



הקרן הלאומית למדע  
المؤسسة الإسرائيلية للعلوم  
Israel Science Foundation

**Please note that the application includes several steps:**

1. Applications are to be submitted via the *ISF Online* system, following registration and authentication of details. (However, authentication of details does not constitute registration for submitting a proposal).
2. The deadline to register for submitting a proposal is 1:00pm (Jerusalem time), January 19, 2021. A proposal will not be accepted if registration was not completed by this time.
3. The deadline for submission to the ISF is 1:00 pm (Jerusalem time), January 27, 2021. Approval by the research authority must be obtained before this date. Please check with the relevant research authority regarding its submission deadline. Proposals that were not approved by the research authority by the submission deadline will not be accepted.
4. The Deadline for submission to the NSFC (by the Chinese partner) is 4:00pm (Beijing Time), January 29, 2021.

**Please Note that only applications submitted to both foundations will be considered for funding**

## **ISF-NSFC Joint Scientific Research Program**

### **Summary of Guidelines for Submission**

#### **Ninth round**

These guidelines include the following:

1. General information
2. Eligibility for Submitting Proposals
3. Fundamental rules
4. Research Grant Budget
5. Submission Instructions
6. Proposal Sections
7. Research Program
8. Completing the Proposal Submission

**For Full information, please see Hebrew Guidelines**

## 1. General Information

### 1.1. Introduction

1.1.1. The program aims to encourage research cooperation between Israeli and Chinese scientists.

1.1.2. The program is activated due to an agreement of cooperation between the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) and the Israel Science Foundation (ISF), and is funded by the Chinese and Israeli governments, through the two funding agencies, each funding its own scientists according to their respective regulations.

1.1.1. The ninth round of submission will be in the fields of: **Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Computer sciences, Nanotechnology, and Earth sciences.**

1.2. Criteria for evaluation: The criterion for evaluating the research proposal is scientific merit. Applications will be scored according to:

- a) Scientific quality of the proposal;
- b) Originality and innovation of the research;
- c) Exchange of mutual knowledge and expertise;
- d) Strengths of the proposed cooperation and the level of synergy between the groups.

The research proposals will be evaluated by professional committees, assisted by assessments from external reviewers.

An application might be rejected on scientific or administrative grounds or based on mismatch to the joint program.

**Please note:** The selection of the winning proposals is on a competitive basis of scientific excellence. The researcher's age, gender and institutional affiliation **are not** criteria in evaluating the research proposal.

## 2. Eligibility for Submitting Proposals:

### 2.1. Personal eligibility

#### 2.1.1. ISF:

2.1.1.1. Researchers in Israel who hold a PhD or MD degree, and are employed in at least a 50% position at an institution recognized as eligible for submission to the ISF (see 2.2 below) and who have the authority, ability and means required to independently conduct scientific research throughout the grant period. Included in this category:

- Members of the senior academic staff of institutions of higher education accredited by the CHE and/or funded by the PBC, or researchers who will hold such academic appointments throughout the research period.
- Researchers from institutions that are not institutions of higher education, provided that the institution meets the conditions stipulated in section 2.2, who have permanent appointments at the institution or researchers who will have such appointments throughout the research period.

2.1.1.2. Members of the ISF's council and management are not eligible to submit proposals in the framework of this program.

#### 2.1.2. NSFC:

2.1.2.1. Researchers from China must be permanent employed researchers residing in China and affiliated with a recognized higher education or research institution which is registered in NSFC. The Chinese applicant must possess an academic title of professor or associate professor and must be the PI of an on-going or

completed NSFC research grant with a duration of more than 3 years. Please read the Chinese version of guidelines for details on the eligibility for Chinese applicants.

**Please note:** The researcher's ability to conduct the proposed research independently is an integral part of the considerations of the professional committees. The committees are authorized to reject a proposal submitted by a researcher who, in the committee's opinion, does not meet this criterion. The ability to conduct the research is reflected, in part, by scientific publications pertaining to the topic, where the researcher was the sole or principal author.

