

Guidelines for 2026 BrainLink X-Lab Day

March, 2026

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I Background & Necessity

- Growing Need for International Cooperation Amid Intensifying Global Technological Rivalry
 - Major powers are increasingly competing for technological leadership in advanced scientific and technological fields—such as AI and quantum technologies—with these advancements becoming decisive factors in shaping national security and industrial leadership.
 - International cooperation and joint research are essential to overcome the limitations of domestic science and technology and to effectively respond to the rapidly shifting global paradigm.
- The Need to Establish a Strategic Global S&T Network at the National Level
 - It is necessary to move beyond one-off exchange events and establish government-led technology exchange platforms. These platforms would facilitate networking with outstanding international talent and lay the groundwork for substantive research collaboration with leading countries in science and technology.
- The Need to Nurture Talent in Key S&T Fields and Enhance Competitiveness Through Exchange With Outstanding International Researchers
 - Engaging with distinguished international scholars and research institutions enables the acquisition of cutting-edge trends, successful case studies, and specialized know-how in science and technology. These exchanges help strengthen domestic research capacity and accelerate technological innovation.
 - Promoting the development of the next generation of scientists and engineers through interdisciplinary and cross-generational academic exchange among senior, mid-career, and early-career researchers in Korea.

- Evolving Into a Platform for a Sustainable Ecosystem of International S&T Cooperation
 - Beyond network building, the technology exchange forum aims to create an environment where a global scientific community can thrive—by attracting international talent to Korea and encouraging their participation in joint research projects.

< Progress Overview >

- **(Apr. 2022–Dec. 2024)** KOFST pursued the BrainLink X–Lab Day program.
- **(Mar.–Apr. 2025)** KOFST applied for and was selected through NRF' s open call for the BrainLink X–Lab Day
- **(May 2025–present)** KOFST was selected for the BrainLink X–Lab Day, signed the agreement, and initiated program.

II. Overview

1 Project Purpose

Vision

Embark on a new chapter as a global hub for S&T talent by enhancing and scaling up global human networks

Purpose

- ◆ Accelerate the scale-up of technological exchanges through Brain Circulation network
- ◆ Promote in-depth discussions and human networks among eminent scholars and early career researchers from home and abroad

Direction

① Step up support for international research exchange in science and technology

② Provide talented young researchers with an opportunity for interdisciplinary academic exchanges in pursuit of developing their research capacity

③ Embrace the value of diversity in providing a venue for effective and sustainable technology exchanges

④ Extend collaboration in international research interchange by harnessing the overseas Korean network

2 Key Direction

□ Strategic Linkage with Policy and Research Needs

- Plan and operate technical exchange meetings centered on topics with high demand in the research field.
- Strengthen an effective exchange framework that links policy directions with on-site research needs.

□ Establishment of a Sustainable Cooperation Framework

- Systematically support selected researcher groups with outstanding achievements by providing follow-up exchange opportunities and collaborative activities.
- Promote the development of exchanges beyond one-time events into mid- to long-term, self-sustaining cooperation networks.
- Give priority to previous beneficiaries and gradually expand small-scale, in-depth technical exchange meetings, as well as specialized workshops by field and topic, while ensuring continuity of cooperation through the operation of an online and offline collaborative platform that enables ongoing collaboration.

III. Project Plans

1 Project Overview

□ Project Period : Jan ~ December 2026

□ Areas : 12 National Strategic Technologies

Secondary Battery	Advanced Mobility	Next-generation Nuclear Energy	Semiconductor & Display	Advanced Biotech	Aerospace & Marine
Cyber Security	Hydrogen	AI	Next Generation Communication	High-tech robot·Manufacturing	Quantum

* Core science and technology for enhancing national R&D capacity and global network are also eligible

□ **Implementation Method:** Project selection through an open call and expert review (approximately 16 projects)

○ **Announcement Period :** March 16 (Mon) – April 16 (Thu), 2026

○ **Application Method :** Online application and submission via the International Cooperation Portal (Ultari)

- The organizer(s)* shall prepare and submit the proposal for the X-Lab Day, and shall be responsible for organizing and conducting the program.

* An organizer refers to a qualified domestic or overseas scientist or engineer (including overseas Koreans) with research and development experience in the relevant field and the expertise to organize and lead the meeting.

※ For further details, please refer to the attached Proposals and Application Form.

□ **Intended Participants**

○ (Domestic) : government-funded research institutes, national research institutes, universities, university-affiliated research institutes, academic societies in science and engineering fields, non-profit foundations, corporate-affiliated research institutes, industrial area etc.

○ (Overseas) : Overseas universities and research institutes, Overseas Korean Scientists and Engineers Associations, Overseas Professional Branch Associations

□ **Operation Plan**

○ (Hosting BrainLink X-Lab Day) Host the BrainLink X-Lab Day to promote academic exchange between domestic and international scientists and engineers, and to lay the groundwork for global collaborative research.

○ (Follow-up Networking and Outcomes) Encourage the formation of participant communities (clubs) among X-Lab Day attendees to encourage sustained engagement and promote the generation of follow-up research outcomes.

