

Grant Program for Japanese Studies Projects Application Instructions

For Fiscal 2025-26 [RJS-KP 2025]



1. Objective

To promote Japanese studies overseas, this program partially covers the costs of Japanese studies projects run by overseas not-for-profit organizations.

* For organization in Southeast Asia, please apply for the "Grant Program for Strengthening Research Networks to Co-create a Future with the Next Generation" program instead.

2. Eligible Projects

(1) Japanese studies projects (including online projects) implemented between April 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026 that fall under any of the following:

- a. Research or conferences on Japan; study or training in Japan or publications that promote and contribute to the development of Japanese studies;
- b. Inviting scholars or researchers from Japan or another country to deliver lectures on Japanese studies;
- c. Obtaining books and materials on Japanese studies;
- d. Other relevant projects which will further promote and expand the horizon of Japanese studies and interest in Japan.

* When requesting funds for multiple projects (e.g., for a conference and for library support), applicants are required to complete all mandatory application sections for each project and submit two or more applications separately.

(2) Projects must fulfill the following requirements:

- a. It must be impossible or difficult for the applicants to achieve the purpose of the project without funding from the Japan Foundation.
- b. The plan and implementation method must be appropriate and there must be sufficient expectation that the project will yield positive results.

(3) Projects that fall under any of the below are not eligible:

- a. Projects for religious or political purposes;
- b. Projects that include commercial activities;
- c. Projects with the direct purpose of disseminating specific doctrines, claims, or political measures;
- d. Projects in the field of medicine, technology, or the natural sciences;
- e. Projects for the organization of or participation in sporting events and training;
- f. Art and cultural activities;
- g. Projects with the main purpose of goodwill exchanges;
- h. Projects that directly implement social welfare activities or international cooperation activities;

- i. Tourism-oriented projects;
- j. Language education projects.

3. Eligible Applicants

- (1) Not-for-profit organizations (e.g., academic institutions from university level upwards, research institutions, or academic societies), except those in Japan and the United States of America, are eligible to apply. Applicants must meet the following requirements (individuals are not eligible to apply):
 - a. Applicants must have the capacity needed to implement the planned project(s).
 - b. The receipt of grants or support from the Japan Foundation must not violate any local laws, regulations, or ordinances.
- (2) The Japan Foundation does not provide grants for:
 - a. Foreign governments (including their administrative organs, embassies, and consulates-general, but excluding educational, cultural, or research institutes, such as universities or museums);
 - b. International organizations to which Japanese national government organs contribute;
 - c. Organizations based in countries that do not have diplomatic relations with Japan;
 - d. Japanese national government organs, local governments, incorporated administrative agencies, and local incorporated administrative agencies, as well as education and research institutions and other organizations, institutions, and facilities attached to or established by these (excluding organizations with their own legal personalities, such as incorporated associations or incorporated foundations).
- (3) Points to note
 - Organizations that have continually received support from this program for the past three fiscal years will not be provided with grants unless the Japan Foundation judges there is a compelling reason for them to continue receiving such support. This is a measure to avoid giving ongoing support to the same applicants, and to distribute grants to as many applicants as possible. If one does apply for a fourth consecutive fiscal year, low priority will be placed on such an application.
 - Organizations in Taiwan considering application should contact the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association (JTEA), Taipei Office, with which the Japan Foundation cooperates.

4. Grant Coverage

- (1) Assistance will take the form of a grant covering part of the following direct expenses incurred and paid during FY2025 (from April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026):
 - a. Travel expenses (for international and domestic airfare, other transportation, accommodation and per diem, etc.);
 - b. Meeting expenses (for preparing materials, venues, equipment, public relations, etc.);
 - c. Honorariums (for lecturers, collaborators, interpreters, assistants, etc.);
 - d. Other direct expenses (for purchasing materials, etc.).

- (2) The following are not supported by the Japan Foundation:
 - a. Indirect expenses;
 - b. Administrative expenses of the institution (as well as salary for administrative staff);
 - c. Costs to purchase goods that may remain for a long time;
 - d. Expenses related to land and buildings (excluding rental fees for facilities for a specific project event).
- (3) Points to note
 - The grant amount will be decided upon consideration of each project's scale and necessity.
 - Grants made in the past averaged around 900,000 Japanese yen for each project, but the actual grant amount may be lower or higher than this amount. If requesting a much larger sum than this approximate average, the applicant should be prepared for two eventualities: (a) the project may be rejected since it is deemed to be beyond the scope of the Japan Foundation to support it; or (b) the project may be supported but at a much lower level than requested.
 - Individual researchers who wish to conduct research in Japan should apply to the Fellowship programs.