## 2.2. Institutional eligibility

2.2.1. **Israeli** Institutions recognized by the ISF whose researchers are eligible to submit proposals in this track include:

- Institutions of higher education in Israel that are accredited by the CHE or funded by the PBC
- Hospitals or hospital departments in Israel that are affiliated with an institution of higher education

2.2.2. **Israeli** institutions for scientific research (or Israeli institutions with a unit conducting basic scientific research) approved by the ISF for submission of grant applications. The conditions and procedure for the ISF's approval of a research institution appear [here](#).

2.2.3. Proposals submitted by researchers from research divisions of commercial industrial companies will not be funded.

2.2.4. **NSFC:**

Please read the Chinese version of guidelines for details on the eligibility for Chinese Institutions.

## 3. Fundamental rules

- 3.1. Upon submitting a grant application, the researcher accepts the guidelines and jurisdiction methods.
- 3.2. Each funding agency funds activities of PIs of their respective countries.
- 3.3. Each of the PIs (Israeli & Chinese) will apply to the relevant foundation (ISF or NSFC), according to the rules and regulations of the relevant foundation. The Chinese PI is also required to attach the English proposal submitted by the Israeli PI to his application.
- 3.4. Only applications which will be submitted to both foundations will be considered for funding.
- 3.5. The grant will be given for a research project performed in Israel and in China in coordination with the respective relevant institution's research authority.
- 3.6. Grants are awarded for a period of three years.
- 3.7. The researcher/s undertake/s to attain all the necessary authority approvals needed for carrying out the research and to provide them on request at any time (see Sect. 6.2.5.2, below).
- 3.8. A proposal may be submitted to the ISF only if it is substantially different from other proposals submitted to/funded by the ISF or by another entity in Israel or abroad. By submitting a proposal to the ISF, the researcher commits to refrain from submitting a substantially similar proposal to the ISF or to another entity in Israel or abroad during that academic year.

An investigator submitting more than one proposal in the same broad field during the same academic year, must notify the ISF, provide details and clarify the essential differences

between the submitted proposal and the other proposals. A proposal found to be similar to a funded research or to another submitted proposal will be rejected.

**3.9. The researchers submitting the proposal:**

- 3.9.1. An Israeli researcher and a researcher from China are allowed to participate as principal investigators (PIs), in only one application of this program per submission cycle.
- 3.9.2. Principal investigators from either China or Israel are not eligible to hold more than one active grant of this joint program at any given time.
- 3.9.3. A grant application will include only a single Israeli PI and a single Chinese PI.
- 3.9.4. If for any reason (leaving the country, retirement, etc.), the researcher cannot continue as a PI, the respective agency should be updated immediately.
- 3.9.5. The PIs are held by the respective funding agencies as responsible and in charge of the research.
- 3.9.6. The application is judged according to the format submitted. Therefore, the respective agencies have no mandate to fund it should any modifications be made. As a result, the PI status cannot be changed.

**3.10. The proposals:**

- 3.10.1. Applications of the following nature are not accepted within this program: Survey or descriptive nature programs, publishing findings alone, database preparation, book publishing, translation work and preparation of bibliographies.
- 3.10.2. Studies funded by this joint program, which include the establishment of a database as a result of the research objectives, must make these databases available to the scientific community, and to inform the respective agencies as to where a link can be found (by references in the final scientific report).
- 3.10.3. Resubmission – One-time resubmission is available unless the rejection letter has noted otherwise.
- 3.10.4. It is hereby declared that any piece of equipment, including computers and computer equipment purchased with the funds of the grant is not the researcher's personal property.
- 3.10.5. The ISF has no interest in intellectual property and royalties deriving from the products of funded research project.

**4. Research grant Budget**

- 4.1. The maximum grant amount for a project is up to USD 300,000 for each partner, for 3 years (up to 100,000USD/year/partner).
- 4.2. The proposed budget should be submitted according to the rules and regulations of each Foundation.
- 4.3. This grant may include per diem and travel expenses for cooperation between the PIs.
- 4.4. The evaluation process includes an examination of the appropriateness of the requested budget to the submitted work plan.
- 4.5. The researchers must request a realistic sum for conducting the research and explain the sections of the requested budget.

**5. Submission Instructions**

- 5.1. **Language:** the application shall be submitted by the Israeli PI to the ISF in English. The Chinese PI will submit an identical proposal in Chinese to the NSFC. In addition, the Chinese applicant will upload the final version (PDF), of the proposal submitted to the ISF by the Israeli partner.

