

National Science and Technology Council
Partnership Program for the Connection to the Top Labs in the World –
Dragon Gate Program

The National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) is the government agency dedicated to promote scientific and technological development in Taiwan. NSTC supports academic research in Taiwan through providing grants to Taiwanese scientists of educational and research institutions for their research projects as well as for their international academic activities.

In order to participate actively in the advanced research work outside Taiwan, NSTC launched a new project known as “Partnership program for the Connection to the top labs in the world (Dragon Gate Program)” for young scientists to carry out research works abroad with their foreign partners in 2010. We hope this Program could give Taiwanese scientists opportunities to establish new partnerships for mutual benefits and to strengthen the cooperative relations and network with first-rate research institutes. Additionally, these Taiwanese scientists could contribute greatly to the global scientific and technological development in the future.

Contents of the program:

The NSTC will issue call for proposals in the first season of each year and select well-qualified candidates within 4 months after application deadline.

1. Being a research team from Taiwan willing to devote the cooperative program in a foreign country

In order to enhance the strength of cooperation, the NSTC will select a team of researchers to go abroad and carry out research work in a foreign research institute.

The research team, with group member from 2 to 5, consists of one PI, one Co-PI (optional) and one (up to three) Ph.D. student or post-doctoral researcher(s).

2. The NSTC will cover the required expenses

The NSTC will cover the expenses for the round trip airfares, living allowance, insurance as well as the scholarship. The stipends of scholarship are about US\$ 30,000 and US\$ 43,300 per year for each Ph.D. student and post-doctoral researcher, respectively. As for the PI, in addition to the living allowance and round trip air-tickets, the NSTC may also provide him/her with funding approved for his/her research work, if any, on a one-time basis. The total funding for research expenses is limited to 4 millions NT dollars (~US \$130,000) per year.

The world leading laboratories (WLL) participating under this program should grant laboratory access and provide standard office space for the Taiwan team to conduct research activity. In addition, the WLL is also agreed to host the PI and research personnel for the duration described above.

The WLL is allowed to request for an annual laboratory access fee or infrastructural expenses under this project, the Taiwan PI should itemized these expenses in the proposal before submit to the NSTC for review.

Responsible PIs should submit an interim or final progress report on our website within 3 month after the end of the project duration. The final report should be available for public inquiry if not involving sensitive technology, patents, or intellectual property.

3. Encouraging the Taiwanese Ph.D. students/Postdoc researchers to stay abroad for a longer period

As required by this program, each Ph.D. student or post-doctoral researcher must stay for research work at the foreign research institute for at least 10 months per year. The PI must stay at the cooperative research institute for at least two months per year. PI could invite a Co-PI to share the stay period for execution of the research abroad if necessary.

The research project can be extended for one additional year for strengthening the cooperative relations. The maximum length should not exceed 2 years.

4. Encouraging the Taiwanese team to develop long-term cooperative projects with its foreign partner

This purpose of this program is to encourage young Taiwanese scientists to establish long-term cooperative programs and relations with renowned research institutes in the world.

Therefore, during the selection process, the past performance of the PI, the quality of the proposal, the reputations of the host laboratory will be critically taken into consideration. The proposal merit review process consists of two stages. At first, experts in the relevant fields are invited to review the proposals. Then, the NSTC reviews the preliminary evaluation results and takes the comments of PIs at the corresponding foreign institutions into consideration. The grants are then awarded to the proposals based on the overall rating results. The items emphasized during the review process are as follows:

1. Past performance of the PI

2. Ability for project execution and PI's experience in international cooperation
3. Expertise and ability of the research personnel and the research benefit from conducting research abroad
4. Significance and innovation of the research project
5. Project feasibility and compatibility with the purpose of the program
6. The expected research outcomes and the necessity for and possible contribution to the technology development in Taiwan
7. Necessity, appropriateness, and prospects of the collaboration and mentoring relationship with international research teams.

Remarks:

- The NSTC has officially appointed our 17 Overseas Liaisons Offices (OLO) to be the primarily channel for communication with the WLL. Please refer to the link of their respective webpages for the further information: https://www.nstc.gov.tw/sci/ch/list?menu_id=a3c7966b-db7f-4def-b8f2-84cbe9694503&view_mode=listView
- The NSTC welcomes comments and suggestions from any WLL regarding this program; please express your valuable opinions via our OLO back to us. Contact person: Ying-Ying Wang, Associate Researcher at the Department of International Cooperation and Science of Education, NSTC.
E-mail: yywang@nstc.gov.tw
pchents@nstc.gov.tw