5. Selection Policy

- (1) Projects will be selected by comprehensively considering applications, including their contents, viability, relevance, efficiency, etc. The Japan Foundation also takes into account the regional and national distribution of its funding, and may select projects accordingly, if need be.
- (2) Lower priority is given to:
 - a. Projects wherein the total cost is sought exclusively from the Japan Foundation; and
 - b. Projects based on existing partnerships, such as agreements between organizations and sister institution relationships.
- (3) A proposed project shall not be awarded multiple Japan Foundation grants. Applicants in Southeast Asia will be considered for the "Grant Program for Strengthening Research Networks to Co-create a Future with the Next Generation" program instead.

6. Application Procedures

- (1) Application deadline
1:00 p.m., December 3, 2024 (Japan Standard Time)
- (2) How to apply
 - a. Download the application documents from the website below:
<https://www.jpf.go.jp/e/program/intel.html>
 - b. Complete your application documents, following the Application Instructions and the Application Documents Completion Guide.
 - c. Upload your application documents to the Online Application Portal.
Online Application Portal: <https://www.apply.jpf.go.jp>
 - * Visit the website to view the manual for this procedure.

(3) Notification of results

By the end of April 2025

- * For projects that are scheduled to start in April 2025, please note that notification of results may be sent after the project has already started.

(4) Points to note

- a. During the screening process, Japan Foundation staff may ask the applying institution questions as the need arises.
- b. The Japan Foundation does not make specific comments about the screening process or provide reasons for not selecting a specific application.

7. Number of Grants

(1) The number of applications selected in FY2024 was 27 out of 54.

(2) Please refer to the following website for past grant listings.

<https://www.jpf.go.jp/e/project/intel/study/support/index.html>

8. Terms of Agreement

By applying to our program, the applicant will be deemed to have agreed to this statement:

(1) Obligations

- a. The Grantee shall acknowledge the Japan Foundation's financial support when the Grantee produces any materials related to the Grant Project such as publicity materials (e.g. websites, catalogs, posters, flyers, etc.), conference materials, books, videos, etc.
- b. The Grantee shall submit the Final Project and Financial Reports about activities and expenditures upon completion of the project. In addition, the Grantee shall donate the designated quantity of publicity materials and deliverables to the Japan Foundation.
- c. The Japan Foundation is intolerant of any fraudulent activity by applicants during the application process and throughout the grant period. Once a grant has been provided, committing any form of fraud with regard to Japan Foundation grant funds could result in penalty measures such as a revocation of the decision to provide a grant in whole or in part, the required return of the rescinded portions of the grant including additional charges, late payment charges, suspension of the applicant's eligibility to apply for a grant for a certain period of time, and/or other legal actions (Ref. "Act on Regulation of Execution of Budget Pertaining to Subsidies, etc." (Act No. 179 of 1955)).

(2) Disclosure of information on the project

- a. If the project is selected, the information such as the name of the applicant/organization and the outline of the project will be made public in the Detailed Annual Reports of the Japan Foundation (*Kokusai Koryu Kikin Jigyo Jisseki*), the Annual Report, on the Japan Foundation's website and in other public relations materials.
- b. When the Japan Foundation receives a request for disclosure of information in accordance with the "Act on Access to Information Held by Incorporated Administrative Agencies" (Act No. 140 of 2001), application forms submitted to the Japan Foundation, except for non-

disclosure information stipulated in such act, will be disclosed.

