

2026 Korea-Canada Joint Call for Proposals in Quantum Science and Technology

The Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT) hereby announces the 2026 call for new research proposals under the Korea-Canada Joint Quantum Science and Technology Program, aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of quantum science and technology through international cooperation between Korea and Canada. Interested researchers are invited to submit proposals.

August 31, 2026

<Governing Ministry> Bae Kyung-hoon, Minister of Science and ICT

<Managing Institution> Hong Won-hwa, President of National Research Foundation of Korea

※ *This document is an official English summary of the NRF announcement. The NSERC announcement should be reviewed separately.*

1. Program Overview

※ " _____ " indicates content related to this specific call for proposals

□ Program Name: Quantum Information Science Human Resources Development Program

□ Program Objective

- To build career development pathways and expand the research base so that outstanding talent is drawn into the field of quantum information science — a field with significant transformative potential — and can grow into senior-level researchers

□ Program Details

- **(Quantum Graduate School Operation)** Support for establishing and operating a consortium of domestic universities to build an open, cross-institutional education and research system (Quantum Graduate School) for cultivating core quantum science and technology talent
- **(Strengthening Leading-Researcher Capacity)** Support for newly appointed faculty and others to discover future research topics and build global networks through personnel exchange-based joint research with leading overseas research institutions and universities (Research Innovation Track, Strategic Technology Track)
- **(Long-Term Training Support)** Support for master's/PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, and others to participate in related research projects and specialized training programs at leading domestic and overseas universities, companies, and research institutions
- **(Promoting Future Talent Inflow)** Operation of tailored education programs for elementary/middle/high school students, university students, and the general public to raise awareness of and interest in quantum information science
- **(Expanding the Research Base)** Building and operating a comprehensive quantum information science information system, developing and utilizing education/promotion content, hosting international conferences, and providing policy support

2. Support Details

□ Purpose of Support

- To advance bilateral cooperation in science and technology by promoting joint research between Korean and Canadian researchers
- To support joint research focused on fields where synergies are expected through bilateral cooperation

※ Canadian Funding Agency: Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)

□ Fields of Support

- Quantum algorithms/encryption, including post-quantum cryptography
- Quantum communications
- Quantum computing
- Quantum materials
- Quantum sensing

□ Conditions for Support

- **(Research Team)** Composed of two or more Co-Principal Investigators representing Korea and Canada, respectively
 - (Korean Side) Only domestic universities may serve as the lead institution; collaborating institutions may also include universities and national/public research institutes or government-funded research institutes; a consortium of academic and research institutions is permitted
 - (Canadian Side) Limited to academic researchers affiliated with universities; non-academic institutions and for-profit entities may not participate
- ※ For detailed eligibility requirements, see the NSERC announcement
- **(Research Approach)** Joint research to create innovative outcomes by building a sustainable bilateral research cooperation ecosystem through collaboration and exchange between the Korean and Canadian research teams

□ 2026 Funding Scale and Key Selection Considerations

○ Funding Scale and Method

- Number of Selected Projects: Approximately 4
- ※ Subject to adjustment by mutual agreement between the two countries
- Project Duration: Total of 3 years (36 months, Dec 2026–Nov 2029)
- ※ The project period on the Canadian side may be subject to change
- Research Funding (per project, per year): Up to KRW 300 million (Korean side); CAD 250,000 (Canadian side)
- ※ Each country's funding agency provides funding directly to its own participating researchers

<Example: Annual Project Period and Budget (Korean Side)>

Security Level	General	
Project Type	General Project	
Budget	Period	Amount (Proposed)
Total Research Period	36 months (Dec. 1, 2026 – Nov. 30, 2029)	Up to KRW 900 million
Year 1	6 months (Dec. 1, 2026 – May 31, 2027)	Around KRW 150 million
Year 2	7 months (Jun. 1, 2027 – Dec. 31, 2027)	Around KRW 175 million
Year 3	12 months (Jan. 1, 2028 – Dec. 31, 2028)	Around KRW 300 million
Year 4	11 months (Jan. 1, 2029 – Nov. 30, 2029)	Around KRW 275 million

○ Key Review Criteria

- ① Collaborative research (25 points)
- ② Scientific relevance, originality and topicality (25 points)
- ③ Suitability of methods and feasibility (25 points)
- ④ Applicants' scientific track record and expertise (25 points)

※ In the event of a tie in the merit review, priority will be given to the project with the higher score in the order of the review criteria above (① → ④)

□ Program Briefing Session (Webinar)

- **(Purpose)** To introduce the bilateral program's implementation details and the funding plans for this program
- **(Date/Time and Method)** September 10, 2026 (Thu) / Online

3. Eligibility and Restrictions

※ For Korean-side researchers only. See the Canadian announcement for Canadian-side eligibility.

