



**AUN/SEED-Net**



**Call for Application**

**For**

**Special Program for Research Against COVID-19 (SPRAC)  
Japanese Fiscal Year 2020 - 2021**

ASEAN University Network  
Southeast Asia Engineering Education Development Network (AUN/SEED-Net)

Released in July 2020

## Table of Contents

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. About AUN/SEED-Net .....   | 1 |
| 2. Background .....   | 1 |
| 3. Objectives.....  | 1 |
| 4. Research Field .....   | 2 |
| 5. Expected Output .....  | 2 |
| 6. Applicant Eligibility.....   | 2 |
| 7. Research Period .....  | 2 |
| 8. Research Fund Supported by AUN/SEED-Net.....   | 2 |
| 9. Submission of Reports .....  | 3 |
| 10. Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) .....   | 4 |
| 11. Application Preparation and Deadline.....   | 4 |
| 12. Application Selection Criteria .....  | 5 |
| Annex 1 - List of Member Institutions (MIs) and Japanese Supporting Universities (JSUs) ..... | 6 |

## 1. About AUN/SEED-Net

Since its establishment in 2001, JICA Project for ASEAN University Network Southeast Asia Engineering Education Development Network (AUN/SEED-Net) has proved to be successful in strengthening university-industry relations, enhancing research capacities of academic staff in ASEAN member countries, and fostering a network of quality higher education in engineering in the region. Currently, the project is during its Phase IV, which focuses on the following objectives:

- 1) To enhance education quality and research capacities of Member Institutions (MIs) through collaboration among ASEAN and Japanese academia
- 2) To strengthen industrial relations and applications
- 3) To address developmental issues in ASEAN
- 4) To improve the quality of higher education through the expansion of ASEAN academic networks

## 2. Background

In early 2020, COVID-19 has swept across the globe and posed serious threats to nations worldwide. Amidst this global health crisis, AUN/SEED-Net shares grave concerns with the people around the world and is determined to contribute its expertise and support to alleviate the situation.

For over 17 years, AUN/SEED-Net has nurtured more than 1,400 innovative and highly skilled human resources through providing scholarship programs, and has strengthened the research capacity of MI academic staff by supporting collaborative research among our graduates, researchers, and professors in ASEAN and Japan. With these experiences, AUN/SEED-Net believes that our strength in human resource development, in particular the research capacity enhancement, could be one of the key efforts to help relieve difficulties caused by COVID-19. Therefore, JICA and AUN/SEED-Net, in response to the pandemic crisis, decide to launch a new research support program, entitled “The Special Program for Research against COVID-19 (SPRAC)”.

The program aims for research outputs in any engineering fields or interdisciplinary areas of research that revolves around COVID-19. SPRAC offers opportunities for research collaboration between Member Institutions (MIs)<sup>1</sup>, Japanese Supporting Universities (JSUs), industry, and external partners in ASEAN, Japan, South Asia, and Africa. The program also reflects the core value and objective of Japan’s Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy (FOIP)<sup>2</sup> and ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific Initiative where stability and prosperity of the international community would be reached through trans-continental cooperation.

## 3. Objectives

- 1) To support research collaboration in novel engineering and interdisciplinary ideas, methods, tools, and technologies that exhibit potential contribution to counter COVID-19 outbreak, including prevention and preparation for future outbreaks

---

<sup>1</sup> The network of AUN/SEED-Net is composed of 26 Member Institutions (MIs) selected from leading institutions in the field of engineering from 10 ASEAN countries, and 14 Japanese Supporting Universities (JSUs). Please refer to Annex 1- List of Member Institutions (MIs) and Japanese Supporting Universities (JSUs).

<sup>2</sup>Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy (FOIP) is Japan’s foreign policy that aims to establish connectivity corridor between two continents (Asia and Africa) and two oceans (Pacific Ocean and Indian Ocean). [https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/page25e\\_000278.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/page25e_000278.html)

2) To support research collaboration that provides solutions to economic and social issues/problems caused by COVID-19

3) To strengthen the human network among MIs, JSUs, industrial partners, and external partners in ASEAN, Japan, South Asia, and Africa

#### 4. Research Field

Research must include expertise and knowledge related to any engineering fields, including interdisciplinary ones, and indicate potentials to counter COVID-19 in a highly practical manner (applicable for real use).