(3) Handling of personal information

a. Compliance with applicable laws

To the extent applicable, the Japan Foundation will comply with the “Act on the Protection of Personal Information” (Act No. 57 of 2003) (the “Act”), relevant cabinet and ministerial orders, various guidelines stipulated by the Personal Information Protection Commission or other organizations to which the Personal Information Protection Commission has delegated authority, the “EU General Data Protection Regulation (the “GDPR”),” the Personal Information Protection Law of the People’s Republic of China and related laws and regulations (the “Chinese Laws”), and other laws and regulations in relation to protection of personal information in relevant countries and regions, etc., and when handling any personal information, the Japan Foundation will properly collect, use and control the same. For more information on the Japan Foundation’s efforts to protect personal information (privacy policy), please visit the following websites:

(Related to the Act): (Japanese) <https://www.jpff.go.jp/j/privacy/>

(English) <https://www.jpff.go.jp/e/privacy/>

(Related to the GDPR): <https://www.jpff.go.jp/e/privacy/index.html#gdpr>

(Related to the Chinese Laws): https://www.jpfbj.cn/jp/personal_information/

b. Acquisition of personal information

The Japan Foundation may acquire the following personal information (the “Personal Information”) from the applicants through the application forms, attachments, project reports, deliverables, etc. (the “Project Materials”). In addition, the Japan Foundation may acquire the applicants’ Personal Information through publicly available websites.

[Basic information of applicants]

Name, date of birth, nationality, permanent residence, gender, place of employment, job and work duties, home address, postal code, telephone number (including mobile phone number), fax number, e-mail address, ID number, passport number, family structure, names of family members, dates of birth of family members, nationalities of family members, genders of family members, addresses of family members, jobs of family members, photographs taken during or prior to the program, etc.

[Information on applicants’ educational background, career history and abilities]

Resume (including educational background and career history), major achievements, foreign language proficiency, overseas residence history, overseas residence plan, contact information during the residence period, etc.

[Sensitive data on applicants]

Personal data such as medical history, medical examination results, other health-related information and bank account information

* The Japan Foundation may acquire the Personal Information of the applicant’s family members from the applicant. On such occasion, the applicant must obtain consent from his/her family members regarding the content of this “Handling of personal information” section before providing such Personal Information to the Japan Foundation.

- c. Purposes of use and period of personal information
 - (a) Based on the consent of the applicant and his/her family members, the Japan Foundation will use the Personal Information acquired from the applicant for screening, notification of screening results, implementation of the project, post-evaluation, communication to successful applicants and for any and all other purposes for management of applicants and successful applicants (the "Purposes of Use").
 - (b) For the proper and smooth operation of the Japan Foundation projects, any information such as the applicants' names, genders, jobs, titles, affiliations, project periods, project content, etc. will be: posted on published materials, such as the Detailed Annual Reports of the Japan Foundation (*Kokusai Koryu Kikin Jigyo Jisseki*), the Annual Report and the Japan Foundation's website; used for preparation of statistics materials; and used for formulation of future Japan Foundation projects.
 - (c) In addition to the information specified in (b) above, the applicants' contact information (i.e., address, e-mail address and phone number) will be used to: request the applicants to answer questionnaires as follow-up to the project after completion thereof; provide a notice regarding other Japan Foundation projects; request the applicants to provide information for formulation of future Japan Foundation projects, and so on.
 - (d) The Japan Foundation will handle the Personal Information of the applicants and their family members for the period necessary to achieve the Purposes of Use stated above.
- d. Provision of personal information
 - (a) The Japan Foundation may provide the Personal Information acquired from the applicants to the following organizations, to the minimum extent necessary. The Japan Foundation will make sure that the recipients take measures to ensure the security of the Personal Information.
 - i. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Embassies or Consulates-General of Japan, etc. (for arrangement of visas, handling of security control, support for project implementation, etc.)
 - ii. Evaluators such as outside experts, etc. (for screening, post-evaluation, etc.)
 - iii. News media and other organizations (for public relations for the projects)
 - iv. Other organizations and individuals who receive the information as needed for the projects
 - (b) The Personal Information acquired from the applicants may be used or provided for purposes other than those specified in the Purposes of Use, in accordance with Article 69, Paragraph 2 of the Act, such as providing such Personal Information for administrative organs, other incorporated administrative agencies, local public entities or local incorporated administrative agencies (the "Administrative Organs") as long as the Administrative Organs use the same within the scope necessary to conduct the affairs or services prescribed by applicable laws and regulations and where there is a reasonable ground for such use.
- e. Cross-border transfer of personal information
 - (a) The Japan Foundation may handle the Personal Information acquired from the applicants

by transferring the same to the base located in Japan (including the Japan Foundation headquarters) or other countries or regions for the Purposes of Use specified above. The Japan Foundation shall appropriately control the Personal Information in such countries or regions.

