Tsukuba-Hamburg Networking Challenge Grant
-International and Transdisciplinary Research Team Building
for Early-Career Researchers-
Application Guideline for the Phase 1

Research Administration/Management Office,
University of Tsukuba

1. Purpose

The world has entered the VUCA era (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity), an era of rapid change, complexity, and unpredictability. To challenge academic difficulties and solve the problems we face on a global scale, it is more important than ever to fuse the natural sciences, the humanities, and the social sciences. It is also necessary to create excellent seeds for the future and to promote transdisciplinary research. Currently, in Japan, there is concern about the lack of mobility of researchers and the decline of their international status. Therefore, producing researchers with diverse ideas and global perspectives is needed.

2. Outline of the project

This project is a joint effort between the University of Tsukuba (Japan) and the University of Hamburg (Germany) to connect promising early-career researchers from both universities to form international and transdisciplinary networks and teams to tackle challenging academic problems and important research issues at the global level. This project invites researchers from a wide range of fields and provides financial support for building multidisciplinary teams based on unconventional research ideas. By creating opportunities to collaborate with researchers in a variety of fields, the project will develop research concepts and create new fields that will contribute to scientific innovation.

3. Research themes

The research themes of this call are 1) Exploration of Manuscript Culture, and 2) Climate Change

① **Exploration of manuscript culture**

From the centuries-old Arabic Koran to biblical manuscripts to fragments of Homer's Iliad, manuscript culture contributed the world's cultures long before the progress of printing technology. Researchers from various disciplines, including the humanities, natural sciences, computer science, and psychology, will focus on handwritten materials

to expand transdisciplinary collaboration. Today, manuscript continues to play an important role in many cultures, and this project will focus on exploring manuscript culture from an interdisciplinary approach.

➢ **Image of research network activity**

Example: A researcher of pre-medieval documents of Japan and China

This time, I would like to focus on the organisms (plants, animals, bacteria, etc.) in those documents and discuss with biologists to identify interesting research topics. Since plants and animals are also food for humans, I would also like to talk with researchers in food science and medicine. Historically, a stable supply of food through cultivation has required planned labor, organized villages, and expand disparity in wealth, but those social developments differ depending on the type of food (meat, plants, or fish). I will also talk to historians and sociologists.

② **Climate change**

It focuses on the elucidation of the problem from various fields to prevent global warming.

➢ **Image of research network activity**

Examples:

- How people responded to the benefits and harms of climate change, according to records in ancient documents.
- How has climate change affected food production and people's livelihoods?
- How should governments respond to climate change in national policies, strategies, and plans?
- What education and enlightenment are needed in academia and society to reduce the effects of climate change?
- What organizational management is needed?
- How do you improve the capacity of developing areas and small island nations to effectively plan for and manage climate change, with an emphasis on women, young people, and marginalized communities?

4. Project plan

In Phase 1, early-career researchers will visit the partner university by the end of FY 2022(March 31, 2023) to have actual discussions with researchers in different fields and to seek research collaborators. Specifically, by the deadline of the call (December 12, 2022), at least one collaborative researcher from the partner university will be selected ideally, (prior discussion with a collaborating researcher is recommended) and a team formation plan will be submitted with researchers from multiple fields to develop the
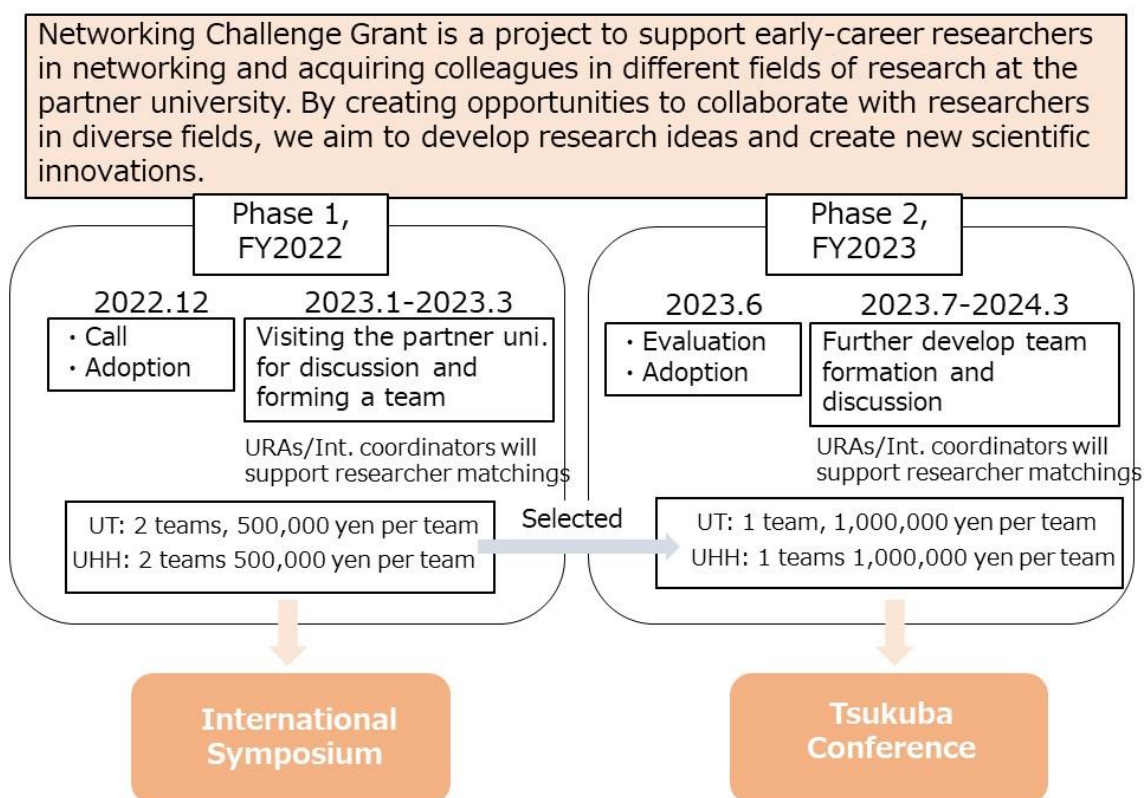
research idea. The URAs and international coordinators at both universities will support researchers in matching to form teams before and after applications are submitted.

