

Call for Postdoctoral Fellows (Fixed-term Project Researcher) to work at SENDO : International Leading Research at WPI-IRCN, The University of Tokyo

The International Research Center for Neurointelligence (WPI-IRCN), based at the University of Tokyo Institutes for Advanced Study in Japan, is seeking post-doctoral research fellows who specialize in neurobiology/developmental neuroscience/social neuroscience and/or intelligent robotics/mathematical neuroscience and are extremely motivated and enthusiastic to participate in our new projects on "Social Brain" networks.

Recently, we have acquired a research grant ("International Leading Research") sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), Japan, to facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration across the world. This call seeks candidates who will conduct collaborative research (themes and locations described below) with one of our five international partners outside of Japan.

IRCN was originally launched in October 2017 as a World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI) of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) focusing on brain development and its disorders to inspire novel A.I. as well as its application toward disease prediction and prevention. Through the WPI mechanism, IRCN established a research and administrative vision for an international ecosystem to attract the best scientists from around the world to Japan and our international satellite labs. IRCN accommodates and encourages diverse scientists from all countries to carry out novel, ambitious, cutting-edge research toward a value-added trans-disciplinary global impact. For further information about IRCN, see: <https://ircn.jp/en/>.

IRCN welcomes all qualified candidates, regardless of nationality or gender, and works positively to eliminate biases. Position details are provided below.

1	Title / Number of positions	Project Researcher / up to 5
2	Employment period	For a period of one year commencing after September 1, 2026 (start date negotiable). Notwithstanding the foregoing, as this employment contract spans fiscal years, the appointment shall terminate on March 31, 2027 and shall be renewed on April 1, 2027 for the remaining term. Renewal will be judged based on, the progress of the work engaged in, remaining work at the end of the contract period, work performance, work attitude, health situation, and other factors.
3	Probationary period	14 days from the date of hiring.
4	Place of work	At one of 5 international partner labs (see below) and International Research Center for Neurointelligence, The University of Tokyo, Institutes for Advanced Study (7-3-1 Hongo, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0033 JAPAN) Scope of change: In principle, within the same center.
5	Job Description	<p>Selected candidates will participate in one of the international collaborative research activities as an early-career researcher under the scope of "Nurturing Brain Networks for Social Networks". Therefore, please specify the preferred project and lab location when submitting the application.</p> <p>(1) Boston Children's Hospital / Harvard University (USA): https://research.childrenshospital.org/research-units/nelson-laboratory-research/ https://henschlab.mcb.harvard.edu/</p> <p>(2) CNR Istituto di Neuroscienza (Italy):https://www.cnr.it/en/institute/061</p> <p>(3) Ecole Normale Supérieure (France):https://lscp.dec.ens.fr/en</p> <p>(4) Nanyang Technical University (Singapore): https://www.ntu.edu.sg/empower</p> <p>(5) IIT (Italy): https://www.iit.it/it/web/cognitive-architecture-for-collaborative-technologies/home</p> <p>Below is a list of potential projects.</p> <p>(a) Exploring interventions targeting critical periods- Understanding neurodiversity [Primary Site: Boston Children's Hospital, Harvard University (USA)]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - e.g. Reveal the impact of early life adversity or rare disorders on social brain development - e.g. Contribute to better understanding of critical period mechanisms and reactivation for therapy <p>(b) Foundations of social brain development - Typical and atypical trajectories [Primary Site: Institute of Neuroscience, CNR (Italy)]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - e.g. Identify key molecular and cellular bases of healthy social brain development - e.g. Contribute to integrative research focus on resilience.