- (b) In addition to the case specified in the preceding paragraph, the Japan Foundation may provide the Personal Information acquired from the applicants to necessary organizations or individuals in Japan or other countries or regions for the Purposes of Use specified above as needed for the projects, only when the conditions stipulated in laws and regulations are satisfied.

- f. Security control of personal information

The Japan Foundation shall endeavor to prevent unauthorized access and leakage of the Personal Information of the applicants by way of taking appropriate security control measures and control means.

- g. Rights pertaining to personal information of applicant

The applicant has the right to access his/her Personal Information, correct inaccurate Personal Information, suspend the use of the Personal Information, etc., to the extent that the Act, the GDPR, the Chinese Laws and other laws pertaining to protection of the Personal Information in the relevant country or region apply.

- h. Filing of objections against handling of personal information

In the case where the applicant is dissatisfied with the handling of the Personal Information in the Japan Foundation, such applicant may state his/her objections to the Japan Foundation to the extent permitted by the applicable laws and regulations. In accordance with the applicable laws and regulations, the applicant may also file objections to the authority that has jurisdiction over protection of the Personal Information in the country to which the applicant belongs.

- i. Personal information of persons involved in the project

The Personal Information of persons involved in the project other than the applicant, which is submitted by the applicant to the Japan Foundation, shall also be handled in the same manner as stipulated in a. to h. above, and therefore, the applicants should provide explanations in advance to the persons involved in the project and obtain their consent.

- j. Contact information

Please use the contact details specified in "9. Contact" for any opinions, questions, etc. regarding any matters specified in this "Handling of personal information" section.

- k. Revocation of consent

The applicant has the right to revoke his/her consent to any matters specified in this "Handling of personal information" section at any time. The revocation of consent does not affect the legality of the handling of the Personal Information prior to the revocation. In addition, when the applicant does not provide his/her consent or revokes his/her consent, such applicant may not be able to receive necessary information and/or services from the Japan Foundation.

- (4) Response to the spread of infectious diseases

Depending on the spread of infectious diseases, appropriate measures may be required when

implementing a project in accordance with the regulations and instructions of the relevant authorities. Please understand that the Japan Foundation may unavoidably change the substance of its grant or the conditions attached as a result of changes in circumstances that have occurred after the decision to provide the grant.

(5) Ensuring the necessary safety and security of projects

Considering the recent instability in global security, with the increase of terrorist attacks in particular, the Japan Foundation highly recommends that you take the necessary security measures to ensure safety when you carry out your projects, including the following:

- a. Check and obtain security information about the area in which your project will be conducted to ensure the safe travel and accommodation of all related parties;
- b. Provide information on security and safety issues for your international guests (if any).

9. Contact

(1) Overseas

The Japan Foundation Overseas Offices: <https://www.jpf.go.jp/e/world/index.html>

If there are no Japan Foundation offices in your country/area, please contact the nearest Japanese diplomatic mission.

Japanese Diplomatic Missions: https://www.mofa.go.jp/about/emb_cons/mofaserv.html

(2) In Japan

Japanese Studies Department

The Japan Foundation (Headquarters)

YOTSUYA CRUCE, 1-6-4 Yotsuya, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0004, Japan

E-mail: r_info@jpf.go.jp Tel: +81-(0)3-5369-6069 FAX: +81-(0)3-5369-6041

* The Application Instructions end here. The Application Documents Completion Guide follows.

Application Documents Completion Guide

1. List of Application Documents

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Document	Format Specified/Free	Required/ Optional
	Application Form	Specified (PDF)	Required
	Project Proposal Form (in either Japanese or English)	Specified (Word)	Required
	Short CVs for all major participants	Free (PDF/Word)	Required
	Applicant Information	Free (PDF/Word)	Required
	Letters from collaborating organizations/individuals	Free (PDF/Word)	Optional

2. Application Form

- * Please use Adobe Acrobat Reader to complete this form. Other applications may cause incompatibility issues.

(1) "1. Applicant"

a. Name of applying institution

Only one organization may serve as the applying institution for a project. Any other institutions involved in the project should be listed under collaborating organizations.

b. Country/area

Please write down the country/area where the applicant's office is located.

c. Address

Please write down the physical address of the applying institution.

d. Tel.

