

**Research Institute for Humanity and Nature**  
**FY2025 Call for Proposals for Research Project**  
**Feasibility Studies (FS)**

**I. Vision and Mission of the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature**

The Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN) was established in 2001 as an Inter-University Research Institute to conduct comprehensive research for solving global environmental problems.

Since its establishment, the core belief of the RIHN has been that “global environmental problems are a matter of human *culture* in the broadest sense of the word”, and the RIHN has been engaged in problem-solving research through a variety of research projects featuring "interdisciplinary research" centered on the fusion of the humanities and sciences, and "transdisciplinary research\*" rooted in direct collaboration between researchers and society.

\* Transdisciplinary research: It refers to research in which a community of researchers collaborates and cooperates with various stakeholders in society to create new value. It comprises multiple processes, such as identifying stakeholders, planning for collaboration, conducting joint research, disseminating research results, and implementing research in society.

The RIHN promotes research activities aimed at contributing to solving global environmental problems based on the following vision and mission.

**Vision**

To strive for the realization of an equitable, fair and sustainable society globally by formulating how the relationship of people and nature to be, from the community to global scale.

**Mission**

To lead the way in the comprehensive study of the environment that aims for a practice directed towards solving global environmental problems and a fundamental and inclusive understanding of the mutual interaction of humans and nature, based on interdisciplinary research that fuses humanities, social science and natural science and as well as transdisciplinary research that cooperates and collaborates with society.

**II. Program-Project System**

To comprehensively develop its research activities, the RIHN conducts research under a "program-project system," which links multiple research projects and their preparatory studies under a program that unites diverse research activities beyond existing disciplines and fields, based on the vision and mission stated above.

3 research programs that implemented for the 6-years of "Phase 4 Mid-term Goals and Plans" started in FY2022 include the following three perspectives in the research theme. Research projects are solicited and developed to accomplish the mission set for each program.

1. Perspective of exploring the understanding of environmental changes and the responses to degradation from the perspective of the global system.
2. Perspectives to explore the "way of life" in the Anthropocene through understanding environmental issues in terms of their connection to culture and value systems.
3. Perspectives to explore measures and thoughts for solving global environmental problems in collaboration with diverse actors in society, and to present mechanisms for realizing such solutions.

A research project affiliates with designated program however, Program-Project system enables all the projects to collaborate closely with other programs and projects utilizing resource of RIHN to encompass wide range of research disciplines of a project.

The formation of research projects is characterized by a system in which research is deeply developed and refined through internal and external reviews and evaluations at the RIHN. There are Incubation Study (IS), Feasibility Study (FS), and Full Research (FR) phases—with a Pre-Research (PR) phase as a preparatory period before FR.

Upon reaching the FR stage (including PR)—the final stage of research project formation—, the PI of the FR (Project Leader, PL) is required to become a full-time professor or associate professor of the RIHN, either by full transfer to the RIHN or by application of the Joint Appointment. This is because considering research projects as the core of the RIHN, the RIHN aims to create new ideas at the RIHN where research projects with diverse disciplines and frameworks assemble.

Thereafter, a FR will form a research group in collaboration with universities, research institutes, companies, local governments, etc., and you can utilize the various resources of the RIHN.

The final research outcome is expected to construct options such as a shift in people's awareness and values, and/or the specific nature of society, through the implementation of academic research and collaborative practice in society to solve global environmental problems.

Additionally, research projects must always be structured with researchers from different disciplines. Regarding the criteria required for research projects, please refer to Appendix 1 "Evaluation Criteria" of the "Detailed Rules for Implementation of Research Projects at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature".

Call for this year is exclusively for proposals that start with FS stage.



\* FY2026 call for proposal will be opened in a form of research groups of single fiscal year, and there will not be the call starting IS or FS to form FR.

### III. Project Trajectory

#### **Feasibility Study (FS): 1 year**

This joint research is performed to verify feasibility as a FR, with a maximum budget size of 4 million yen per year. During the FS phase, the FS Principal Investigator is required to become a visiting faculty member of the RIHN (FS Principal Investigators affiliated with the RIHN are subject to personnel screening to become a full-time faculty member).

FS is to go through the internal review by the RIHN (usually performed in late November) and the External Research Evaluation Committee (usually held in February) comprising external review committee members from Japan and abroad, when passing the internal review. It may then be approved both by the RIHN Project Selection Committee and the RIHN Board of Advisors. It can proceed to the FR as early as April 2026.

