

ASPIRE Japan–Netherlands Joint Call  
FAQ on Research Security

Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)

I. General Overview

I.1 Objective of Ensuring Research Security

Q I.1 What is the objective of ensuring research security?

A I.1 In recent years, the importance of preventing the leakage of technological information from research institutions has been increasingly emphasized. The purpose of ensuring research security is to prevent the unintentional leakage of unpublished research results or know-how that may serve as a source of research competitiveness, while at the same time safeguarding the independence, transparency, and openness of research in academia. This is essential for creating an environment in which researchers can conduct their work without caution.

Q I.2 Why is JST ensuring research security in this Japan–Netherlands joint call?

A I.2 JST has launched an initiative called JST-TRUST to promote research security. This initiative aims to prevent the unintended outflow of sensitive information, such as unpublished research results and know-how that could form the basis of research competitiveness in economically critical technologies. At the same time, it seeks to uphold the independence, transparency, and openness of academic research, thereby ensuring a safe and secure environment for researchers. As a pilot initiative for this year, JST is implementing JST-TRUST in programs that solicit research proposals in the fields of semiconductors and quantum technologies, and the ASPIRE program is designated as one of these initiatives.

Q I.3 If a risk is identified during the research security check, will the research be unable to proceed? What should be done to enable the research to proceed?

A I.3 Even if a risk is identified, the research can proceed by implementing appropriate risk mitigation measures.

Q1.4 What are the "risks" that are intended to be mitigated through ensuring research security?

A1.4 JST considers the unintentional leakage or transfer of unpublished research results or know-how that may serve as a source of research competitiveness, as well as the unintentional leakage or transfer of technological information that is important for economic security or has dual-use potential, as risks to be mitigated.

Q1.5 Does the content of the research security questionnaire affect the selection process?

A1.5 As long as the necessary information is appropriately described in the research security questionnaire, it does not affect the review of the research proposal. However, appropriate risk mitigation measures may be required before the start of the research if necessary.

## 2. Timing of research security check

2.1 Subsequent process if JST confirms research security is ensured during the eligibility check

Q2.1 In the ASPIRE Japan-Netherlands Joint Call, what process does JST conduct if research security is confirmed to be ensured during the eligibility check?

A2.1 After JST confirms that research security is ensured based on the content of the research security questionnaire, the review for the research proposal is conducted. If necessary, the content and implementation status of risk mitigation measures may be confirmed during the interview.

2.2 Subsequent process if risks on research security are identified during the eligibility check

Q2.2 In the ASPIRE Japan-Netherlands Joint Call, what is the process if risks are identified in the research security questionnaire during eligibility check?

A2.2 Depending on the scope of the research, risk mitigation measures may be requested for the adoption and promotion of the research. If the response is insufficient, JST may suspend the review of the proposal until appropriate measures are taken by the relevant research institution.

## 3. Target Fields and Targets

3.1 Scope of research proposals requiring research security in the ASPIRE

## Japan-Netherlands Joint Call

Q3.1 Are all research proposals subject to research security measures in the ASPIRE Japan-Netherlands Joint Call?

A3.1 Yes. All research proposals in this call are required to submit the research security questionnaire.

### 3.2 Scope of JST's research security questionnaire review (target persons)

Q3.2 Does JST's research security questionnaire apply only to the Japanese research team, or both Japanese and the Dutch teams?

A3.2 Please confirm the Japanese research team. If there are any other domestic or international cooperating institutions or researchers (excluding the Dutch research team) that are not included in the Japanese research team, please confirm them as well.

### 3.3 Research security check for cooperating institutions not receiving research funds

Q3.3 If the research proposal includes cooperating partners (such as companies) that do not receive research funds, are they subject to the same checks?

A3.3 Yes. JST requests the completion of the research security questionnaire for Japanese cooperating partners and collaborators not receiving research funds from JST.

It is assumed that the research system under this project may include cooperation partners (mainly companies) and co-funders (contributing to joint research in-kind) who do not receive direct research funding. It is also assumed that there may be domestic or international cooperating institutions and researchers outside the proposed Japanese research team.

