


# Applying for *Kaken-hi* in the social sciences Some practical tips

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# About me

- ▶ Italian national, 35 years old
  - ▶ Background also as practicing attorney
  - ▶ Associate professor of Law – since July 2015
  - ▶ In Japan since 2011 – first as JSPS Postdoctoral Fellow
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# My experience with *Kaken-hi*

- ▶ 2011–2012

JSPS Postdoc Fellowship *Kaken-hi* (automatic)

- ▶ 2013–2015 Start-up Grant → rejected! C


- ▶ 2014–2016 Wakate B → accepted

- ▶ 2016–2018 Wakate B → rejected B


# Some stereotypes you may want to get rid of

- ▶ *Kaken-hi* are primarily conceived for hard, mathematical sciences
  - No. The success rate is about the same.
- ▶ Applications forms in Japanese are evaluated more positively
  - No. Moreover, it is much better to have an application written in good English than one in mediocre Japanese
- ▶ Senior scholars/research teams have an advantage over junior scholars/individual researchers
  - No. Plus, there are dedicated categories of funding

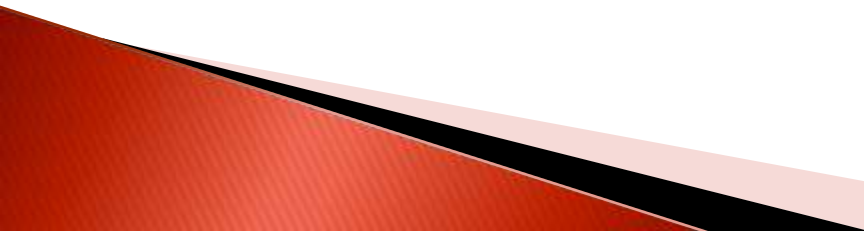
# Practical tips – a purely personal view

- ▶ The three–lines summary at the very beginning is the most important part of the application
  - ▶ Try to be as convincing as possible. Feasibility is more important than comprehensiveness
  - ▶ The research should have a practical outcome, useful for society
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# Practical tips – a purely personal view

- ▶ Try to show you have the concrete, practical tools to carry out the research from the beginning to the end (taking into account external factors e.g. changes in your employment status). Not only what to research but *how* to research it
  - ▶ The application must be totally understandable to anybody in the field
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# Practical tips – a purely personal view

- ▶ Choose your field carefully (evaluators)
  - ▶ Try to be as detailed as possible when it comes to expenses, travel plans, etc.
    - If you plan to attend/present in conferences, try to identify specific ones (*i.e.* do not say «a conference in the field of procedural law», but «the International Association of Procedural Law 2017 Conference in Bogotá)
    - When you describe your travel expenses, please refer to the official tables by the University
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# Practical tips – a purely personal view

- ▶ Have your proposal checked by a colleague in the same or neighbouring field before you send it out
- ▶ Do not alter the forms. Do not add pages
- ▶ If appropriate, divide long paragraphs with appropriate headings

E.g. *Research Objectives:*

- 1. Scientific background of the research
- 2. What will be elucidated and to what extent will it be pursued during the research period
- 3. Scientific characteristics, originality and expected achievements and significance of the research in the area



Thank you for you kind  
attention

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