- 5.2. **Date and manner of submission:** The process will include 2 stages - Registration and Submission.
- 5.2.1. Online Registration of the joint application to ISF by **1:00pm** (Jerusalem time) **January 19, 2021**.
- 5.2.2. Online submission of the joint application, (including the R&D authority approval) to the ISF by **1:00pm** (Jerusalem time) **January 27, 2021** while to the NSFC by **4:00pm (Beijing Time) January 29, 2021**.  
Any amendment whatsoever **WILL NOT be accepted after the deadline**.
- 5.3. The Israeli PI will submit to the ISF via the on-line system, after approval by the Chinese PI.
- 5.4. No hard copies of the proposal should be submitted.
- 5.5. **ISF – Online submission**
- 5.5.1. All the submitting process (including the registration form) is done through the personal account, in the ISF on-line system, of the Israeli PI.
- 5.5.2. Submitter system requirements may be found [here](#).
- 5.5.3. All the submitting process (including the registration form) are done through the Israeli PI's personal account, on the ISF on-line system.
- 5.5.4. Upon confirmation of the registration form by the Israeli PI (see Sect. 6.1.5, below) the serial number given to the application will appear on the screen (and in the e-mail message sent to the PI), this number should be noted in every communication with the ISF regarding the application.
- 5.5.5. The online application submitting system (see Sect. 6, below) contains a few screens. Please read the following guidelines.
- a) Some of the information on the application forms is taken from the registration form, and all details can be modified and updated (excluding changing the PI) up to the date of submission.
  - b) Be sure to fill in all the fields. The system automatically checks the required information, but you can also use the "Check Form" button for a manual check.
  - c) Be sure to follow the submission guidelines concerning font type and size, spacing and margins. The system will display a warning for every deviation from these guidelines. We recommend monitoring and correcting these warnings in order to avoid rejection of the proposal on technical grounds. The full guidelines can be found [here](#).
  - d) No revisions can be made to files that have already been uploaded. Any revision must be made on the original files and then the revised files should be uploaded again. (First, delete the previously uploaded file and then upload the revised file).
  - e) To avoid problems in creating the full PDF file of the application, please do not upload files that are locked for editing or secured in any other way.
  - f) Upon completion of the online form, the PI will send the final version application to the Chinese researcher for approval, via the on-line submission system, critical for the final submission.
  - g) It is highly recommended to proofread the contents of the application, and to save a copy on the submitter's PC before clicking on 'Submit the proposal'.
  - h) Clicking on 'Submit the proposal' delivers the application to the research authority at the coordinating institution for approval. The research authority may request that corrections be made in the application or reject it based on institutional considerations. After receiving approval from the research authority,

the application will be submitted to the ISF. The system will notify the PI via email when the research authority has approved the application and transferred it to the ISF.

## 6. Proposal sections:

### 6.1. Registration:

- 6.1.1. Prior to starting the registration process, applicants are requested to affirm that:
  - a) They have read the Guidelines.
  - b) They agree to have the application evaluated according to the ISF procedure described.
  - c) They are aware of the reporting method for active grants and commit to meet the reporting requirements if awarded a grant.
  - d) They commit to participate in the ISF's evaluation process if asked to do so.
- 6.1.2. The registration form will consist of the following details – general information (including the coordinating Israeli institute and subject of the proposal), the Israeli researcher's details and submission screen.
- 6.1.3. The details of the researchers identified by the system will be listed as they appear in the ISF's database. Please update and complete all the details. Researchers who belong to institutions that have more than one campus should check that the correct campus appears and update the information if necessary.

**Please note – for security purposes, an email address can only be updated via the personal account of the principal investigator in the ISF Online system.**
- 6.1.4. Resubmission – selecting “Yes” will open a list of the rejected proposals submitted by the applicant. Select the number of the previous proposal and its title from the list.
- 6.1.5. After sending the registration form, a registration confirmation message will appear on the screen, including the proposal number. An email message will be sent to the researchers submitting the proposal; notification will also be sent to the email address of the research authority selected in the registration.
- 6.1.6. All the details can be changed later (during submission), excluding the PI identity.