#### 5. Expected Outputs

By the end of December 2021, the awarded project is expected to deliver at least one of the following outputs.

1) Papers published in ASEAN Engineering Journal (AEJ), or any international journals indexed in international database such as Web of Science or SCOPUS

2) A prototype of an invention that can be patented

3) Possible engineering-related methods that respond to the current COVID-19 situation, or suggest solutions for any future outbreak prevention and preparation

#### 6. Applicant Eligibility

Research project applicant shall be a team consisting of different parties as listed below.

| Team Member   | Necessity  | Quantity         | Applicant Eligibility  | Nationality   |
|---|------------|------------------|--|---|
| <b>Principal Investigator (PI)</b><br>(submit the proposal) | Compulsory | 1 person         | Full-time faculty member of MI (excluding MI in Singapore and Brunei Darussalam)   | ASEAN member state (excluding Singapore and Brunei Darussalam)  |
| <b>Co-investigator A</b>                                    | Compulsory | Minimum 1 person | Full-time faculty member of any Japanese university  | Japan   |
| <b>Co-investigator B</b>                                    | Optional   | Not specified    | Researcher from any organization/institution in ASEAN (including Singapore and Brunei Darussalam), Japan, South Asia, and Africa | ASEAN member state (including Singapore and Brunei Darussalam)<br>Japan<br>South Asian countries<br>African countries |
| <b>Co-researcher</b>  | Optional   | Not specified    | Any postgraduate student of MI and/or CEP consortium member institutions (including those in Singapore and Brunei Darussalam)    | ASEAN member state (including Singapore and Brunei Darussalam)  |

#### 7. Research Period

October 15, 2020 - December 15, 2021

#### 8. Research Fund Supported by AUN/SEED-Net

1) Total number of SPRAC awardees: 5 projects

2) Ceiling amount of support grant:

The ceiling amount is USD 50,000 per project covering the whole research period (October 15, 2020 - December 15, 2021). The research fund shall be allocated based on the approved project proposal.

### 3) Program Contract

- Program Contract will be signed twice (once per fiscal year). The first contract will be signed in JFY2020 and the second contract will be signed in JFY 2021.
- Program Contract period and budget allocation

The approved budget throughout the project implementation period will be allocated *twice a year* to the designated bank account provided by Principal Investigator (PI). Details of budget allocation are provided in the table below.

| Year     | Program Contract Period   | 1 <sup>st</sup> Disbursement  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Disbursement  |
|----------|---|---|---|
| JFY 2020 | Start: October 15, 2020 or contract signing date (whichever comes later)<br>End: March 15, 2021 | After the contract is signed<br><br>(80% of the total requested budget in JFY 2020) | January 2021<br><br>(20% of the total requested budget in JFY 2020) |
| JFY 2021 | Start: April 1, 2021 or contract signing date (whichever comes later)<br>End: December 15, 2021 | After the contract is signed<br><br>(80% of the total requested budget in JFY 2020) | August 2021<br><br>(20% of the total requested budget in JFY 2020)  |

- Only official bank account of the university (or equivalent) to which the Principal Investigator belongs is applicable.
- Carryover of funds (surplus or deficit) from JFY 2020 to JFY 2021 is not permitted.
- Expenditure incurred before the Program Contract signing date and/or after the Program Contract termination date is unacceptable.

### 4) Breakdown of Budget Support

The budget support breakdown requirement specifies eligible expense categories, which will be applied to all research funds given under Special Program for Research Against COVID-19. All expenses must fall into the following categories:

- Trip expense
- Equipment
- Consumables/spare parts/others
- Commissioned work
- Honorarium

5) Only Principal Investigator (PI), Co-investigator A, Co-investigator B and Co-researcher are eligible to take part in the budget spending. Principal Investigator (PI) shall be responsible for the overall expenditure.