### 3.4 Research security check for companies or private organizations joining Japanese research team as cooperation partners or external collaborators

Q3.4 Companies or private organizations may have multiple locations in different countries, making it difficult to investigate the requirements of the research security questionnaire. Should such institutions be investigated to describe the status in the questionnaire?

A3.4 If companies or private institutions join the research team as cooperation partners or external collaborators, please investigate whether the company itself or any concerned funder in case it is clear to support the company are listed in the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry's End User List, and describe the results in the questionnaire.

(This procedure is the same as when universities or research institutions cooperate with companies, so please consult the relevant department of the university or research institution.)

### 3.5 Participation of researchers with risks in Japanese research team

Q3.5 There are researchers in the Japanese research team who are also affiliated with institutions listed in the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry's End User List or other similar lists. Should their participation be avoided?

A3.5 First, consult the export control management department of the university or research institution regarding the acceptance of such researcher. If it is necessary to participate the researcher in Japanese research team, please implement appropriate risk mitigation measures considering the information and other research assets handled in your research project.

### 3.6 Participation of researchers who have co-authored papers with researchers of institutions with research security risks

Q3.6 There are researchers in the Japanese research team who have co-authored papers with researchers of institutions listed in the End User List or other similar lists. Should their participation be avoided?

A3.6 If researchers have co-authored papers with researchers from such institutions within the past two years, if necessary, please implement appropriate risk mitigation measures considering the information and other research assets handled in your research.

### 3.7 Scope of members in PI's or Co-PI's laboratory for research security check

Q3.7 What is the scope of members for PI's or Co-PI's laboratory to be confirmed to cope with the research security questionnaire? For example, are secretaries or staff members included?

A3.7 Please target members involved in the research conducted by PI's or Co-PI's laboratory. If secretaries or staff members are not directly involved in the research and do not have access to information directly related to the research, they are not targeted.

### 3.8 Participation of members with concurrent positions

Q3.8 If the PI or Co-PI participating in the research team has concurrent positions in other research institutions, is confirmation required for

related members in the research institutions as well?

A3.8 If the concurrent affiliation is also a research institution, please confirm individuals who currently belong to the PI's or Co-PI's laboratory at that institution in your responses to sections "1. (1) and (2)".

3.9 Participation of researchers who were previously affiliated with institutions listed in the End User List or Integrated Screening List

Q3.9 If researchers who were previously affiliated with institutions listed in the End User List or Integrated Screening List participate in the research, what response is required?

A3.9 If they are no longer affiliated, there is no need to consider them along with the research security questionnaire. However, if they have co-authored papers with researchers from such institutions within the past two years, please describe that information.

3.10 Possible risk mitigation measures

Q3.10 Relating to "Implementing risk mitigation measures considering the information and other research assets handled in your research, what specific risk mitigation measures are considered?

A3.10 For example, it will be considered that defining and specifying "specified research information" that is expected to be handled or generated in the research activities described in the research proposal, and limiting access to such information to specific members.

3.11 If no risks are identified

Q3.11 If there are no concerns identified in the research security questionnaire, is it necessary to fill out the risk mitigation measures section ("4. Risk Mitigation Measures")?

A3.11 It is not necessary to fill out the section if there are no concerns. However, if your research proposal is adopted, it is expected that some measures will be taken to raise awareness of research security among the members in your team.

3.12 Participation of "non-residents" in the Japanese research team

Q3.12 There are researchers in the Japanese research team who are categorized as "non-residents." Are they subject to risk mitigation measures? Should such researchers be excluded from the research team?

A3.12 Providing technology to researchers who are considered "non-

residents” requires export control not only when sending it overseas but also within Japan as it falls under the category of “deemed export control”. Therefore, if necessary, please implement appropriate risk mitigation measures considering the information and other important assets handled in your research project. Note that being a "non-resident" does not automatically mean that the person is considered a security concern.