### 6.2. The complete proposal form:

#### 6.2.1. Part 1 – General information

- 6.2.1.1. The coordinating institute and number of years needed for the research
- 6.2.1.2. Resubmission – for an application which is resubmitted (once), please enclose a resubmission letter (no longer than 5 pages in English) explaining the differences/ improvement if you have made some. Please note that these changes are not obligatory. However, you are required to address the comments of the former reviewers. **Since the explanatory letter is sent to the members of the professional committee and to the reviewers (or to some of the reviewers),** this appendix should not include any request or comment pertaining to the review process itself, including the disqualification of reviewers. In addition, we recommend refraining from strongly worded comments.

The letter should be marked “re-submission,” and the name of the PI and number of the current application should be cited. Please add the number of the rejected application on the top of the letter.
- 6.2.1.3. Declarations – declarations regarding parallel funding and a Statement of close family ties with an ISF staff/governance member if applicable should be uploaded here.

#### 6.2.2. Part 2 – Investigators

6.2.2.1. PIs Details, The Research Team: for the Israeli side – PI’s Details will be included, (others, who are to be funded, will appear in the detailed budget); for the Chinese side - all personnel involved with this project (excluding students).

6.2.2.2. **Israeli investigator’s details:**

- a) CV and a list of publications for the Israeli PI – up to 5 pages; An explanation on entering the CV for the Israeli researcher can be found [here](#).
- b) PhD mentor – the names of doctoral advisors should be listed for each researcher (including advisors who are not scientifically active). If the researcher is an MD, he/she should note this on the screen. In this case, if the researcher has no doctoral advisor, the system will not require entering a name.

6.2.2.3. Recent ISF grants – a short report (1-2 pages only, up to 200 KB) should be uploaded on this screen, summarizing a previous (last) ISF grant (that began during the past 10 years) as principal investigator(s). The report should mention the research objectives, achievements to date and list of publications resulting from the grant.

6.2.2.4. **Chinese investigator’s details:**

- a) The Chinese PI will be identified via his email address.
- b) CV and a list of publications for the Chinese side (PI only), the list of publications will include up to 10 most relevant items to the project.

6.2.3. **Part 3 – Scientific Program:**

Including Title & Keywords, Scientific Abstract, and a full Research Program. The research program including figures, (up to 15 pages, A4) Make sure to adhere to the guidelines on font type/size and margins that appear [here](#))

6.2.3.1. **Scientific abstract:** including an analysis of current domestic and international research trends in this field. A file of up to one page (limited to 200 KB in PDF format only). The title “Scientific abstract” should appear at the top of the abstract, followed by the name of the first principal investigator (PI), proposal number and research title. The template file of the abstract should be downloaded and then re-uploaded in this section.

6.2.3.2. **Research Program:** a single file (limited to 16 MB) that includes the research plan, figures, and bibliography, in PDF format only. The name of the first principal investigator and proposal number should appear at the beginning of the research program. Please see section 7 below for a full explanation regarding the research program, figures, and bibliography.

6.2.3.3. **Bibliography with \*:** A separate file with the same bibliography including \* for articles whose subject is the closest to the proposal subject will be uploaded in this screen. This file will be sent only to members of the professional scientific committee (and not to external reviewers).

6.2.3.4. **Mode of cooperation** – Because the essence of the program is active cooperation between Israeli and Chinese researchers, the PIs must upload a file defining and specifying the nature of the collaboration and the roles and tasks of each party. Cooperation can be manifested in several ways, for example: Mutual research carried out in two different laboratories, Joint research infrastructure (materials, equipment, or services) and Personnel exchanges.

