

Notice on the Application for 2023 International Sci-tech Cooperation Projects under the “Innovation Yongjiang 2035” Key R&D Programme

To further prop up sci-tech collaboration and interchange between China and other nations, and foster increased exchange of innovation resources, the application process for 2023 International Sci-tech Cooperation Projects under the “Innovation Yongjiang 2035” Key R&D Programme is hereby initiated in accordance with relevant sci-tech policies of Ningbo municipality. The particulars of this announcement are delineated as follows:

I. Eligibility

The 2023 International Sci-tech Cooperation Projects under the purview of the “Innovation Yongjiang 2035” Key R&D Programme mainly supports the research areas that align with the “315” science and innovation strategy of Zhejiang Province (Internet+, New Materials and Healthcare, and the 15 relevant research areas) and the Innovation Hub Development Plan of Ningbo City (New Materials, Industrial Internet and Key Core Basic Parts). The project shall encompass collaborative efforts of the Chinese applicant and its

overseas counterparts, with an aim of R&D progress or technological breakthroughs in advantageous areas of scientific innovation. Priority will be given to collaborations with nations/regions boasting robust innovation capabilities.

The 2023 International Sci-tech Cooperation Projects under the purview of the “Innovation Yongjiang 2035” Key R&D Programme have three tracks for prospective applicants: basic research projects, applied research projects, and experimental development projects.

1. Basic Research Projects. Projects qualifying for this track must have a dedicated focus on cutting-edge technologies and strategically vital realms of research. The applying projects are anticipated to consolidate and harness global innovation resources, augment global networks for sci-tech collaboration, confront significant scientific challenges, and generate pioneering scientific outcomes through experimental/theoretical research. Projects in this classification shall showcase the potential of effecting original breakthroughs.

Basic Research Projects are open for all research areas.

2. Applied Research Projects. Projects qualifying for this track shall dovetail with Ningbo’s industrial development trend, and

embody a foresighted approach to harnessing global innovative resources for the study of cutting-edge and disruptive technologies. The applying projects shall serve to foster the creation of technological prototypes that can transition to piloting implementation, expedite industrial breakthroughs within a concise timeframe, and instigate the emergence of forerunner industries.

Key supporting areas: functional materials, advanced manufacturing, digital twins, network communication, aerospace information, healthcare, dual carbon technology, artificial intelligence, etc.

3.Experimental Development Projects. Projects in this track shall serve for the demand of the competitive industries and key industrial chains in Ningbo. The applying projects shall be positioned at the forefront of specific technological domains, and be capable of effecting substantial technological breakthroughs. Preferably, these initiatives shall serve to enhance Ningbo's core competitiveness and its capacity for independent innovation, while amplifying economic output and generating consequential economic and social benefits.

Key supporting areas: integrated circuits, high-end equipment manufacturing, healthcare, new energy vehicles, etc.

II. Application Requirements

(1) Basic Requirements for Foreign Partners

The foreign partner must be a foreign institution (rather than an individual or a team) possessing independent legal personality, robust technical capabilities, high-level scientific research capacity, and demonstrated willingness & ability to collaborate with their Chinese counterparts. The foreign partner may participate by way of providing technologies, capital, information, advanced facilities, exclusive resources, etc.

(2) Basic Requirements for Principal Investigator and Core Members

1. The project leader, identified as the individual listed at the forefront of the application form, shall, as a guiding principle, be a current employee of the institution responsible for undertaking the project (or its collaborating unit). Additionally, the leader should possess a high academic standing or advanced technical expertise in the relevant technological field. They must be instrumental in developing the primary research concepts and leading the on-site research. Furthermore, the leader should demonstrate organizational, managerial and coordinating abilities that are essential for project

completion.

2. Each foreign partner entity shall assign at least one person to the project's R&D endeavors.

(3) Basic Requirements for The Projects

1. The applying project shall serve to bolster high-quality sci-tech innovation in Ningbo, align with local industrial development trajectory, and fall under the purview of key innovation domains in Ningbo. The project shall demonstrate a solid foundation, necessary conditions, and a well-defined model for international cooperation. The project proposal must outline the specific scope of cooperation, present reasonable and achievable collaboration plans, and articulate clear and measurable technical benchmarks. Priority will be given to those international sci-tech cooperation projects that can address challenging technological issues, align closely with local industrial needs, and potentially lead to the establishment of relevant intellectual property rights or the formulation of technical standards.

2. The Chinese and foreign parties must demonstrate good faith and mutual trust by signing a cooperation agreement. The agreement must be meticulously accurate and conform to professional

standards, bearing the signatures and seals of all involved parties. Critical aspects, such as specific tasks, workload distribution, conditions for research support, financial contributions from each party, budget allocations, and ownership of intellectual property rights, must be explicitly detailed. The agreement should include the names, institutions, departments, positions, and other pertinent information of the signatories. In cases where the official seal of the foreign partner is absent, the signature of the person in charge of the institution or the authorized department is required. The applicant must provide necessary explanations and relevant supporting and verification materials concurrently to validate the signatory's authority. If a formal project cooperation agreement is not signed at the time of application, a letter of intent for cooperation between the Chinese and foreign parties shall be submitted instead. However, upon project approval, the project cooperation agreement must be submitted before finalizing the *Project Contracts and Plans for the Ningbo Key R&D Programme*. The collaboration period generally should not exceed three years.

3. Infrastructure construction, equipment procurement projects, non-STEM research projects (such as policy and administration studies), or projects involving mature technologies, product

development and marketing are not eligible.

III. Policy Support

1. The funding for basic research projects generally shall not exceed RMB 1 million, and shall be mainly for universities and research institutes. The funding for applied research projects generally shall not exceed RMB 2 million. The funding for experimental development projects generally shall not exceed RMB 5 million.

2. For projects involving enterprises, the allocated funding shall not surpass 1/3 of the total approved budget. Projects solely undertaken by state-owned scientific research institutes, institutions of higher education, or other state-owned entities shall adhere to a funding limit equivalent to the total approved project budget.

3. When the applicant necessitates the allocation of funds to foreign partners, they are required to deploy their own resources for this specific purpose. The management of funds associated with the project must comply with the stipulations outlined in *Measures for the Management of Special Funds for Sci-tech Development in Ningbo (Revised Version)* (Ningbo Sci-tech Funds [2022] No. 36).

4. In cases of equal merit across other criteria, consideration

will be accorded to collaborations with countries from the Central and Eastern European (CEE) region and the projects affiliated with international science and technology cooperation bases.

IV. Application Procedure

1. Application. The online application portal is open between 9:00, 6th February to 17:00, 15th March. (Note: Applicants are advised to allow ample time for online submission and refrain from submitting applications in the immediate proximity of the deadline.)

2. Formal Review. The Ningbo Science and Technology Bureau will scrutinize the completeness and validity of the application materials. Applications meeting the stipulated requirements of the Notice will be accepted, while those falling short will be declined.

3. Expert Evaluation. A panel of experts in relevant fields, organized by the Ningbo Science and Technology Bureau, will undertake the evaluation of proposed projects. Approval and funding allocations for each project will be determined based on expert evaluations, while taking into consideration Ningbo's distinctive features/objectives of sci-tech innovation and industrial development.

V. Contact Information

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Ningbo Science and Technology Bureau
4th February, 2024