To expand international and transdisciplinary experience (ideas, difficulties, innovations, and gains when forming teams with transdisciplinary researchers) at both universities, a symposium will be held in May 2023 to present the results.

In FY2023, the review committee will select one outstanding team based on the FY2022 team activity results to further develop the research ideas and to exercise their experience in international and transdisciplinary team building. The selected team will receive additional support of approximately 1 million yen until the end of FY2023 (March 31, 2024).

Matching support

For those who request the matching support, the URA and international coordinators will introduce researchers from the partner university (matching support) in accordance with the research concept. The support will be only for matching, and will not include support for the content of the application.

Networking Challenge Grant is a project to support early-career researchers in networking and acquiring colleagues in different fields of research at the partner university. By creating opportunities to collaborate with researchers in diverse fields, we aim to develop research ideas and create new scientific innovations.

Phase 1, FY2022		Phase 2, FY2023	
2022.12	2023.1-2023.3	2023.6	2023.7-2024.3
· Call · Adoption	Visiting the partner uni. for discussion and forming a team	· Evaluation · Adoption	Further develop team formation and discussion
	URAs/Int. coordinators will support researcher matchings		URAs/Int. coordinators will support researcher matchings
UT: 2 teams, 500,000 yen per team UHH: 2 teams 500,000 yen per team		UT: 1 team, 1,000,000 yen per team UHH: 1 teams 1,000,000 yen per team	

Selected

International Symposium

Tsukuba Conference

5. Application requirements

This call is open to early-career researchers, including post-doctoral fellows, who meet the following requirements:

1) The applicant must have a doctoral degree (PhD) or a similar degree.
2) The applicant should be within approximately 15 years of receiving his/her last PhD degree.
3) The applicant must be employed by the University of Tsukuba.
4) Post-doctoral fellows must have the approval of their employer (host faculty member) in their field when applying as the applicant.
5) Other research institutions can participate in the project.
6) Ideally, at least one collaborative researcher from the partner university would be chosen. (Prior discussion with a collaborating researcher is recommended.)

6. Evaluation criteria

The following points will be considered in the review process.

1) **The research must be relevant to the theme.**
   Novelty and academic value of the research (high academic value in terms of potential development of new knowledge or concepts, research methods, etc.)
2) **Team formation plan, development potential**
   Challenging, creativity, and future prospects of the team formation plan
3) **Cross-disciplinary collaboration and fusion research**
   The need for collaboration and fusion research in different academic fields should be clear, and the significance of collaboration and fusion research of different fields by researchers from both countries should be clear through the formation plan.
4) **Internationality and synergy (significance of exchange with the partner country)**
   The need for academic exchange with the partner country should be clear, and the significance of the cooperation and academic exchange between researchers from the two countries through the team formation plan should be explained clearly.

7. The number of projects to be adopted

(Phase 1)
University of Tsukuba: about 2
University of Hamburg: about 2
(Phase 2) The results of Phase 1 will be considered as the basis for the screening process.
University of Tsukuba: about 1
University of Hamburg About 1

8. Schedule

[Phase 1: Travel Period, January 2023-March 31, 2023]

December 12, 2022 (Mon.), the Deadline for Applications

December 13-December 22, 2022, Screening

December 23 (planned), 2022, the Result Notification

January-March 2023, Travel Period

April 2023, Report Submission

May 2023 (planned), International Symposium on Sharing Achievement

[Phase 2: Travel Period, July 2023-March 31, 2023].

May or June 2023 (planned), Phase 1 Evaluation

End of June 2023 (planned), the Notification of the Phase 2 Results

September 2023, Participation in Tsukuba Conference

July 2023-March 2024 (planned), Travel Period

9. Financial support and travel period

1) Expense

The budget per team for Phase 1 (FY2022) is up to 500,000 yen.

The budget per team for Phase 2 (FY2023) is up to 1,000,000 yen.

2) Expenditure

- Travel expenses: Airfare, accommodation, etc. for research representative and research participants. Travel by the Principal Investigator is mandatory.
- Others: Expenses necessary to carry out the project (e.g., printing and binding expenses, equipment leasing expenses, miscellaneous service expenses, etc.) Purchase of computers with this grant is not allowed.

[Rules of Use]

1)Expenses may be combined with other expenses; 2) no expenses may be carried over to the next fiscal year.

3) Travel Period

(Phase 1)

The travel period is estimated to be at least one week.

10. How to Apply

Please submit an application form (Form 1) via U-rad system.

https://u-rad.sec.tsukuba.ac.jp/login/index.php?support_id=DBc2E1qSQgwHC7MNVoBD6w%3D%3D

11. Application Deadline

December 12, 2022 (Monday)

[Note]
Before traveling to the partner country, the URAs and international coordinators at both universities can support researchers in networking with various fields.

12. Obligations after adoption

- The adopted proposal will be announced on the URA website, COTRE, etc.
- Requires to participate in symposiums and other events conducted by the Research Administration/Management Office.
- Submit a report (by April 2023) and, if necessary, report on the progress of the research, acquisition of external funds, etc.
- Indicate in the acknowledgments that the project was funded by "Tsukuba-Hamburg Networking Challenge Grant" in conference presentations, paper presentations, etc.

13. Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us as follows.
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