"The Hitachi Global Foundation Asia Innovation Award"
Frequently Asked Questions

■About the Award

1. Purpose

Q. What is the purpose of The Hitachi Global Foundation Asia Innovation Award?
A. The Hitachi Global Foundation Asia Innovation Award is an award program launched in 2020 to promote science, technology, and innovation that contributes to solve social issues and realizing a sustainable society in the ASEAN region.
This award recognizes individuals and groups that undeniably served public interests through their outstanding achievements in research and development (R&D) in the fields of science and technology, including their visions of an ideal future society and social implementation plans for R&D as a means of achieving the United Nations' SDGs.

2. Application Details

Q. Are the goals, targets, and examples of research and development themes for the SDGs already determined?
A. No, they are not predetermined. Applicants select one goal from the 17 SDGs and one target from the 169 targets and then propose a research and development theme that they believe will contribute to these selected goal and target.

Q. Until 2024, two goals were selected and examples of research and development themes related to those goals were presented. Will these not be presented this year?
A. From 2025, these will not be presented because the format has been changed to allow applicants to select one goal and one target. However, our website introduces research summaries of award winners from the past five years, which you may find helpful to refer to for hints.

Q. Why did you change the selection method for SDGs?
A. We changed the selection method for SDGs to an open format where applicants can choose for themselves for the following reasons:
First, since the beginning of this program, there have been requests from universities and research institutes to make the selection of SDGs open and allow for self-selection.
Second, after implementing this program for five years, we have selected 10 goals out of the 17 SDGs. The remaining goals were found to be more significantly influenced by national policies rather than science and technology.
Therefore, we decided to open up the selection of goals, allowing applicants to choose which SDGs they want to address in their proposals.

Q. While the SDGs are described as universal goals and targets for the entire world, and are said to be integrated and indivisible, why are applicants asked to select a single goal and target rather than multiple goals?

A. There are several reasons, but a major one is to clarify the focus for evaluation. Even if the research results themselves contribute to multiple SDGs, when applying, it is necessary to select which goal and target the research is most committed to.

Q. Are the eligible countries, universities, and research institutes determined in advance?

A. Among the 10 ASEAN countries, target countries, universities, and research institutes are selected annually based on several criteria. Applicants must be faculty members, researchers, or students who are enrolled in a target university or research institute in their home country, must be conducting research or R&D in their home country, and must have a letter of recommendation from their department, division head, or above.

Q. Can I apply if I am just starting my research?

A. This program is an award, not a research grant, so applicants who are just starting their research are not eligible to apply. We require R&D achievements. However, the level of achievement can be ranged from research papers and conference presentations to patents. It is recommended that at least one research paper be submitted as evidence of the applicant's R&D achievements.

Q. Can I apply for research and development that is currently in progress?

A. It is possible to apply for this award. The level of achievements required for this award varies; for example, research papers and conference presentations are also accepted as achievements. Even if the work is still in progress, it is possible to apply attaching proof of certain achievements.

Q. Does the title of the research I submit for the award have to be exactly the same as a research paper I have already published?

A. It does not necessarily match everything if it is an appropriate title. Just to make sure, it has to be something to do with the achievements you are submitting for the award.

Q. Can I apply for a technology currently applying for a patent?

A. If you are submitting a patent as an outcome, the patent should have been already granted. But if it is pending, please indicate its latest status.

Q. Could you be more specific about the social implementation plan?

A. The focus of this award is on how to make use of existing achievements in society. For this reason, please write about the achievements you have already accomplished, and how you would like to implement the technology–to improve your society. Examples of social implementation could be commercialization of your developed results, knowledge provision, providing data and policy recommendations to national government and/or local governments, and awareness-raising activities for the local communities. The term "Social Impact" is one of the key words.

Q. Does the Hitachi Global Foundation have any programs to support social implementation plans in addition to the awards for achievements?

A. No, not currently.

Q. Has the scholarship program of The Hitachi Global Foundation been terminated?
A. We discontinued the scholarship program several years ago. We launched the current award program in response to requests from scholarship recipients to provide support that would enable them to conduct research while in their home countries.

