

Call for Proposals: Ensemble Continuation Grants for Early Career Researchers 2025

Hiroo Yugami

Professor

Chairperson of Tohoku University Research Institutes' Director Meeting

Director of New Industry Creation Hatchery Center, Tohoku University

Yuki Kanda

Assistant Professor

Leader of Tohoku University Research Institutes' Ensemble Project Working Group

Institute of Fluid Science, Tohoku University

The Ensemble Project for Early Career Researchers in Tohoku University will provide research grants “Ensemble Continuation Grants for Early Career Researchers 2025” to promote joint research between several departments, mainly among early career researchers affiliated with the “Alliance of Research Institutes and Centers, Tohoku University”. The “Ensemble Continuation Grants for Early Career Researchers 2025” provides grants for ongoing research that is expected to develop further, based on the budding research proposal “Ensemble Grants for Early Career Researchers”. In addition, the research groups that were unfortunately not selected for the “Ensemble Grants for Early Career Researchers” by random selection may also apply if the research proposals are expected to develop further. We welcome applications from early career researchers, but we also welcome researchers regardless of their status if their affiliation meets the requirements in the application guidelines. We look forward to receiving your active application.

Application Guidelines

1. Period of research

From April 1, 2025 (scheduled) to March 31, 2026.

2. What is funded?

We will provide research funds up to 1,000,000 yen for about two projects. After a certain period, the grants will be distributed to the departments of the Alliance of Research Institutes and Centers, Tohoku University.

3. Selection process

At a review meeting to be held online on February 19, 2025, a decision will be made by vote. For details, please refer to “(Supplementary material 2) Review meeting”.

4. Eligible research projects

Research proposals conducted by research groups that fulfill either of the following two conditions are eligible.

- Research groups that were selected for the “Ensemble Grants for Early Career Researchers” in FY2023 or FY2024.
- Research groups that were not selected in the random drawing for the “Ensemble Grants for Early Career Researchers” in FY2023 or FY2024. (excluding groups that did not pass the screening process).

In addition to meeting the above criteria, the research group must be expected to further develop or expand the scope of the research theme from the research proposal application of “Ensemble Grants for Early Career Researchers”. Research proposals in all fields are eligible, but interdisciplinary or interdisciplinary research is not required. The research project that has already been funded by other grants is not eligible. Only one application per person, including the principal investigator and co-investigator, will be accepted.

5. Eligible principal investigator

Applicants (principal investigators) should be postdocs, research assistants, assistant professors, lecturers, and associate professors (including special appointments) who belong to each department of the Alliance of Research Institutes and Centers, Tohoku University. We especially welcome applications from early career researchers. Co-investigators other than the principal investigator are not subject to any restrictions on job title or status, but they are not eligible if it is clear that the group in more than one department will no longer be included in the majority of

the research period due to graduation or completion of the course.

6. Notes regarding application

<Group Composition>

- Herein, the “Alliance of Research Institutes and Centers” refers to Institute for Materials Research (IMR), Institute of Development, Aging, and Cancer (IDAC), Institute of Fluid Science (IFS), Research Institute of Electrical Communication (RIEC), Institute of Multidisciplinary Research for Advanced Materials (IMRAM), International Research Institute of Disaster Science (IRIDeS), Center for Northeast Asian Studies (CNEAS), Frontier Research for Interdisciplinary Sciences (FRIS), Advanced Institute for Materials Research (AIMR), Research Center for Accelerator and Radioisotope Science (RARIS), and New Industry Creation Hatchery Center (NICHe), International Center for Synchrotron Radiation Innovation Smart (hereinafter the same).
- In the case of concurrently serving or concurrently serving (including the mentoring system of the Interdisciplinary Research Institute), it is not considered to be more than one department by itself, even if you are a member of a group with researchers belonging to a department of the Alliance of Research Institutes and Centers, Tohoku University, which is your main activity base. Please refer to “Supplementary material 2 Details of Research Group” and carefully ensure your research members.
- The applicant (principal investigator) must be able to use the university's budget management system in one of the above departments.
- New members can be added to the research group which you applied for the “Ensemble Grants for Early Career Researchers”. It is also acceptable if some members leave the group, as long as the main members remain. The reason for the change of members should be stated in the application.
- If your proposal was screened out in when you applied for the “Ensemble Grants for Early Career Researchers”, you are also eligible to apply for this “Ensemble Continuation Grants for Early Career Researchers 2025”. If there are any changes in members, please refer to “(Supplementary material 3) Details of Research Group” and carefully ensure your research members. If you are not sure whether your research group is eligible to apply or not, please contact the Project Working Group in advance of the deadline.
- When students are selected as joint researchers, even if the student's affiliation is different from that of the principal investigator, if the main activity base (e.g. laboratory) is in the same department, it will not be considered as multiple departments.
- If it is difficult to determine whether the composition of the members of the applicant's representative/associate is eligible for the application, please check with the Ensemble Project

Working Group (WG) well in advance of the deadline.