For more details, please refer to Financial Guidelines for Special Program for Research Against COVID-19 (SPRAC) at <https://seed-net.org/programs/sprac-member-institutions/>

## 9. Submission of Reports

Principal Investigator (PI) must submit the required reports to AUN/SEED-Net as specified in the table below. Failure to submit any of the required reports within the submission time will result in withholding future installments.

| Year  | Submission Time   | Report Type                                |
|---|-------------------|--|
| JFY 2020  | March 15, 2021    | 1. Financial Report<br>2. Technical Report |
| JFY 2021  | August 2021       | 1. Interim Report                          |
|   | December 15, 2021 | 1. Financial Report<br>2. Technical Report |
| After the Project Contract signing, Financial Report Guidelines and report formats will be forwarded to each Principal Investigator whose proposal is approved. |                   |  |

## 10. Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)

A written agreement shall be made between the research team members and other concerned parties who are involved in the research project. Agreements must stipulate the following:

1) Rights and ownership to all intellectual property generated by research activities in SPRAC, such as patents, trade secrets, and copyrights shall be vested on the member universities and other concerned parties involved.

2) Only by written consent of all parties involved in the research project will allow AUN/SEED-Net and other Member Institutions to have the rights to use the research's IPRs for any academic purpose and publication.

3) The research team members and other concerned parties are expected to contribute a part of the revenue generated by the IPRs resulting from the fund provided by AUN/SEED-Net. Details shall be discussed and agreed upon among concerned parties.

4) The Member Institution (MI) to which research Principal Investigator (PI) belongs shall bear full responsibility to make sure that any part of the activities or the outcomes produced by the research team members will not infringe upon the IPRs of other parties. In this regard, AUN/SEED-Net shall bear no responsibility for any disputes or claims on IPRs related to SPRAC.

5) AUN/SEED-Net shall have the right to use photographs of the persons engaged in activities under SPRAC for advertising, promotional, and reporting purposes without having to acquire prior consent and permission from the research team members.

## 11. Application Preparation and Deadline

1) Apply online by August 31, 2020 at

<https://www.cognitofrms.com/JICAProjectForAUNSEEDNet/SpecialProgramForResearchAgainstCOVID19SPRACJapaneseFiscalYear20202021>

2) The online application must be accompanied with the following documents:

| Required Documents | Description   |
|--------------------|---|
| Form A             | Research proposal   |
| Form B             | Budget plan   |
| Form C             | Endorsement letter with Department Head's (or above) signature  |
| Commitment Letter  | Commitment Letter/e-mail from each Co-investigator and Co-researcher. Commitment Letter sample is provided in the link below, but no strict format is required. |
| CV                 | Curriculum Vitae of each research team member. CV sample is provided in the link below, but no strict format is required.                                       |

\* Please download Form A – C and find samples of Commitment Letter, CV, and completed online application format at <https://seed-net.org/programs/sprac-member-institutions/>

\*\* Please note that for Form A-C, documents that do not follow the provided templates will not be considered.

## 12. Application Selection Criteria

Submitted applications will be reviewed by AUN/SEED-Net-appointed reviewing committee members who are experts in the related engineering fields. The review criteria include:

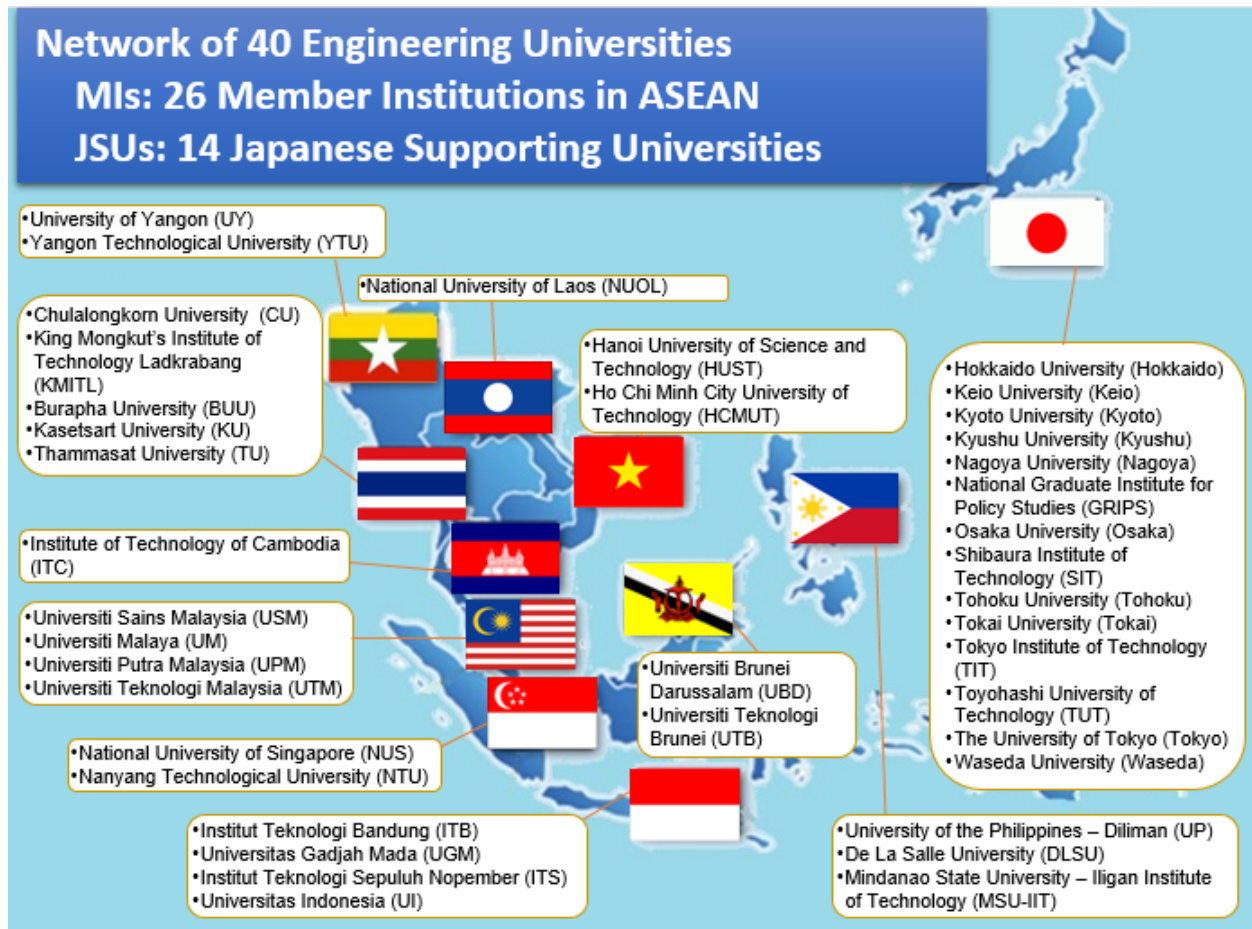
- a. Originality
  - The research nature is original and beneficial in the engineering aspect.
  - The research project has not already been awarded or under consideration by other grants.
  
- b. Usefulness (or impact to society)
  - The research proposal has great potential of application or development, or can be put into real practice.
  - The research topic should be timely and useful for the progress of academism and technology with good systemization of research structure.
  
- c. Relevance to SPRAC program objectives
  - The research topic, objectives, and methodology respond to the objectives and expected outputs of Special Program for Research against COVID-19 (SPRAC).
  - The research proposal suggests possible and useful solutions for either the current COVID-19 situation, or any future outbreak prevention and preparation which can contribute to the betterment of society.
  
- d. Feasibility
  - Necessary data, facilities and equipment required in research activities are well defined and feasible.
  - The budget proposal is reasonable and corresponds to the research framework.
  
- e. Research organization
  - The members of the research team are appropriate and the roles are clearly assigned to each member.

For inquiries, please contact [contact@aun-seed.net](mailto:contact@aun-seed.net)

**END**

## Annex 1

### List of Member Institutions (MIs) and Japanese Supporting Universities (JSUs)



### List of 10 Engineering Fields

- Chemical Engineering (ChE)
- Civil Engineering (CE)
- Computer and Information Engineering (CIE)
- Electrical and Electronics Engineering (EEE)
- Energy Engineering (EneE)
- Environmental Engineering (EnvE)
- Geological and Geo-Resource Engineering (GeoE)
- Materials Engineering (MatE)
- Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering (ME/Manu)
- Natural Disaster (ND)