3. Contents of the Award

Q. What are the details of the award?
A. They are as follows.
Best Innovation Award: Monetary prize of 3,000,000 yen per recipient
Outstanding Innovation Award: Monetary prize of 1,000,000 yen per recipient
Encouragement Award: Monetary prize of 500,000 yen per recipient

Q. Is the prize money in total or per awardee?
A. It is per awardee.

Q. Can applicants choose for which prize they want to apply? What is the difference?
A. The selection committee will decide which award is appropriate. The Best Innovation Award will be given to the research with the highest evaluation by the selection committee, and the Outstanding Innovation Award will be given to the research with the next highest evaluation. However, the Encouragement Award is given to the research results that we would like to encourage, taking into consideration the country, region, etc. The number of winners for each award varies each year, as the selection committee decides based on the applications received that year.

■About Applications

1. Number of Applications

Q. Is there a limit to the number of applications that can be submitted by each university or research institute?
A. Yes, there is. For the FY2025, we have set a limit on the number of applications from each university and research institute based on their past application history. Applications can be submitted by a single person or a group. If applying as a group, an applicant on behalf of the group must meet the requirements.

Q. What should we do if the number of applications within a university or research institute exceeds the maximum limit?
A. Within the university or research institute, please select the best applications up to the maximum number allowed and then submit them.

Q: Do we need to rank the applications we submit?
A: No, you do not. Even if you rank them, they will not be considered, and our selection committee members will review based on our evaluation criteria.

2. Application Requirements

Q: Can I apply as a group?
A: You can apply as a group, but please make sure to choose a representative. Interviews and awards (presentation of commemorative gifts and remittance) will be given to the representative.

Q. When applying as a group, such as for joint research, do all group members need to meet the requirements for applicants?
A. If applying as a group, an applicant on behalf of the group must meet the requirements.

Q. Can I apply for other awards at the same time? Also, can I apply even if I have already won an award elsewhere?
A. Yes, both are possible.

Q. Can applicants from any faculty apply?
A. There is no restriction on the department of applicants if the achievements of research and development in the field of science and technology that contribute to the selected goal of the application and its social implementation plan are met. For example, joint research across faculties is also welcome.

Q. Is there an age limit for applicants?
A. Any age is acceptable if the applicant meets the requirements.

Q. Is it possible for researchers who have received this award in the past to submit another application?
A. Yes, it is possible. However, if reapplying with the same research theme, applicants must demonstrate new achievements since their previous award – such as additional research results or progress in societal implementation.

3. Application Documents

Q. What is the language of the application documents?
A. Application documents should be written in English. Please be sure to attach English translations of any materials in the local language.

Q. Should I submit the application form in Word format?
A. Please do not convert the application form to PDF format and make sure to submit it in Word format.

Q. Are papers under review included in the achievements?
A. Papers under review is not accepted as achievements, but they may be considered as a reference for evaluation purposes.

Q. How many years ago can I include the achievements?

A. There is no limit. However, since this is an innovation award, either the research and development achievements or the social implementation plan must be innovative even at this moment. Even if the paper is 10 years old, it is OK if the content or the plan is still innovative. The reason for this is that we believe that old technologies that have not been used yet in society can be good ideas for social implementation.

Q. If the achievement is a paper, does the applicant have to be the first author? Can the applicant be the second or last author?

A. The order of authorship does not matter.

Q. How should I submit the Social Implementation Plan?

A. There is a section on the application form where you can fill in the social implementation plan. For specific instructions on how to fill in the form, please check the "Application Form (How to Fill in)".

Q. What level of social implementation plan is required?

A. Any level is acceptable if it contributes to the SDGs. For example, it can be ranged from promoting local activities to making recommendations to local governments, government policy makers, and industry. Please check the application form (How to Fill in) for more details on specific examples.

Q. Can I submit not only the social implementation plan but also the social implementation achievements?

A. Of course it is OK, but please submit your achievements regarding the research and development as well.

Q. Do I need to submit a video introducing my research and development?

A. It is mandatory to create and submit one.

Q. What is the maximum length of the R&D introduction video?

A. The maximum length is 5 minutes. Please do not make it any longer than this. If it exceeds this length, we will request that it be shortened.

Q. Can I make a simple video introducing my research and development that can be shot with a cell phone?

A. Yes. The method of filming and editing skills are not required. We request that the applicant submits an introduction video to make up for the fact that the selection committee cannot visit the site. The video should convey to the selection committee the actual state of your research, including the state of your laboratory, experiments, and field studies, which cannot be understood from the application form.

Q. Can I use footage that already exists to make a video introducing my research and development?

A. You may use footage that already exists. The purpose of a video introducing your

research and development is to confirm the actual status of your research, which cannot be determined from the application form, so it does not matter when or how the video is filmed. Editing skills are also not required. It is OK if we can confirm the necessary contents.