<Restrictions>

- Only one application per person (including the principal investigator and co-investigator) is allowed.
- The principal investigator and co-investigator who were selected for the continuing grants last year will be excluded from the selection process (Table 1).

Table 1 Duplication restrictions

Where to apply	FY2024 Ensemble Grants	FY2025 Ensemble Continuation Grants (this proposal)
Applicant's status		
Ensemble Continuation Grants (adopted last year)	NG	NG

<Other>

- In principle, amendments to the application form after submission are not permitted. Please be careful not to make any typos.
- If your application contains false information, you will be excluded from the random selection and no further applications will be accepted.
- Applications that do not meet the application requirements.
 - When the member composition does not fall under multiple departments. If you cannot make a clear judgment, please check with the Working Group well before the deadline.
 - When the representative of the application is not a postdoc, assistant, assistant professor, lecturer, or associate professor (including specially appointed or designated) belonging to any department of the Tohoku University Affiliated Research Institutes and Centers Collaboration.
 - When the application form format is not followed.
 - Applications that do not indicate the minimum research content.
 - Applications without a valid breakdown of necessary expenses

7. Application form and submission

The application form must be completed in the prescribed format and converted to PDF format. Please submit the application form by the deadline from the URL below. For details of the application form, please refer to “(Supplementary material 1) How to fill out the application form”.

<https://forms.gle/oJqr99xbj1DMUajj7>

Deadline: January 31, 2025

8. Report on results

After the research period, you must submit a report on results. The deadline for submission is scheduled for May 2025. The report will be published on the website. In addition, the applicants will be required to present the research progress and results at a workshop scheduled to be held during the FY2025. When you publish your results, you should mention that your work was supported by the “Ensemble Continuation Grants for Early Career Researchers 2025”.

Please note that if you do not submit an achievement report or make a presentation at the workshop, you will have a disadvantage in judging for the future Ensemble Grant.

9. Change affiliated institution of the representative or co-researchers

If the affiliation of the representative or co-researchers changes during the research period, please contact Tohoku University Research Institutes' Ensemble Project Working Group as soon as possible. Please hesitate to apply if you have already known that the affiliation of the representative or co-researchers will change during the research period before the application.

10. Change research period

Changing the research period due to the principal investigator's overseas assignment or vacation etc. are not permitted. However, we will respond flexibly, such as by changing the principal investigator, please contact the Ensemble Project Working Group (WG).

11. Management

You are required to conduct your research in accordance with all regulations and guidance provided by the Tohoku University and your department regarding health and safety management, network management, prevention of research misconduct, compliance with laws and regulations, and so on. If any deviations from these rules are found, the support will be terminated.

12. Contact us

Ensemble Project for Early Career Researchers in Tohoku University Working Group

Email: [ensemble_secretariat \[at\] grp.tohoku.ac.jp](mailto:ensemble_secretariat@grp.tohoku.ac.jp)

(Supplementary material 1) How to fill out the application form

1. Research subject

The research subject should be brief and understandable your research.

2. Research group

Please list the names, affiliations, positions of the principal investigator and co-Investigator(s), and principal activity departments (research institutes, laboratories, etc.). Increase/decrease the “co-researcher” column as necessary.

If you are concurrently engaged in other departments due to dual appointments or concurrent positions, please be sure to list them in the “Affiliation and position (if you are concurrently engaged in other departments)”. For members affiliated with Frontier Research for Interdisciplinary Sciences (FRIS), please indicate the department of the mentor in the same column. If the member belongs to more than one department, please list the main department in which you reside in the “Principal activity department (if you are concurrently engaged in other departments)” section. There is no page limit for this item.

3. Research project

Based on the application for the “Ensemble Grants for Early Career Researchers”, please provide the background, details, and progress of the research you have conducted to date. Please explain the need to assemble a team and the responsibilities of each member. If there have been any changes in the members of the research group since you applied for the “Ensemble Grants for Early Career Researchers”, please explain the reasons in this section. Moreover, describe the research plan, methods, and expected results of the research to be conducted under this grant. If you have already received other research funding for a similar research project, please explain the differences between this application and the previous one in the appropriate section. The maximum length of this item is 2 pages. You may use figures and tables (color is acceptable).