		<p>(c) Exploring neural mechanisms of social interactions in early development– to nurture brainresilience</p> <p>[Primary Sites: Ecole Normale Superieure/CNRS (France) and/or Nanyang Technological University (Singapore)]</p> <p>- e.g. Measuring brain activity with AI & wearable technologies during infant-caregiver interaction and impact on language development</p> <p>- e.g. Contribute to revealing cross-cultural social cognition and enabling early, personalized intervention.</p> <p>(d) Modelling how intervention helps social communication – can robots read our mind?</p> <p>[Primary Site: Italian Institute of Technology (Italy)]</p> <p>- e.g. Designing robot-based interventions to enhance social communication</p> <p>- e.g. Contribute to establishing human–robot interaction paradigms to probe social cognition</p> <p>General Remarks</p> <p>To participate in above mentioned projects, the selected candidates need to select one of the five listed international destinations.</p> <p>Scope of change: The University may request employees to be reassigned to different positions, or to take up additional positions or to work on an external assignment. (In principle, no one will be ordered against one's will. Details are in accordance with Article 4 of the University of Tokyo Regulations on Conditions of Employment of Academic Staff.)</p>
6	Working Hours	Under the discretionary work system for specialized work, the employee is considered to work 7 hours and 45 minutes per day.
7	Holidays	Saturday and Sundays; Statutory public holidays of Japan; Year-end and New Year holidays(December 29 through January 3)
8	Paid Leaves	Annual paid leaves, refreshment leave, congratulatory or condolence leave, etc.
9	Salary & Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Salary: Annual salary system in accordance with the University of Tokyo Regulations, with a monthly salary of around ¥400,000 - ¥500,000 including Merit Based Allowances. (Salary is to be determined according to qualifications, ability, experience, etc.) ● Travel expense support / cost-of-living adjustment by site ● No retirement benefits or bonuses
10	Available insurances	Eligible for MEXT Mutual Aid Association (health insurance and pension insurance), employment insurance, and workers' accident compensation insurance in accordance with laws and regulations. *MEXT: Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
11	Qualifications	<p>Required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early-career PhD holder: < 8 years after obtaining the degree - Good experience in social neuroscience, neurobiology and/or information science & engineering - Good communication skill in English
12	Application documents	<p>(1) Cover letter in English: Please indicate which of the above projects you would like to work on as your primary project, and provide a clear explanation of your motivation. Applicants are also encouraged to describe how they can contribute to other projects.</p> <p>(2) Curriculum vitae in English Please download and use the University of Tokyo Standard Resume Format. https://www.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/about/jobs.html</p> <p>(3) Publication list</p> <p>(4) Two letters of recommendation</p>

13	Submission	<p>Please submit your application to the following address by the application deadline specified in 14. Please combine the documents in ONE PDF file (10MB or smaller). Please name the file as "firstname_lastname_(the number of the project).pdf". (e.g. Taro_Todai_5.pdf) The application materials will not be returned. We will notify you via e-mail upon receipt of your application within 5 business days.</p> <p>Address: jinji.ircn#gs.mail.u-tokyo.ac.jp (Please replace # with @ before using this email address)</p>
14	Application Deadline Selection Process	<p>August 3, 2026, 17:00 (JST). Once a suitable candidate has been selected, the recruitment process will be closed. All applications will be screened, and only those qualified will be scheduled for an interview (on-site or via video). If your application passes the screening, you will be contacted by email for an interview.</p>
15	Inquiries	Please refer to "13 Submission".
16	Recruiter Name	The University of Tokyo
17	Status of measures to prevent passive smoking	Smoking is prohibited on the premises (smoking areas are located outside)
18	Notices	<p>(1) Submitted documents will not be returned. Personal information is handled carefully according to the Privacy Policy of the University of Tokyo, and will be used only for the job selection process. (2) Travel cost will not be paid in screening process. (3) For details on work conditions, please see the University of Tokyo Regulations on Conditions of Employment of Fixed-term Academic and Administrative Staff. https://www.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/about/rules_main.html (4) The University of Tokyo promotes gender equality and actively encourages women to apply. (5) If you are personally in contract with foreign governmental bodies, corporations or universities, or you are in receipt of a large benefit (financial or any other form) from foreign governmental bodies during the period of your employment, the provisions of the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act (FEFTA) may prohibit or restrict the sharing of technology that are designated as controlled technology possibly making it difficult for you to fulfill your duties as an academic or administrative staff of the university as a result. Therefore, in such cases it is necessary to keep such contracts/benefits within the scope where it does not hinder the sharing of technologies necessary for your duties by the university.</p>