Q. Can I submit two videos to introduce my research and development?
A. It is not acceptable to submit two. Please combine both videos in advance and submit only one .

Q. What is the list of achievements to be filled out in the application form, and what do I need to write about in the CV?
A. Outcomes refer to papers, conference presentations, patents, etc. The list is different from the CV; for example, in the case of a paper, it is a list of the author(s), title of the paper, publication, volume, year of publication, pages, etc. There is a separate column for writing the Biography.

Q. How many recommendation letters do I need to submit?
A. Please submit one.

Q. What should we include in the recommendation letter?
A. The recommendation letter should include the reasons for the nomination and the selection process (whether it is an institute or individual nomination).

Q. What are the attached documents? Do I need to submit them?
A. Attachments are documents that prove the achievements of your research and development. They must be submitted, and you can attach up to three in PDF format. If possible, please attach one of your publications as an attachment.

4. How to Apply

Q. How do I apply?
A. Applications must be submitted through the application system by a designated department at the university or research institute. The Hitachi Global Foundation will provide the URL and Login ID of the application system to the person in charge at the university or research institute. Applicants cannot apply directly, so please ask the designated department at your university or research institute for more information.

5. Evaluation Criteria

Q. What are the selection criteria?
A. The selection process consists of document screening and remote interviews, based on four criteria. While achievements are certainly important, we also place significant emphasis on the aspect of social implementation.
1. Relevance to Social Issues and R＆D
Whether the applicant can explain how their R&D will contribute to addressing current

social issues.
2. Utilization of Science and Technology, and Innovation
    Whether science and technology play a crucial role in research and research development outcomes, and whether there is innovation. Innovation is assessed in terms of both scientific and technological advancements and social and institute innovation.
3. Feasibility of the Social Implementation Plan
    Whether the social implementation plan is specific, feasible, and tailored to the actual conditions of the target region or country. It also assesses whether there are plans to ensure that the solution is not limited to being temporary and whether it can be transferred, replicated or adapted in other regions as well. (For example, whether the plan includes human resource development for technology dissemination, proposals for sustainable lifestyles, awareness-raising, policy recommendations, records of or plans for collaboration with local governments, and business plans including demonstration experiments.)
4. Relevance to SDG Goals
    Whether the research and research and development results, as well as the social implementation plan, significantly contribute to the improvement of the selected SDGs.

Q. Why were the selection criteria reduced from 7 to 4?
A. We consolidated overlapping criteria to make them clearer and more streamlined.

Q. Which criteria carry the most weight among the four?
A. All four criteria will be evaluated equally. However, as this is an Innovation Award, applicants must demonstrate substantial prior research achievements. Additionally, the implementation plan for societal application of these results will be a key evaluation factor.

6. Schedule

Q. What is the selection schedule?
A. The schedule is as follows.
    April 1 -June 30<Call for applications>
    July -August <Document screening>
    September –October<Online interviews and selection committee >
    January<Announcement of award recipients>

Q. Is the deadline for applications June 30?
A. Yes, that is correct. This award is not a research grant, but an award program for research and R&D achievements. Therefore, instead of creating a new research plan, please describe your social implementation plan based on your existing results, in accordance with the current application guidelines.

7. Announcement of the Awardees

Q. How will the selection results be announced?

A. Applicants will be notified of the results by e-mail in November through the person in charge at the eligible university or research institute.

8. Award Ceremony

Q. Will there be an awards ceremony?
A. We plan to hold it in January 2026. The awards ceremony is held every few years, and details will be informed to the winners.

9. Others

Q. Do recipients need to submit any reports or other documents after receiving an award?
A. We will ask recipients to prepare a manuscript of a research summary for publication on our website, after which they will not be required to submit a report on the progress of their research. However, we would like to keep the network with you even after receiving the award; therefore, sharing your research progress would be greatly appreciated.

Q. Are there any restrictions on how to use the prize money?
A. There are no specific restrictions. While it would be ideal to use it for implementing your plan in society, we do not particularly inquire about how you use it. The award recipients have no obligation to report on their post-award research activities. However, we would like to stay in touch to maintain a good relationship. And if there are any updates on your research activities, we would be pleased to share them on our foundation's website and other platforms.

■Contact

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact the person in charge at your university or research institute.
If you have any other questions, please contact the office below.

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