4. Budget

Research expenses should be divided into the following categories: equipment, supplies, travel, honorarium/personnel expenses, and other expenses, and enter the amount and breakdown for each category. The expenses are limited to those necessary for the execution of this research in the following categories. Only those expenses that are necessary for the execution of this research should be included. Expenses for laboratory operations or expenses that are considered appropriate to be recorded as expenses for other research funds are not acceptable. There is no page limit for this item.

(Supplementary material 2) Review meeting

The review meeting will be held as follows.

1. The review meeting

- Date: February 19, 2025
- Venue: Online (The Zoom URL will be informed to participants)
- Deadline for application: January 31, 2025

2. Method of presentation

- The application form will be made available to all participants in advance.
- Each proposal has 30 minutes (20 minutes for presentation + 10 minutes for Q&A).
- Presenters must be either principal investigator or co-investigator
-

3. How to vote

- The review will be conducted by voting, and voting rights will be given to: (1) Ensemble project committee members and (2) Principal investigator or co-researcher who applied for the continuing project.
- Principal investigators and co-researchers are not allowed to vote for their own research proposals.
- You can only vote if you are attending all presentations (attendees will be identified for each presentation).
- One vote per research group is obligatory (regardless of whether the voter is the principal investigator or co-investigators). Research groups that do not vote, their application will be cancelled. Please note that votes cannot be cancelled if more than one vote is cast within a research group.

(Supplementary material 3) Details of research group

The research group must consist of the researcher affiliated with the departments of “Alliance of Research Institutes and Centers, Tohoku University” as the principal investigator and the researcher(s) from multiple departments within Tohoku University. If the principal activity departments of all members are the same, it is not considered as a multi-departmental group. If they meet the above criteria, members from other universities may be included. There is no limit to the number of members.

- Examples of research group

	NG	OK
e.g.	Principal investigator (RIEC)	Principal investigator (RIEC)
	Co-investigator1 (RIEC)	Co-investigator1 (IMR)
Reason	The group is not composed of multiple departments.	The group is composed of multiple departments.

	NG	OK
e.g.	Principal investigator (RIEC)	Principal investigator (RIEC)
	Co-investigator1 (RIEC)	Co-investigator1 (Graduate School of Engineering)

	Co-investigator2 (Other university)	Co-investigator2 (Other university)
Reason	The group is not composed of multiple departments in Tohoku University.	The group is composed of multiple departments in Tohoku University.

	NG	OK
e.g.	Principal investigator (RIEC)	Principal investigator (RIEC)
	Co-investigator (including students) (Graduate School of Engineering /RIEC)	Co-investigator (including students) (Graduate School of Engineering /IFS)
Reason	The group is not composed of multiple departments in Tohoku University.	The group is composed of multiple departments in Tohoku University.

	NG	OK
e.g.	Principal investigator (RIEC, XX lab.)	Principal investigator (RIEC, XX lab.)
	Co-investigator (including students) (Graduate School of Engineering /XX lab.)	Co-investigator (including students) (Graduate School of Engineering /YY lab.)
Reason	The principal activity departments of all members are the same, and the group is not composed of multiple departments in Tohoku University.	The group is composed of multiple departments in Tohoku University.

	NG
e.g.	Principal investigator (RIEC)
	Co-investigator1 (IMR, RIEC) ※The principal activity departments is RIEC
	Co-investigator2 (AIMR, RIEC) ※The principal activity departments is RIEC
Reason	The principal activity departments of all members are same, and the group is not composed of multiple departments in Tohoku University.

- The case of research group members affiliated with FRIS

The project working group consider that the “mentor department” of researchers affiliated with FRIS is as principal activity departments. Please note that even if their mentor departments are different, groups consisting of researchers belonging to only FRIS are not eligible.

	NG
e.g.	Principal investigator (FRIS) ※The mentor department is Graduate School of Engineering
	Co-investigator1 (Graduate School of Engineering)
Reason	The group is not composed of multiple departments.

	NG
e.g.	Principal investigator (FRIS) ※The mentor department is Graduate School of Engineering
	Co-investigator1 (FRIS) ※The mentor department is Graduate School of Science
Reason	The group is not composed of multiple departments.