□ Eligibility

- **Eligibility of Research and Development Institutions**
 - Only domestic universities may serve as the lead institution; collaborating institutions may also include national/public research institutes and government-funded research institutes
- **Eligibility of Principal Investigators**
 - Researchers affiliated with institutions or organizations eligible to conduct national R&D programs, as specified above

□ Application Restrictions

<Restrictions on Researchers>

- **(Participation Restriction)** Individuals currently restricted from participating in national R&D programs may not apply. However, applicants whose participation restriction ends before the day preceding the R&D proposal submission deadline may apply for and carry out the project.
- **(3-PI / 5-Co-I Rule)** A researcher may concurrently carry out (including as a participant) up to 5 R&D projects, of which no more than 3 may be as the Principal Investigator at the lead research institution.
- **(Labor Cost Rate Calculation)** All researchers, including the Principal Investigator, may not apply if their combined labor cost rate across all national R&D projects they are carrying out would exceed 100%.

<Restrictions on Research Institutions>

- **(Restriction on Research Team Composition)** Only domestic universities may serve as the lead institution; collaborating institutions may also include national/public research institutes and government-funded research institutes

※ Corporate/private companies may not participate.

- Within the same R&D project, the lead institution, collaborating institution(s), and any subcontracted institution must all be distinct institutions.
- Any project in which the lead institution is not a university, or in which a corporate entity is included, will be rejected along with the entire application under that lead institution.
- Any project in which the lead, collaborating, and subcontracted institutions include a duplicate institution will be rejected, along with the entire application under that lead institution.

<Restrictions on Project Application and Composition>

- **(Restriction on Duplicate Applications)** Applicants may apply as Principal Investigator for only one project under this announcement.
 - Any project involving a duplicate applicant will be rejected; if a duplicate applicant is found among collaborating institutions, the entire application under the associated lead institution will also be excluded.

※ Co-investigators and participating researchers are not automatically excluded for duplicate applications, but this is discouraged.

- **(Restriction on Duplicate Support under the Same Program)** Applications are not permitted if the applicant is currently serving as Principal Investigator on a project under the same parent program as this announcement.
 - However, an exception applies if the ongoing project under the same parent program will reach final completion within the selection year (by Dec. 31, 2026), excluding annual/phase-based completions.
- **(Restriction on Similar Project Applications)** Applicants are discouraged from applying if they are currently carrying out or participating in a similar project, and must individually verify, prior to application, that the proposed research plan is distinct from any previously funded national R&D project (including those funded by other ministries).
 - Any project found to duplicate an existing national R&D project will be rejected.
- **(Restriction on Subcontracted Project Composition)** To enhance the outcomes of the program and individual projects, subcontracted projects covering the same subject matter for the same duration as the overall research period are not permitted.

4. Application Procedure and Required Documents

□ Application Method and Procedure

- The Principal Investigator must log in to the Integrated Research Support System (IRIS, <https://www.iris.go.kr>), complete the online entry information and upload the research plan and other documents, then obtain confirmation/approval from the lead research institution.
- Refer to the Project Application Manual: Log in to the Integrated Research Support System (<http://www.iris.go.kr>) → Click and access the 'R&D Business Portal' → R&D Customer Center → IRIS User Manual → Download the [IRIS R&D Integrated Business Portal – Researcher] Application Manual
- Once the research plan has been completed, it can be submitted after clicking 'Final Confirmation' in the upper right of the screen. Submitted research plans cannot be further revised or deleted.
 - ※ *Revisions to the research plan are only possible by the Principal Investigator prior to the application deadline.*
- When applying, applicants must select the National Research Program Planning_Evaluation Field (National Research Program) that corresponds to their research plan.