○ (Participant Database Development) Develop a database of X-Lab Day participants and enhance its management and utilization by linking it with

the existing database of overseas Korean scientists and engineers.

□ **Anticipated Outcomes**

- Strengthening the foundation for attracting world-class science and technology talent and enhancing global research network competitiveness
- Expanding domestic and international human networks and promoting global research collaboration
- Fostering active networking among leading scholars, mid-career, and early-career researchers at home and abroad to increase the potential for follow-up joint research

2 Detailed Project Plan

□ **Hosting Brainlink X-Lab Day**

○ Period : May 2026 ~ mid December 2026

* Upon submitting their proposal, applicants must specify two preferred dates, and these dates will be used for scheduling purposes and to avoid overlaps with other events.

○ Venue : Geographical Isolation region in Korea (Incheon, Gyeongju, Andong, Yeosu, Pyeongchang)

○ Format : Avoid a mere one-off seminar, and instead encourage idea-sharing on core technology areas, problem-solving mindsets on the latest trends and information as well as in-depth discussions on research outcomes

○ Program : Develop program that meets the characteristics of the respective technology by the Organizer

○ Scale & Participants : Approx 40 / Per meeting

- 2 Organizers, 7~8 overseas speakers, approx. 20 domestic scholars, mid and early career scientists, about 10 graduate students(Ph.D students and postdoctoral researchers etc.)

○ Covered Expenses: The whole expenses incurred during the stay for the purpose of participating in BrainLink X-Lab Day (No registration fee)

- (Domestic) Honorarium for organizer and key role-holders, accommodation, dining, etc.

- (Overseas) Round-trip airfare* for organizer and invited speakers, honorarium, accommodation, and meals will be provided for organizers and invited speakers from overseas.
- ※ Airfare will, in principle, be provided in economy class. Up to two business-class tickets may be provided per meeting for participants designated by the organizer.
- ※ If economy-class airfare is provided for all participants, support may be provided for up to eight participants. If two business-class tickets are requested, support may be provided for up to six participants.

□ Follow-up Engagement and Outcome Generation

- Form participant communities(“clubs”) after the conclusion of the X-Lab Day to maintain ongoing networking.
 - (Activities) Continued sharing of the latest trends and information in relevant fields, promotion of joint research, etc.
 - Operation: Utilization of email and online platforms(e.g., LinkedIn, Slack), along with both online and offline meetings
- Organize related meetings(e.g., club operation and project review meetings) to strengthen follow-up performance management
- Provide continued support—such as hosting follow-up workshops for outstanding clubs—to foster sustained collaboration
- Regularly monitor the performance of each club and identify and disseminate best practices
 - Details: Hold performance-sharing sessions; conduct interviews with outstanding researchers and clubs; publish casebooks featuring exemplary cases
 - Objective: Expand sustainable international cooperation networks and establish best-practice models
- Discover follow-up joint projects through linkages with relevant domestic and international institutions and academic societies
 - Details: Build linkages with domestic and international science and technology organizations, overseas Korean scientific and technological associations, government and public research

institutes, and universities

- Purpose: Expand cooperation into sustainable initiatives such as joint R&D, policy forums, and technology roadmap development

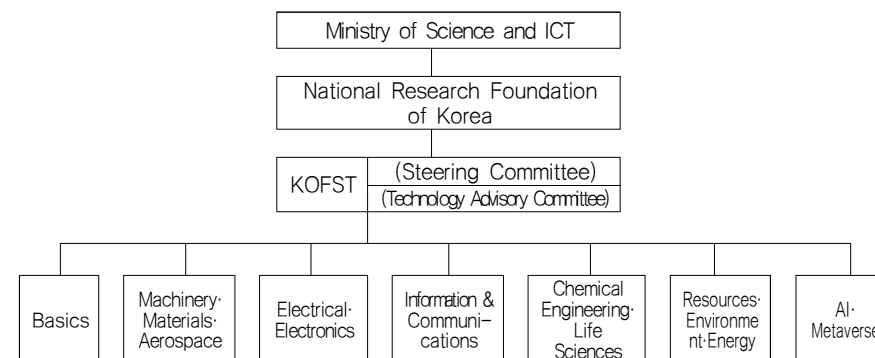
□ Participant Database Development and Management

- Build and manage a database of domestic and international participants
 - Update the participant database with input from club leaders.
- Strengthen database utilization by linking it to the Database of Overseas Korean Scientists and Engineers.