Please write down the office phone number, including country code.

e. URL

When the applying institution has its own website, please write down its URL.

f. Authorized representative

The authorized representative should be the person within the applying institution who represents it in terms of administrative management (e.g., the president, the chairperson), and whose consent will constitute the official commitment of the institution to the proposal. As a general rule, in the "E-mail" column please provide an e-mail address with the domain of the applying institution (an individual address is also acceptable if the applying institution does not have a domain name), and in the "Tel." column please provide a daytime contact number. The authorized representative, the project director, and the bursar should be three different individuals.

g. Project director

The project director is the person who will receive routine correspondence, and who will be mainly responsible for the actual control and implementation of the proposed project. As a general rule, in the "E-mail" column please provide an e-mail address with the domain of the applying institution (an individual address is also acceptable if the applying institution does

not have a domain name), and in the "Tel." column please provide a daytime contact number. The authorized representative, the project director, and the bursar should be three different individuals.

h. Bursar

The bursar is the official who represents the applying institution in its financial affairs, and whose signature will signify acceptance of legal responsibility for the grant funds. As a general rule, in the "E-mail" column please provide an e-mail address with the domain of the applying institution (an individual address is also acceptable if the applying institution does not have a domain name), and in the "Tel." column please provide a daytime contact number. The authorized representative, the project director, and the bursar should be three different individuals.

i. Previous JF grants

Please indicate whether any grants have been received from the Japan Foundation in the past three years. Include the name of the project, the fiscal year, the grant amount, the program from which the grant was received.

(2) "2. Project Outline"

a. Project title

This should be the official project name in English.

b. Proposed project duration

(a) Please include the start and finish dates of the project. This duration should fall within the Japanese fiscal year and the length of the project duration should be within the 12 months between April 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026.

(b) Please note that the project duration is not equivalent to the exact date when an event like a seminar or conference will be held. For example, the time required to prepare for the event or to publish the results of the event would also be included in the project duration.

c. Schedule of events

Please include the actual date(s) and duration of the event(s), excluding the period of preparation and follow-up work.

d. Project summary

Please write down a brief summary of the overall project and its activities in 200 words or less. (Attachments or "please see references" must not be used here.)

e. Project budget

The budget should be made in the currency in which the project is calculated and managed in the applicant's bank account. The Japan Foundation can only remit those currencies that are listed below, and remittance should be made in the local currency when possible. Otherwise, the remittance should in principle be made in United States Dollars, Euros, or Japanese Yen.

United States Dollar (USD)	European Euro (EUR)	Japanese Yen (JPY)	
Australian Dollar (AUD)	Bahraini Dinar (BHD)	British Pound Sterling (GBP)	Canadian Dollar (CAD)
Czech Koruna (CZK)	Danish Krone (DKK)	Hong Kong Dollar (HKD)	Hungarian Forint (HUF)
Indian Rupee (INR)	Indonesian Rupiah (IDR)	Korean Won (KRW)	Kuwaiti Dinar (KWD)
Mexican Peso (MXN)	New Zealand Dollar (NZD)	Norwegian Krone (NOK)	Philippine Peso (PHP)
Polish Zloty (PLN)	Qatari Riyal (QAR)	Saudi Riyal (SAR)	Singapore Dollar (SGD)
South African Rand (ZAR)	Swedish Krona (SEK)	Swiss Franc (CHF)	Taiwanese Dollar (TWD)
Thai Baht (THB)	UAE Dirham (AED)		

3. Attachments

(1) "Project Proposal" form

a. "Detailed Description of the Project"

(a) "1. Purposes of the Project"

Please describe in a clear manner the objectives and aims of the project, explaining the background and relevance of the proposed project in relation to the current status of Japanese studies in the applying institution and in the applicant's country. In the case of a project that is a continuation of a previous project funded by the Japan Foundation, detailed reference to the results of that previous project and why additional support is required should be clearly stated.

(b) "2. Implementation Method"

Specific information on the implementation method or approach to be taken should be included here. A summary of the schedule of the proposed project should be listed in a chronological format, based on the phases of "Preparation," "Main Event(s) (Conference, Seminar, Study Tour, etc.)," and "Dissemination," including conference venues, etc.

