5, Application for Schedule Change. Any overpaid allowances (etc.) already received at that time must be refunded to JSPS. JSPS does not cover any handling charges related to making reimbursements. It’s noted that making bank transfers outside Japan may cost more than doing them while in Japan.
- If Fellows shorten or refuse their fellowships without using this trial suspension system, JSPS may inquire as to their reasons.