Because the active cooperation is a key element in the program, **please describe in detail how the partners complement one another with emphasize on the synergic aspects of the project.**

6.2.3.5. **Time Schedule and Work Plan** – the detailed different stages should be included in the table, as well as a short verbal explanation (under ‘Explanatory

Notes'). In cases where the study is theoretical and cannot be divided into stages, you can check that the schedule is not relevant to this study. In any case the explanation is mandatory

#### 6.2.4. **Part 4 – Budget**

- 6.2.4.1. The proposed budget (including budget for special equipment), of the Israeli researcher will be submitted in New Israeli Shekels, and the Chinese researcher will be submitted in Chinese Yuan.
- 6.2.4.2. The budget must be as detail as possible including explanatory notes in as much detail as possible.
- 6.2.4.3. The budget is limited up to 300,000 USD per project for each partner (Israeli and Chines) 100,000USD/year for each partner.
- 6.2.4.4. For the Chinese partner (in the ISF application), only a budget summary table should be completed (in Yuan)

#### 6.2.5. **Part 5 – Appendices**

- 6.2.5.1. **Collaborations** - lists of collaborators of both PIs.
- 6.2.5.2. Authorities' certificates – declaration of approvals received from authorities. The researcher should cite the approvals required for the submitted research proposal, as well as the research year for which the approval is required. The approvals must precisely match the proposal topic and requested period of research. At the stage of proposal submission, there is no need to attach the documents; the researcher pledges to present them to the ISF upon request. Details on the types of approvals, along with explanations, can be found via [this link](#). The approvals required for carrying out the research should be referenced in the research program.
- 6.2.5.3. **Review Requests** – PIs may provide the names of up to two (2) experts to whom the ISF should not send the proposals to for review or any other request regarding the review process.

**Apart from the above, do not attach any appendices, letters of recommendation or articles published, sent or accepted for publication, to the proposal. All relevant findings and results should be included in the research program.**

## 7. **Research Program**

- 7.1. The research program including figures, will be up to 15 A4 pages. Make sure to adhere to the guidelines on font type/size and margins that appear [here](#). Applications that will exceed the scope of the above frame may not be sent out for review and may be rejected by the participants of the review process or the ISF.
- 7.2. The **research program** recommended to describe the following:
  - 7.2.1. Scientific background, including an analysis of current domestic and international research trends in this field and the PIs' prior contribution to the field of research.
  - 7.2.2. Research objectives and significance – describe the unique aspects of the research program.
  - 7.2.3. Detailed description of the proposed research, including:
    - The working hypothesis
    - Scientific design and methods, including reference to the basis for cooperation: The unique strengths and skills of each side. Reference to authority certifications should be here, if applicable
    - Preliminary results, including results from both partners and achievements already made.



- Research environment and facilities available, (including plans to make use of facilities of both institutions)
  - Expected results and possible pitfalls and alternative approaches and methods in case the proposed method/experiment does not work as expected.
- 7.3. **Figures:** Each page of figures should be formatted to accommodate several figures, including an explanation for each figure. Scanning documents greatly increases the size of the proposal, and it is highly recommended to avoid this as much as possible. Figures may be incorporated in the pages of the text, but the limit of 15 pages must not be exceeded.
- 7.4. **Bibliography (English only):** up to 5 pages (A4) this section may be single-spaced.
- 7.4.1. For each publication, the full article title and detailed reference should be cited. The full names of all the authors, should be cited for each publication (even if the author is cited in several articles). For publications that include many authors (more than 10), the principal authors should be listed. The author's first name may be cited by initial letter only.
- 7.4.2. The items in the bibliography should be numbered.
- 7.4.3. The research program file should not specify \* for articles whose subject is the closest to the application subject.

## 8. Completing the Proposal Submission

- 8.1. After filling in all the parts of the application, the PI must lock the proposal (at this stage, the system will check whether all the required data has been entered), create a PDF on the on-line system, check it (if changes or corrections are needed, the file can be unlocked and corrected as needed), and send it via the system to the Chinese PI for approval.
- 8.2. Proposal submission to the ISF will be possible only after it is approved by the Chinese researcher.
- 8.3. Pressing the "Submit the proposal" button will forward the application to the Research Authority. Only after receiving the approval of the Research Authority will the application be forwarded to the ISF.

### Please note:

Registration will be closed **at 1:00pm (Jerusalem time), January 19, 2021.**

The final deadline for full submission on the ISF on-line system (after the R&D approval) is **January 27, 2021 at 1:00pm (Jerusalem time).**

The final deadline for full submission to NSFC is **January 29, 2021 at 4:00pm (Beijing Time).**

Any amendment whatsoever **WILL NOT be accepted after the deadline.**