

Arctic Challenge for Sustainability II (ArCS II)

International Research Exchange Program

Reviewing Guidelines

1. Reviewing Procedure

1) Review committee

Reviewing is made privately by the review committee for the International Research Exchange Program (hereinafter referred to as the “review committee”) established in the ArCS II Project.

2) Review process

(1) First screening

Document screening is made based on the submitted application documents.

(2) Second screening

In the second screening, on-line interview is made for applications that have passed the first screening. The review committee comprehensively evaluates the results of the first screening and the interview, and determines overseas exchange plans to be adopted. The review committee will make a comprehensive judgment based on the significance and necessity of international joint researches and the feasibility of the overseas exchange plan including preparation status. Depending on the review results, the amount of support may be less than the amount applied.

3) Notification of acceptance or rejection

For all applications, the ArCS II Secretariat will notify each applicant whether the application is accepted or rejected by e-mail to the e-mail address of the coordinator stated in the application form.

2. Viewpoint of Reviewing

1) Effectiveness for enhancing research capabilities

- What kind of research capabilities are you aiming to enhance through the overseas exchange plan
- Can we expect high-value results that will contribute to enhancing research on the Arctic region?

2) Effectiveness for fostering human resources, particularly early-career researchers

- Is the plan made to contribute to improving the capabilities and qualities of early-career researchers through bi-directional personnel exchanges?
- Can we expect the effect of fostering early-career researchers on the Arctic region?
- Is the overseas exchange plan designed to include the plan of dispatching early-career

researchers overseas, such as participation in field surveys or international conferences and presentation opportunities at international conferences?

- 3) Importance and developability of establishing and enhancing international research networks
 - In the overseas exchange plan, is the necessity and importance of conducting international joint research with overseas partner institutions made clear?
 - Is it possible to create an environment in which the international research network can be continued and developed even after the end of the project?
- 4) Implementation system of domestic and overseas partner institutions
 - Are the teams of the laboratories or research groups on both sides arranged so that the overseas exchange plan can be implemented effectively?
- 5) Validity of the overseas exchange plan (including the budget plan)
 - Is the three-year overseas exchange plan appropriate to enhance research capabilities and foster human resources, mainly early-career researchers?
 - Is the overseas exchange plan designed so that sufficient research results on the Arctic region can be expected?
 - Is there a clear distinction between the research using other external funds and budgets and the research under the overseas exchange plan of this program?
 - Is the budget plan focused on bi-directional personnel exchanges and holding international workshops and seminars?
 - Is the budget plan capable of enhancing research capabilities and fostering early-career researchers?

3. Examination Criteria

1) First screening

(1) Evaluation score

Score	Evaluation
5	Extremely excellent
4	Excellent
3	Good
2	Slightly insufficient
1	Insufficient

(2) Description of comments for each score

- Reviewers should give a score for each item in Section 2, “Viewpoint of Reviewing.” In particular, if a reviewer gives a score other than 3, he or she must enter a comment describing the specific grounds and reasons for the judgment regarding which points are

excellent or which points are insufficient.

- Because a comment on the entire plan is an extremely important factor in making a decision of acceptance or rejection, each reviewer should enter a comment as a comprehensive finding. For conditions and opinions to improve the plan, enter as issues or points of attention.

(3) Document screening

The review committee should confirm the application documents based on the results of the document screening and select overseas exchange plans for which the second screening should be carried out.

2) Second screening

For the review committee –selected overseas exchange plans that should be subjected to the secondary screening, the review committee should conduct interview for coordinators based on application documents.

(1) Evaluation scores

For the overseas exchange plans for which interview was made, the review committee should comprehensively evaluate in accordance with the following table and add examination opinions.

Rating category	Rating criteria
4	Should be adopted
3	May be adopted even though there are some inadequacies
2	Difficult to adopt because there are some inadequacies
1	Should not be adopted

(2) Comprehensive evaluation

After all of the interview is completed, the review committee should make a final decision on acceptance or rejection by comprehensively considering the results of the first screening and the interview. At that time, conditions or opinions to improve the plan can be added as necessary (including a reduction of the amount of budget).

4. Conflict of Interest

1) Non-participation of stakeholders

Reviewers who have an interest in applied overseas exchange plans should notify the secretariat to that effect and should not participate in the review process of applied overseas exchange plans. The scope of interests is as follows.

- (1) The reviewer is the coordinator of the overseas exchange plan in question
- (2) The coordinator belongs to the same organization (e.g., faculty, graduate school, research institution) as the reviewer on a full-time basis, or the coordinator's research field is the same as that of the reviewer, even if he or she is working on a part-time basis
- (3) A coordinator is included among persons who have close relationships with the reviewer, such as a relative
- (4) It is judged that it is difficult for the reviewer to make a neutral and fair judgment

5. Information Disclosure

- 1) In principle, the evaluation results and agenda of each reviewer in the examination will not be disclosed.
- 2) All applicants are notified of the results of acceptance or rejection. If there are any points of consideration or conditions in implementing the adopted overseas exchange plan, applicants should also be notified of these points.
- 3) Reviewers must not leak the information obtained in the process of examination to the outside, except for published information. In addition, the information obtained as a reviewer must be strictly managed.