#### **Pre-Research (PR): Within one year**

After the decision is made to transit to the FR stage, a preparation period within one year is allowed. The budget size is limited to 16 million yen per year (reduced by monthly installments if less than one year). During this period, preparations are possible to ensure a smooth launch of the research from the beginning of the FR stage, such as recruiting researchers.

PI is required to be employed as a full-time Professor or Associate Professor by the RIHN fully transfer or joint appointment to the RIHN to commence PR.

#### **Full Research (FR): 3 to 5 years**

The research period ranges from three to five years, with two types of budget plan: 50 million yen/year and 30 million yen/year; interchanges are possible until transition to the FR stage. The two budget types are established to respect the nature of the research themes and the diversity of the methods of integration and collaboration between the humanities and sciences; they do not represent differences in the significance of the projects.

-FR annual budget up to 50 million yen per year, not to exceed 250 million yen in five years

-FR annual budget up to 30 million yen per year, not to exceed 150 million yen in five years.

Please be advised that the budget management is done at RIHN, and the amount shown for each research phase is subject to change depending on the budget amount allocated as an operating grant.

### IV. Content of the Call for Research Proposals

The call for research projects is based on the mission of the RIHN, and research programs. Presently, we accept applications for the following programs, therefore understanding of the attached mission

statements is required, and that the content of proposed research plan matches—or is partially related to—that orientation.

Program Name	Program Director	Scheduled Date of Calls
Towards a Global Environmental Culture by Articulating Science with Indigenous Knowledge	Motoji Matsuda	For FY2022 starts (IS and FS) FY2023 starts (FS only) <i>*Call closed</i>
Combining knowledge for a fundamental innovation of land use to combat global environmental challenges	Mikitaro Shobayashi	For FY2023 starts (IS and FS) FY2024 starts (FS only) <i>*Call closed</i>
Co-creation of the sustainable future based on the linkage of the earth-human system	Makoto Taniguchi	<del>For FY2024 starts (IS and FS)</del> FY2025 starts (FS only)

Programs Subject to this Call	Outline of Research
<b>Co-creation of the sustainable future based on the linkage of the earth-human system (Co-creation of the Earth-human System)</b> Program Director Taniguchi	We will define the various thresholds and linkages in the earth-human system which have been causing complex problems of global environment. We are aiming to transform the relationship between humanity and nature for the sustainable future by changing our lifestyles, values, and behaviors, as well as creating the multi-scale social design that connects locals, regions and the global.

Please contact the program director for the requirements related to the program, while general contact below for administrative inquiries.

Program Director and Professor, Makoto Taniguchi  
 Contact: makoto[at]chikyu.ac.jp

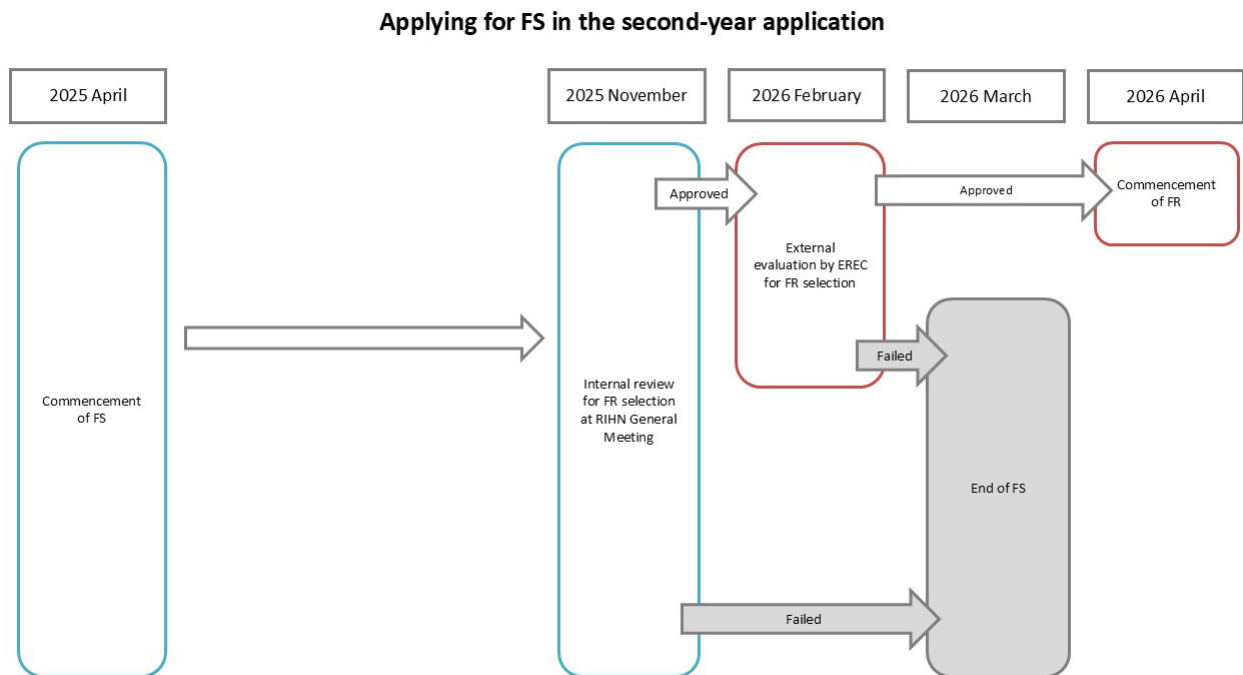
## V. Characteristics of the Call Starting FY2025

