

The Sumitomo Foundation

Partnership with the Sumitomo Foundation

The Besshi Copper Mine in Ehime Prefecture was opened in 1691 after Tomoyoshi Sumitomo—the fourth head of the Sumitomo family—acquired mining rights from Japan’s feudal government. It thereafter became the foundation of the various businesses of the Sumitomo Group. The Sumitomo Foundation was established in 1991 to commemorate the opening of the mine 300 years earlier and since then the SuMi TRUST Group has collaborated with the Foundation in various ways. For example, we have contributed money, played a part in its management as trustee, and dispatched staff.

Grant Business of the Sumitomo Foundation

As a universal grant-making organization, the Sumitomo Foundation extends grants to research activities and businesses in various fields, including basic sciences, the environment, art and culture, and international exchange. From fiscal 1991 through 2020 the Foundation had awarded a total of 7,069 grants worth more than ¥11.3 billion.

Basic Science Research Grants

Scientific advancements have contributed greatly to the development of society and science has the potential to open up the future of humankind. This grant provides support to basic science research projects considered important but lacking research funds, and especially budding research undertaken by young researchers expected to generate innovative ideas.

Cumulative number of grants from FY1991 through FY2020: 2,503 for a total of more than ¥4.0 billion

Environmental Research Grants

Environmental issues are some of the biggest problems currently confronting humanity. Researchers continue to investigate the causes and seek solutions to numerous environmental problems, including global warming, ozone-layer depletion, acid rain, species decline, food and population, desertification, and pollution. Given the need to develop analysis methods and various countermeasures based on a multi-faceted approach in order to solve the problems plaguing the environment, this grant provides support to research projects undertaken in a variety of fields (humanities, social sciences, natural sciences).

Cumulative number of grants from FY1991 through FY2020: 1,520 for a total of more than ¥2.9 billion

Grant for Projects for the Protection, Preservation & Restoration of Cultural Properties in Japan

When considering spiritual wealth, cultural assets are the source of a spiritually affluent lifestyle and the basis for the creation of new culture. And as a foundation for mutual understanding, they serve to deepen awareness of one’s own culture and the cultures of other countries. Having access to cultural assets is therefore an extremely effective way of learning about the history of bilateral cultural exchange. From this point of view, it is the responsibility of the current generation to preserve cultural assets so they can be inherited by the next generation. That said, it is hard to say that there is always enough



Inouchuzu (Map of Japan, made by Ino Tadataka), The University of Tokyo

money to spend on preserving and restoring cultural property in Japan. This grant is for projects that aim to help protect, preserve, and restore cultural assets in Japan (fine arts such as paintings, sculptures, craftwork, handwriting, books, ancient documents, antiquities, and historical materials).

Cumulative number of grants from FY1991 through FY2020: 864 for a total of more than ¥1.7 billion

Grant for Projects for the Protection, Preservation & Restoration of Cultural Properties outside Japan

Culture is the cornerstone of a country and the source of spiritual enrichment. Cultural properties are assets in which humanity and the history of mankind are interweaved—they represent the hope and pride of the people in all countries. Mutual understanding is deepened when the people of the world have access to each other’s cultural assets, which in turn builds relationships of trust. It is the responsibility of the people alive today to protect cultural properties and pass them on to the next generation. That said, not enough has been done in other countries to preserve and restore cultural assets. With the aim of helping to hand cultural properties shared by all humanity down to posterity, this grant is for projects in other countries that preserve and restore cultural properties (fine arts and relics), as well as preliminary research that leads directly to preservation and restoration work.

Cumulative number of grants from FY1991 through FY2020: 354 for a total of more than ¥830 million



Kaman-Kalehöyük archaeological site, Turkey

Japan-Related Research Grants in Asia

This grant is for researchers in mainly East Asian or Southeast Asian countries undertaking research related to Japan, including comparative studies, international relation studies, and historical exchange studies that include Japan. The grant aims to lay the groundwork for deepening understanding of Japan in these countries and to help further mutual understanding between Asian countries and Japan.

Cumulative number of grants from FY1991 through FY2020: 1,676 for a total of more than ¥1.2 billion