□ Required Documents

- Korea-Canada Joint Quantum Science and Technology Program Research Plan (in English), 1 copy
 - ※ *Only the main body of the plan (PART 2) will be accepted in English; the final report may be required in Korean.*
 - ※ *Length: Within 17 pages (excluding references and the Principal Investigator's CV)*
- Appendices, 1 copy each
 - ※ *All appendices apply only to the Korean-side research institutions; the lead institution is responsible for collecting and submitting them together through the system.*
 - ※ *Failure to submit required documents (including those required "if applicable") will result in exclusion from evaluation.*

List of Appendices

Category	Document	Lead	Collab.	Sub.
Appendix 1	[Required] Confirmation of Eligibility	○	○	○
Appendix 2	[Required] Consent for Provision/Use of Personal and Tax Information / Research Ethics Compliance Pledge	○	○	○

Appendix 3	[Required if applicable] Institutional Support Confirmation	○	○	○
Appendix 4	[Required] Data Management Plan (DMP)	○	○	X
Appendix 5	[Required] Pledge Regarding Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern (STRAC Attestation Form)*	○	○	○

※ Under the Canadian government's Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern (STRAC) Policy, each Korean-side Principal Investigator (lead, collaborating, or subcontracted institution) must individually complete one copy of the Attestation Form. The Lead Institution collects these forms and submits them to IRIS, and forwards them to the Canada-side Principal Investigator for submission to NSERC.

5. Application Period and Precautions

□ Application Period and Precautions

Category	Details
PI Application Period	Until 18:00 (KST), Oct. 7, 2026 (Wed) NSERC submission deadline: until 20:00 (ET), Oct. 7, 2026 (Wed)
Lead Institution Review/Approval Period	Until 18:00 (KST), Oct. 7, 2026 (Wed)
Application Procedure	PI submission via lead institution ▷ Lead institution approval ▷ Application complete

※ The Principal Investigator must fully complete registration of the research plan and the request for institutional review by the application deadline, and the application is only finalized once the head of the lead institution has approved the PI's submission.

- **(Principal Investigator)** In principle, the PI must fully complete both submission (final confirmation) of the research plan and the request for institutional review within the PI Application Period.
- **(Research Institution)** The lead institution must complete review and approval of the research plan submitted by the researcher within the Lead Institution Review/Approval Period. (However, review and approval may also be completed in advance, during the PI Application Period.)
- **(Note)** No remedy will be provided under any circumstances for projects not fully submitted within the application period. As input errors during plan upload are common (e.g., validation errors), researchers are strongly advised to upload at least 3 days before the deadline.

□ Precautions When Applying

- The Korean-side Lead Principal Investigator submits the application via the Integrated Research Support System (IRIS) in accordance with this announcement, and separately submits a CV and the STRAC Attestation Form for each Korea-side Principal Investigator to the Canadian side.
- Required documents must be submitted to both the Korean and Canadian sides; failure to submit to either side may result in exclusion from evaluation.
- The research plan (PART 2) must be prepared and submitted in English only. Through consultation between the Korean and Canadian research teams, the respective research focus, objectives, and division of responsibilities of each researcher must be clearly delineated.
- The Korean-side budget must be prepared in accordance with the National R&D Innovation Act manual.
- As this announcement is a program promoted under a bilateral Korea-Canada government agreement, a re-announcement may not be issued even if the number of applications is at or below the planned number of selected projects, in consideration of both countries' program schedules.

- Selection may not proceed if no projects meet the requirements of this announcement.
- Failure to prepare/submit required appendices (including those required "if applicable") may result in disadvantages such as exclusion from evaluation.
- Applications submitted after the deadline, applications with incomplete documents, applications with research content duplicating other projects, and applications with ineligible applicants may be excluded from evaluation.
- The eligibility conditions for R&D projects specified in this announcement (research team composed of 2 or more Korea-Canada Co-PIs, lead institution restricted to universities, no corporate participation) must be strictly observed; failure to comply may result in exclusion from evaluation (rejection at preliminary review).
- Project objectives and content, project composition, research funding, and research period may be adjusted based on the opinions of the Review Committee/Steering Committee, and the number of selected projects may be adjusted by bilateral agreement.
- The reference date for various supporting documents is, in principle, the application deadline. (However, for participation restrictions, the reference date is the day before the application deadline.)
- Sanctions (including selection cancellation) may be imposed if false information is found in the research plan, appendices, or other submitted materials.
- Changes to key matters after selection (lead/collaborating/subcontracted institutions, PI, etc.) are, in principle, prohibited.
- Matters not specified in this announcement shall be governed by relevant laws and regulations and the NSERC announcement.
- This announcement may be subject to revisions during the announcement period; any such revisions will be separately announced.
- Applicants and performers of NRF-funded projects are recommended to disclose their use of generative AI tools, if used, when preparing the research plan and interim/final reports.