This is the second year of the "**Co-creation of the Earth-human System**" program.

In the second-year open call, owing to program time constraints, there will be NO call for proposals that begin with IS, but only those begin with FS. Research proposals from the FS phase must undergo the FR transition internal review approximately six months after the commencement of the research; therefore, thorough understanding of the program is required.

If the proposal is adopted, commencement FS in April, the internal review for FR transition will occur approximately in 6 months, at the end of November. If FR proposal is approved by the internal review, and the RIHN approves its transition to FR after the external evaluation, FR can start already in following April.

\* PR is not considered below



## VI. Personnel Procedures for Project Leaders

Upon reaching the FR stage (including PR), the **Project Leader (PL) is required to become a full-time professor or associate professor at the RIHN, either by fully transfer to the RIHN or by applying the joint appointment.** In either case, the personnel procedures will be thoroughly discussed between the RIHN and the PL's home institution and will be stipulated in a collaboration agreement or memorandum of understanding, as necessary.

To apply the joint appointment, you are asked to provide an effort ratio for the work of the RIHN in consultation with your institution before the internal review (RIHN General Meeting) in November. Based on the concept of allowing PLs to devote themselves to RIHN work as much as possible, the joint appointment system follows the policy that the effort ratio including participation in internal meetings, etc., should be **at least 70%**.

A Principal Investigator (PI) is premised to responsible for research from start of FS to end of FR. Therefore, change of PI in the midst of a project is not anticipated.

## **VII. Procedures for application**

### **1. Documents to be submitted**

- Form 1–7a, b Application Form for 2025 Feasibility Study  
(7a is for non-RIHN applicants and 7b is for in-house applicants, and only the approval sections of these forms differ.)
- Form 1–8 2025 Feasibility Study Proposal
- Applicant's CV
- Names and contact information of two persons who can provide reference opinions (only for those who fall under the category of "4. Eligibility (2)" in VII Procedures for application)

### **2. Submission deadline: Monday, January 20, 2025, 10:00 a.m. (Japan Standard Time)**

- Official sealed form 1–7 should be scanned and submitted as PDF files attached to your email. The original does not need to be sent by postal mail.
- The subject of the application e-mail should be "[FY2025 FS Call for Proposals] your name and affiliation."
- If you do not receive a confirmation email by 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 22 JST, please contact us.

### **3. Address for submission:**

By email: opencall[at]chikyu.ac.jp

By postal mail:

457-4, Kamigamo Motoyama, Kita-ku, Kyoto 603-8047, Japan

Research Planning Subsection, Research Support Section, Administrative Office, Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN)

### **4. Eligibility of Applicants**

- (1) Professors, Associate Professors, Lecturers, and Assistant Professors at national, public, and private universities
- (2) Those who are equivalent to (1) above (in this case, the names, telephone numbers, and email addresses of two persons who can provide their opinions (references) about the applicant are required).
- (3) Those who are not yet 65 years of age as of March 31 in the fiscal year the FR is expected to start which starts only in April.

\*NIHU regulates retirement age of faculty staff as 65 years of age. Retirement day is the first March 31 after reaching 65, therefore continued employment is not possible afterwards. If applicants reach 65 years of age by March 31 in the year in which the beginning of implementation of PR or FR is planned, an employment contract cannot be executed and therefore they are not eligible as PI of PR or FR. Details on possible retirement of PI after starting FR will be explained in the explanatory meetings.