### 3.13 Participation of persons categorized as "specific categories" in the Japanese research team

Q3.13 Some research participants in the Japanese research team have cross-appointments with foreign universities or research institutions. Are they subject to risk mitigation measures?

A3.13 Even if the research participants are “residents”, if they fall under the "specific categories" under export control regulations, they are subject to "deemed export control”. Therefore, if necessary, please implement appropriate risk mitigation measures considering the information and other important assets handled in your research project. Note that being a "specific categories" does not automatically mean that the person is considered a security concern.

## 4. Confirmation and Judgement

### 4.1 Judgment of sensitivity of research, necessity of taking measures, and appropriateness of risk mitigation measures

Q4.1 Who and how will the sensitivity of research, necessity of taking measures, and appropriateness of risk mitigation measures be judged?

A4.1 JST evaluators will assess the importance and sensitivity of the research based on the research proposal and judge the necessity and appropriateness of risk mitigation measures based on the research security questionnaire. In the ASPIRE Japan–Netherlands Joint Call, eligibility checks with research security checks will be conducted immediately after the call closure.

### 4.2 Content of the research security questionnaire ("4. Risk Mitigation Measures" related)

Q4.2 Who and how should "specified research information" be defined and specified?

A4.2 The research proposer should define and specify "specified research information" that is expected to be handled or generated in the

research activities described in the research proposal and is know-how that will be source of economic competitiveness or research information that have a significant technology from the perspective of economic security. JST may provide advice on the content and scope if the proposal is selected.

## 5. Differences of research security activities between Japan side and the Netherlands side

### 5.1 Impact on the Dutch side if JST identifies research security risks

Q5.1 If JST identifies research security risks, is there the case that be changed the entire Japan-Netherlands team?

A5.1 JST will confirm only Japanese research team based on the research security questionnaire and assume not to ask the change of Dutch research team.

## 6. Risk mitigation measures

### 6.1 If risk mitigation measures are not completed by the start of the research

Q6.1 If risk mitigation measures are not completed by the start of the research, what should PI do?

A6.1 In this joint call, JST proceeds the reviews for proposals with expectation that PI and Japanese team will complete the proposed appropriate risk mitigation measures. Therefore, if the proposals will be adopted, JST may require PI to make the research plan including implementation of risk mitigation measures before the start of the research.

### 6.2 If risk mitigation measures are completed by the start of the research but not by the start of the review for proposals

Q6.2 If risk mitigation measures are completed by the start of the research but not by the start of the review, what should PI do?

A6.2 The review will be conducted assuming that risk mitigation measures will be completed before the start of the research.

## 7. If members in Japanese team will be changed

### 7.1 If new members join the Japanese team due to changes

Q7.1 If new members join the research team due to changes of the team, is it necessary to submit the research security questionnaire each time? Which level of new members (Co-PI level?) is to be informed to JST? Or, does it include young researchers and students? Are coordinators also

included? Are both Japanese and Dutch members included?

A7.1 If there are any changes in Japanese team or changes of the members' affiliation, JST will request to submit the revised research plan. Depending on the content, JST may conduct research security checks.

7.2 If changes in Japanese team, the necessity of reporting to the Dutch research council

Q7.2 If changes in Japanese team, is it to be required reporting to the Dutch research council (NWO)?

A7.2 Please confirm the Dutch PI whether it is required to NWO as the agency may have procedures for such changes.

7.3 If unable to meet JST's requirements during changes in Japanese team

Q7.3 If unable to meet JST's requirements during changes in Japanese team, will there be measures such as temporary suspension of research support or inability to add members?

A7.3 JST will consult with the Japan-side PI after scrutinizing the changes in Japanese team.

8. If Japan-side PI inform JST false or incorrect answers on research security questionnaire

8.1 If Japanese team inform JST false or incorrect answers on research security questionnaire

Q8.1 Japanese team inform false or incorrect answers on research security questionnaire submitted to JST, what response will be taken?

A8.1 The university or research institution should re-confirm the information to be included in the research security questionnaire and implement appropriate risk mitigation measures if necessary. Please re-submit the research security questionnaire.

This FAQ will be updated as needed.