※ Reference: "Recommendations for the Responsible Use of Generative AI (AI) Tools (Revised)" (Sept. 2025, NRF)

6. Merit Review

□ Basic Direction

- The target projects or lead research institutions for support will be selected based on the research plan.
- Outstanding projects will be selected through expert review against program-specific review criteria, in line with the program's objectives.
- Selected research funding, etc. will be adjusted based on review results; any matters requiring supplementation as indicated in the review comments will be reflected in the research plan before finalizing the agreement with the selected project.

※ Projects scoring below 60 points will be excluded (below 70 points if the number of applications is at or below the planned number of selected projects).

- Detailed matters concerning the review may be changed depending on the characteristics of the program and project, and will be reflected in and governed by the review plan as established.
- Notwithstanding the above, matters related to the review may be separately determined through agreement between the two governments (funding management agencies).

□ Review Entity and Method

- **(Review Entity)** Review will be conducted by a panel of experts in the relevant field (hereinafter the "Review Committee")

○ **(Review Method)** Panel discussion (written review)

○ **Key Review Criteria**

- ① Collaborative research (25 points)
- ② Scientific relevance, originality and topicality (25 points)
- ③ Suitability of methods and feasibility (25 points)
- ④ Applicants' scientific track record and expertise (25 points)

※ In the event of a tie in the merit review, priority will be given to the project with the higher score in the order of the review criteria above (① → ④)

□ **Review Procedure**

Stage	Description	Responsible
Applications Shared	Korean-side applications received; shared with Canadian side	NRF
① Preliminary Review	Review/confirmation of each country's application eligibility and document adequacy	NRF, NSERC
② Expert Review & Bilateral Consultation	Expert review conducted and draft supported project(s) determined through bilateral consultation	Review Committee, NRF
③ Program Steering Committee Review	Review and adjustment/reporting of proposed projects	MSIT
④ Final Selection & Appeals	Review results announced; appeals received	NRF/MSIT

※ Korean-side applications received; shared with Canadian side (Applications Shared, handled by NRF) precedes the four stages above.

○ **(Preliminary Review)** Prior to Review Committee review, applicant institutions/organizations/researchers for R&D projects are screened against each country's criteria for application eligibility, participation restrictions, and other requirements.

- For Korean-side applicants, similarity/duplication review of applications may be conducted through the National Science & Technology Knowledge Information Service (NTIS, www.ntis.go.kr) and by the Review Committee

※ Projects found to lack distinctiveness from other national R&D projects may be excluded from selection.

○ **(Expert Review and Bilateral Consultation)** Applications meeting the preliminary review requirements are individually reviewed based on the research plan and other materials against the review criteria and their respective weightings; the draft list of supported projects is determined through bilateral consultation based on the review results.

- **(Lead Agency)** Merit review for this call will be conducted solely by NRF as the Lead Agency.
- **(Similarity/Duplication Review)** For the Korean side, the responsible agency provides the Review Committee with verification results from the NTIS similarity/duplication review system as reference material, with final determination made by the Review Committee; projects found to lack distinctiveness from other national R&D projects may be excluded from selection.
- **(Bilateral Consultation)** NSERC will observe NRF's expert review process and consult on review results. NSERC and NRF will jointly determine the proposed list of supported projects.

○ **(Appeals)** The head of the R&D institution may submit an appeal to the head of the responsible agency within 10 days of being notified of the review results.

7. Other Matters

※ This section applies only to researchers on the Korean side.

<Mandatory Requirements>

□ Faithful Performance of the R&D Project

- Researchers participating in the R&D project must prepare and maintain a research notebook (documentation recording the process of carrying out the R&D project and its research outcomes).
- **When a person in a special relationship (spouse, lineal ascendant/descendant, etc.) wishes to participate in the R&D project, prior approval from the responsible agency must be obtained.**
- **The Principal Investigator is encouraged to actively cooperate when requested by the competent ministry or funding management agency to participate in program planning/review.**

□ Research Data Management

- Upon selection of this project, in accordance with the "National R&D Data Management Standards," establishing and submitting a Data Management Plan (DMP) — covering the production, storage, management, and shared use of research data — is mandatory (using the attached plan format).
 - ※ "Research data" refers to factual data produced through various experiments, observations, surveys, and analyses conducted in the course of carrying out the R&D project, and which is essential for verifying research results.
 - The DMP will be reviewed at each stage of the merit review (selection, final review, etc.), and if the Review Committee requests revisions or supplementation, these must be reflected accordingly.
 - The Principal Investigator must disclose and share research data during and after the research period, in accordance with the timing, location, period, and format specified in the DMP.
 - ※ Data production is to be registered annually (during the project period, only the data production list is disclosed; the actual data is disclosed upon results announcement such as publications/patents, etc.)