(c) "3. Applying Institution, Participants, and Collaborating Organizations"

The proposal must include information on the applying institution, collaborating organizations, and individuals involved and describe why they are appropriate and qualified to implement the project, and explain the rationale for the selection of the proposed participants and collaborating organizations.

(d) "4. Dissemination"

The proposal must contain a concrete description of a plan to disseminate the results of

the project and pass on any products that will be generated by the project. The proposal should include the target audience(s) for the project, such as the policy community, media, business community, academia, or civil society, and explain how the results of the project will be disseminated to that audience.

(e) "5. Evaluation"

Clear benchmarks and specific plans for evaluating the project (evaluation by the applicant and by third parties) to measure the success of the project should be given. The Grantee is requested to report the result in the final project reports.

b. "Project Budget" Form

(a) "1. Currency"

Please indicate the currency in which the project budget is calculated and managed in the applicant's bank account.

(b) "2. Budget Plan"

i. Please fill in the attached form relating to the designated budget items. Designated budget items are:

- Travel expenses: for international and domestic airfare, other transportation, accommodation, per diem, etc.;
- Meeting expenses: for preparing materials, venues, equipment, public relations, etc.;
- Honorariums: for lecturers, collaborators, interpreters, assistants, etc.;
- Other expenses: for purchasing materials, etc. (all items other than those in the above-mentioned list should be included in other expenses.)

* Indirect expenses and normal operational costs of the applying institution cannot be supported by the grant.

* Budget items not corresponding to activities already described in the Detailed Description of the Project should not be newly introduced here.

ii. All budget items for the project should be indicated, even though the applicant is not requesting funds to cover them from the Japan Foundation. Please provide as much information as possible.

iii. For each item, please give a specific breakdown of how the total figure has been reached.

Examples:

- Accommodation: \$100/day × 3 days × 4 persons = \$1,200
- Meeting Materials: \$5/unit × 200 copies = \$1,000
- Interpretation Fee: \$150/day × 2 days × 2 persons = \$600

(c) "3. Explanatory Notes for Project Budget"

Additional information explaining the necessity of particular budget items should be included here. Please refer to each budget item by the number used in the budget plan. If applicable, we also request that the applicant supply detailed information about the following budget items:

i. In the case of travel-related items, proposed travel itinerary (e.g., Hanoi–Bangkok–

Hanoi in economy class). Please note that the maximum amount of airfare shall be, in principle, the cost of round-trip, economy-class discount tickets (discount economy airfare), but the use of business class may be permitted if additional funds from another source are also used;

- ii. Specification of hotel or conference venue site, including the name;
- iii. Details of materials and reports to be created (including purpose, number of pages and units for printing);
- iv. Justification for interpreter or lecturer honorarium, including the names of those to receive them;
- v. Detailed listings of the kinds of reference materials to be acquired;
- vi. Justification and breakdown of the items listed in other expenses, etc.

(d) "4. Other Funding Sources"

Here, we request information about income from grants, bequests, trusts, loans, etc., requested, expected, or already received from other donors in relation to the project under application with the Japan Foundation. Please list the name of the donor institution, the status of the application (i.e., pending or approved), and the total amount requested or received from that institution.

(2) Short CVs for all the major participants

Please submit CVs for the authorized representative, the project director and all major participants. Each CV should include the following information: field or research interest, present job title (including title, department, and institution), educational background (including names of institutions and dates of degrees awarded), employment history, a brief synopsis of fellowships/grants/awards; memberships in professional societies; and a list of publications highlighting those with most relevance to the project.

(3) Applicant information

Please include the following background information concerning the applying institution:

- a. Institutional category, the date and the purpose of foundation;
- b. Organizational information (directors and other structural information);
- c. History, activities and achievements;
- d. Statutes of the institution, act of endowment, articles or other rules and regulations of the institution;
- e. Finances (total income and expenditure of at least the last three years, gain and loss in the current fiscal year, subsidies and grants received) and the applicant's banking information for management of the project budget (if the applying institution does not hold a bank account in their name, please describe the reason with rules and regulations).

(4) Letter(s) from collaborating organizations/individuals

The letters should clearly indicate a commitment to participate in the proposed project and the form that their participation will take. If a commitment has not yet been secured, then the applicant should explain the status of their discussions with potential collaborating organizations or participants on a separate sheet. External letters of recommendation are not required.