



Funding Scheme for External Science and Technology Cooperation — Joint Funding Category

Application Guidelines for Joint Research Projects between the National Natural Science Foundation of China and the Macao Science and Technology Development Fund (2026)

According to the Memorandum of Understanding on Scientific and Technological Cooperation and Exchange between the Macao Science and Technology Development Fund and the National Natural Science Foundation of China, the Macao Science and Technology Development Fund (hereinafter referred to as “FDCT”) and the National Natural Science Foundation of China (hereinafter referred to as “NSFC”) jointly implement a funding scheme for collaborative research projects.

I. Supervising Authorities and Management

1. The supervising authorities for this joint research funding shall be the FDCT from Macao and the NSFC from mainland China.
2. Applications from the Macao side, including submission, acceptance, evaluation, approval, implementation, management, and project conclusion, shall be governed by the current Funding Scheme for External Science and Technology Cooperation and the current Guidelines.
3. The FDCT and the NSFC shall respectively disburse funds to their approved collaborators in Macao and mainland China. Funds disbursed by each party can only be used within their respective jurisdictions.

II. Supported Fields and Unsupported Project Types

1. This scheme shall fund joint basic research or applied basic research projects proposed by researchers from mainland China and Macao, with priority given to the following fields: information science, traditional Chinese medicine research, marine science, environmental science, biological science, new materials science, and space science.



2. Projects involving basic infrastructure construction, pure equipment procurement, soft science research such as policy and management, or market promotion shall not be supported.

III. Funding Amount and Duration

1. The applied funding amount for each project shall not exceed MOP 2.5 million.
2. The approved funding amount shall not exceed the applied amount.
3. The funding duration shall not exceed three years.

IV. Application Period

January 19 to February 27, 2026.

V. Requirements for Bilateral Collaboration

1. Within the five years preceding the start of the application period, the project leader from Macao and the project leader from mainland China must have an established foundation of prior cooperation, which may include: jointly published papers, books, or papers accepted by journals; joint patent applications; joint applications for project funding; joint supervision of postgraduate students; or joint organization of academic activities. Relevant supporting documents shall be attached to the application.
2. For applications led by Macao entities, the lead institution shall negotiate with the partner from mainland China on research content, research plans, and division of responsibilities. They must sign a cooperation agreement, memorandum of understanding, or letter of intent, which must include specific provisions on intellectual property rights.
3. The lead and participating institutions shall have clearly defined divisions of responsibility and substantive R&D cooperation. The project must



effectively protect intellectual property rights, equitably share the results of collaborative research, and safeguard the interests of all parties.

4. Collaborating partners must possess strong technical capabilities or high research standards, along with the willingness and capacity to cooperate with Macao entities. Partners may contribute through technology, funding, personnel, information resources, advanced equipment, proprietary resources, or other means.
5. Applications involving cooperation between Macao research institutions and subsidiaries of Macao-based research institutions in mainland China shall not be supported under this scheme.
6. The partner from mainland China shall simultaneously submit an application to the NSFC. For detailed application procedures, please refer to the NSFC's relevant regulations.

VI. **Output Requirements**

Expected research outputs shall not be limited to academic or applied outcomes and may include papers, monographs, research (consultancy) reports, patents, talent cultivation, software, hardware (prototypes or models), technical standards, formulations, new materials, new processes, or similar deliverables.

VII. **Requirements for the Application Proposal**

1. The application proposal serves as the crucial basis for the FDCT, evaluation experts, and others to understand the project, conduct consultations and reviews, and select projects on merit. Applicants shall diligently complete the proposal in accordance with the specified content, format, and word limits.
2. The basic requirements for completing the application proposal include:



- (1) The project should achieve research collaboration within the relevant fields and in the development of related technologies.
- (2) The collaboration must be significant, justified, and well-reasoned, with clear objectives, specific content, a reasonable and feasible cooperation plan, measurable technical indicators, and a reasonable budget.
- (3) The research and development team should have a clear structure and the capability to complete the project. The lead entity and participating entities should clearly define their responsibilities, ensuring substantive R&D collaboration.
- (4) The project name, collaborating entities, project leaders, project duration, and other details in the proposals submitted by both parties must be consistent.

VIII. Submission of Applications

1. Applicants must prepare the application in any of the official languages of the Macao Special Administrative Region or in English.
2. Applicants who have obtained an electronic signature must submit the application documents through the FDCT online application system on or before the deadline.
3. Applicants without an electronic signature must, in addition to submitting the application documents through the FDCT online application system on or before the deadline, also deliver the signed and sealed application documents to the FDCT office.