□ Guidance on Reporting and Review of the R&D Project

- The Principal Investigator must include in the research plan and submit information concerning any administrative or financial support received from a foreign government, institution, or organization, or any compensation received or provided in exchange for labor or advisory services.
- Compliance with the obligation to submit annual, phase, and final reports
 - ※ Any intent to change the terms of the agreement must be clearly communicated in writing in advance, stating the reason and details of the change, and must be subject to mutual consultation.
- Phase and final reviews will assess the R&D project's implementation process and research outcomes; based on the results of the phase review, the project may be suspended, or the research funding may be increased or decreased.
- In the event of specific circumstances, a special review will be conducted to determine whether the R&D project should be changed or discontinued.

□ Matters Concerning Payment of Technology Fees

- The institution owning the R&D outcomes must submit a technology fee collection report if it concludes a technology licensing agreement and collects technology fees in accordance with the National R&D Innovation Act.
- Detailed matters concerning technology fees shall be governed by the National R&D Innovation Act and other relevant laws and regulations.

8. Upcoming Schedule

Schedule	Details
Until 18:00, Oct. 7, 2026 (Wed)	Application Deadline
Until 18:00, Oct. 7, 2026 (Wed)	Lead Institution Review/Approval Period
During November 2026	Merit Review Conducted
From Dec. 1, 2026	Research Commencement

※ The above schedule is subject to change depending on the progress of the program.

9. Applicable Laws and Regulations

Matters not specified in this announcement shall be governed by relevant laws and regulations and the NSERC announcement.

10. Contact

□ Inquiry Procedure

- **(Check Before Inquiring)** Please review the announcement and FAQ first, and submit inquiries through your lead research institution.
 - If the issue is not resolved via the announcement and FAQ, please proceed with inquiries following the order below.
- **Inquiry Order**
 - (1st) Researcher → Lead Research Institution
 - (2nd) Lead Institution (industry-academia cooperation office, etc.) → NRF

□ How to Check the Announcement and Forms

- Even if the announcement content is revised, updates will be posted via the "Program Notices" menu below, so please check regularly (individual notifications of revisions will not be provided).
- Ministry of Science and ICT (<https://msit.go.kr>) → Notices → Program Announcements
- National Research Foundation of Korea (<https://www.nrf.re.kr>) → Program Information → Program Announcements → New Program Calls
- Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)) (<https://nserc-crsng.canada.ca/en/funding-opportunity/nserc-national-research-foundation-korea-nrf-call-proposals-on-quantum>)
 - Path from NSERC homepage (<https://nserc-crsng.canada.ca>): Funding → Funding opportunities → NSERC–National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF) call for proposals on quantum technologies

□ How to Access Related Laws, Regulations, and Manuals

- Visit the Government-wide Research Fund Integrated Management System website (<http://gaia.go.kr>)
 - Laws/Regulations/Rules: "Resource Room" → "National R&D Funding-Related Laws/Regulations" → check "Common Laws/Regulations" and "MSIT (NRF)-related regulations"

□ Contact

- Please note that the responsible department differs by inquiry topic; check the appropriate contact below.

※ The responsible PM (Team Leader) may be contacted only until application completion; after the application deadline, inquiries may only be directed to the responsible staff (PO, researcher, etc.) of the technology team — the Team Leader cannot be contacted directly.

Category	Department	Contact
IRIS System Inquiries	IRIS Call Center	1877-2041, 042-862-1500, or report via the IRIS website
RFP, Application, Form Inquiries	Quantum Technology Division	042-869-7837, star0rin@nrf.re.kr
	Quantum Technology Division	042-869-7833, oceanlee@nrf.re.kr
Review-Related Inquiries	National Strategic Program Review Team 2	042-869-7745, sohee@nrf.re.kr
Canada (NSERC)-Side Inquiries	Research and Technology Partnerships	alliance_quantumquantique@nserc-crsng.gc.ca