3 Operation Scheme

□ Operating System

- (Ministry in charge: Ministry of Science and ICT) : Project implementation planning and oversight of the project in general
- (Expert organization: National Research Foundation of Korea) : Project planning and management
- (Host organization: Korean Federation of Science and Technology Societies) : Detailed planning and implementation of the project



□ Steering Committee

- (Composition) Comprised of approx. 15 members including the Chair and the commissioned members representing industrial, academic

and research sectors respectively

※ Ex Officio Member : Director General of the Future HR Policy Bureau, Ministry of Science and ICT, KOFST Secretary General, Heads of the technical advisory members representing 7 Areas respectively

- (Designated Role) Establish and revise operating standards, Deliberate on the annual Project plan and the operation scheme, Conduct proposal review and report on the outcomes of the Project operation, Deliberate on matters which the Steering Committee may deem necessary to discuss, etc

□ Technology Advisory Committee

- (Composition) Comprised of approx. 10 experts of each area, representing industrial, academic and research sectors respectively
- (Designated Role) Review and select a proposal submitted by the Organizer and send the results of Steering Committee, Deliberate on matters which the Technology Advisory Committee may deem necessary to discuss

※ Composition (7 Areas)

Areas	Specific Areas
① Basics	Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geoscience, Metrology, Standard, Astronomy, Quantum , etc.
② Machinery-Materials-Aerospace	Machinery, Marine Transport, Aviation, Space , Materials, Hi-tech Robot, Manufacturing, Advanced Mobility , etc.
③ Electrical-Electronics	Electrical, Power, Electronics, Semiconductor, Display , Applied Physics, etc.
④ Information and Communications	Computer, Communication, Optical Technology, Cyber Security, Next Generation Communication , etc.
⑤ Chemical Engineering-Life Sciences	Applied Chemistry, Chemical Engineering, Biotechnology, Agriculture & Fisheries, Health, Advanced Biotech , etc.
⑥ Resources-Environment-Construction-Energy	Resources, Marine , Environmental Construction, Hydrogen, Next-generation Nuclear Energy, Secondary Battery , etc.
⑦ AI-Metaverse	AI , Metaverse etc.

□ Organizer

- (Composition) 2 Organizers (One from Korean scientists, and the other from foreign or overseas Korean scientists)
- (Designated Role) Write and submit the project proposal, Design the program and invite speakers, Organize and manage BrainLink X-Lab Day

, Submit the final outcome report(Korean, English), Establish field-specific communities or clubs to promote ongoing networking among participants following the event

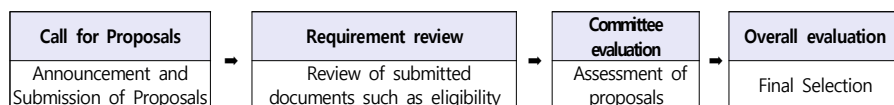
□ KOFST Secretariat

- (Composition) Staff members from the International Cooperation Division at KOFST, designated to oversee overall operational tasks
- (Designated Role) Conduct overall management of the X-Lab Day; organize and operate Steering Committee & Technology Advisory Committee; host the performance-sharing workshop; manage follow-up outcomes and the related database; administer project funds and submit expenditure reports; and submit final reports, including performance evaluations.

4 Selection Review & Outcome Assessment

□ Selection Review

- Requirement Review [KOFST Secretariat]
 - Evaluate eligibility including qualification and proposal requirements
- Expert Review [Technology Advisory Committee]
 - Evaluate the validity of the proposal; the suitability of the organizers and invited overseas speakers; the relevance of the topic; the necessity of the research; and the content and scope of the proposed activities. Selected proposals will be forwarded to the Steering Committee for final approval.
- Comprehensive Review [Steering Committee]
 - Review research tasks recommended by the Technology Advisory Committee and make final selection



□ Outcome Assessment

- Submitted Document: Recordings(Summary of presentation and discussion), Outcome Report(Korean, English), Club Operation and Follow-up Outcome Report
- Submission Period: Within 2 weeks after the BrainLink X-Lab Day is held (Club Operation and Follow-up Outcome Report) Upon request by the Secretariat (quarterly or semiannually)
- Submission Method: Complete and submit the prescribed form online
- Evaluation Method: Each X-Lab Day session will be evaluated based on the appropriateness of participant and program composition, the results of satisfaction surveys, and the level of engagement in follow-up club activities and outcome generation.

※ Based on the evaluation results, outstanding cases will be identified, and follow-up workshop support will be provided.

IV. Project Timeline for Year 2026

Category	Key Actions	Schedule	Role
↓			
Project Announcement & Promotion	Put out a call for proposals on 2026 BrainLink X-Lab Day Project	3. 16. ~ 4. 16	KOFST
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Submission of Project Proposal	Develop & submit a proposal after organizing program, participants, etc.	'26. 3~4	Organizer
↓			
Receipt of proposals & Requirements review	Review proposal including qualification requirements, etc.	'26. 4	KOFST
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Evaluation by Committee	(Round 1) Evaluation of proposals by field (Round 2) Final review and selection of proposals	'26. 4~5	Technology Advisory & Steering Committee
↓			
Orientation	Organizing an orientation	'26. 5	KOFST
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BrainLink X-Lab Day	Organize X-Lab Day(About 16 times)	'26. 5~12	KOFST, Organizer
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Club Operation Meeting	Hold club operation meeting	'26. 12	KOFST, Club Leader
↓			
Final Report	Compile final reports and publish a booklet	~ '27. 1	Organizer
↓			
Steering Committee	Report a project outcome of '26, review a tentative project implementation plan, etc.	~ '27. 2	Steering Committee