## 5. Research period

April 2025–March 31, 2026

## 6. Research expenses

The cost of travel, supplies, etc. can be planned within the limits of its budget. Please plan your budget within 4 million yen for FS. Please note that purchase of equipment (with a unit price of 100,000 yen or more) during the FS periods is not allowed.

## 7. Explanatory meetings

Explanatory meetings for faculty and administrative staff will be held to provide an explanation about research at RIHN and programs, practical explanation on this call. Attending this meeting is required for those who are planning to apply for this call. Please inquire [opencall\[at\]chikyu.ac.jp](mailto:opencall[at]chikyu.ac.jp) for details stating your name and affiliation in the message.

Day1: Wednesday, November 13, 10:00-11:30 JST

Day2: Wednesday, December 18, 16:00-17:30 JST

Same contents on both days. Please inquire about individual arrangement only if attending these days is not possible.

## 8. Schedule the following application (Please note that this is the current schedule and is subject to change.)

-Explanatory meetings on the call and procedures	November 13 (Wednesday) and December 18 (Wednesday), 2024
-Deadline of application	January 20 (Monday), 2025
-Notification of document screening results	Beginning of February, 2025
-Research presentation (at the RIHN) Review of proposals that have passed the document screening	February 18 (Tuesday), 2025 (Reserve date*) February 19 (Wednesday)
-Commencement of research	April 1, 2025
-RIHN General Meeting in Kyoto City (FS only)	November 25 (Tuesday) – 27 (Thursday), 2025
-External Research Evaluation Committee Meeting at the RIHN *Presentation review of proposals that have passed the internal review at RIHN General Meeting (FS only)	February 3 (Tuesday)–5 (Thursday), 2026

\* A "reserve date" is a substitute date if the screening cannot be completed on the originally scheduled date owing to excessive applications, or other reasons.

The applicant may not themselves designate a reserve date.

## 9. Screening and post-adoption process

Proposals that pass the document screening process will be presented at a meeting attended by staff members of the RIHN, followed by a comprehensive review by the Project Selection Committee.

In evaluating research projects, the RIHN emphasizes the following three points: 1) the scope and significance of the research, 2) the appropriateness of the research proposal, and 3) an appropriate project design.

In 1) above, we are seeking original research based on a clear background and subject matter, and in light of existing research. All the research projects of the RIHN are international joint research, but this does not imply that the research is conducted at a foreign research site; the research must be based on an international perspective and the possibility of international dissemination. Additionally, the project must integrate perspectives from diverse disciplines in its research questions and concepts, beyond its area of expertise.

In 2) above, PLs are required to have an appropriate academic background, ability to work with society, and management skills, as well as apply appropriate methodologies to achieve the research objectives.

In 3) above, the project must have an appropriate structure, including research objectives, and human and material resources and budgets.

After the FS is adopted, the FS report and FR proposal will be presented at the RIHN General Meeting at the end of November 2025. Thereafter, after review by the Project Selection Committee, the proposals will proceed to the External Research Evaluation Committee in February 2026. As the RIHN conducts research project formation based on the assumption that FR will be implemented in the future, all FSs are subject to FR transitional review.

## 10. Reference materials

Kindly refer to the following for application instructions.

- Philosophy and Goals: [https://www.chikyu.ac.jp/rihn\\_e/about/philosophy/](https://www.chikyu.ac.jp/rihn_e/about/philosophy/)
- RIHN Prospectus [https://www.chikyu.ac.jp/rihn\\_e/publicity/brochure/](https://www.chikyu.ac.jp/rihn_e/publicity/brochure/)
- Mission Statement of the "Co-creation of the sustainable future based on the linkage of the earth-human system" program: [PDF](#)
- Research Institute for Humanity and Nature Program-Project Rules: [PDF](#)
- Detailed Rules for Implementation of Research Projects at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature: [PDF](#)

## 11. Notes

- The documents for submission should be written in the language specified, and in English or Japanese for all other parts.

- The language to be used at the presentation after passing the document review should be either Japanese or English, and the travel expenses for participation shall be borne by the applicant.
- The language used at the RIHN General Meeting (RGM) will be either Japanese or English, but the language used at the External Research Evaluation Committee Meeting will be English.
- In principle, presentations at presentation meetings, the RGM, and the External Research Evaluation Committee Meeting should be made at each presentation site.

General Contact:  
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