

Call for Applications: APEX 2026 Initiative

1. Program Overview

The APEX 2026 Initiative (Academic Partnerships for Excellence Exchange Initiative) is a flagship visiting program that brings outstanding **non-Chinese PhD researchers from the world's top 100 universities** to Harbin Institute of Technology, Shenzhen (HITSZ) for 6 to 12 months of collaborative research.

By working alongside our faculty on cutting-edge projects, participants will contribute to and benefit from a truly global academic environment. The program fosters cross-border scientific innovation and supports the co-authorship of high-impact publications, building lasting international partnerships that advance the frontiers of knowledge.

2. Eligibility

- Nationality: Non-Chinese citizens.
- Enrollment: Currently registered PhD students.
- Institutional Requirement: Applicants must be from a university outside China ranked among the Top 100 globally in any of the four major world university rankings (QS, THE, ARWU, or U.S. News) within the past 3 years, OR in the Top 50 in the QS Subject Rankings in a field relevant to their research.
- Funding Exclusivity: Applicants who have already received the Chinese Government Scholarship (CSC), or scholarships from other foreign governments/institutions, are generally not eligible for duplicate funding.

3. Financial Support

- Stipend: **RMB 8,000 per month**, issued monthly for the duration of the visit (maximum 12 months). This stipend is intended to cover all expenses in Shenzhen, China.
- Tuition: Not applicable (this is a non-degree visiting program). No application and tuition fee is charged.
- International Travel: Applicants are responsible for covering their own round-trip international airfare to and from China.
- Accommodation: As the monthly stipend is structured as an all-inclusive allowance, visiting students are responsible for covering their own accommodation and utility costs. Host supervisors will assist students by providing information on nearby housing options and helping to facilitate room reservations.
- Medical Insurance: Students must purchase medical insurance (approx. RMB 800/year) covering their entire stay in China prior to registration.

4. English Proficiency Requirements

Applicants must meet one of the following:

- TOEFL ≥ 80 , IELTS ≥ 6.0 (no sub-score below 5.5), or Duolingo ≥ 115 , OR
- A confirmation letter from the current supervisor verifying the applicant's full English communication capability.

Native English speakers are exempt.

5. Application Timeline

For the current cycle, application on the student's behalf before Oct 30th, 2026.

Selected candidates are expected to commence their visit in the second half of 2026 and must arrive at HITSZ and complete registration no later than December 10, 2026. The visit may extend into 2027, provided the start date falls within the 2026 cycle.

6. How to Apply

- Step 1 - Identify a Host Supervisor: Interested students should review faculty profiles on the official website (<https://homepage.hit.edu.cn/home-index?lang=en> → “DEPARTMENT” → “SHENZHEN”), identify a potential host supervisor;
- Step 2 – Log in the HITSZ application System (<https://hitsz.at0086.cn/StuApplication/Login.aspx>) to submit an application, with all required information filled and materials uploaded (operation instruction please see attached file);

Step 3 – The application is reviewed internally, and the admission decision is released via the system.

- Step 4 - Approved students will receive an official Invitation Letter and visa support documents from HITSZ to apply for their visa to China.

7. Application materials

- (1) Certificate of Current Enrollment (in English, with expected graduation time)
- (2) 2 recommendation letters, one of which must be from your current supervisor (The supervisor's letter may also serve as proof of English proficiency if it explicitly addresses your language ability.)
- (3) Proof of Institutional/Subject Ranking (a screenshot or a direct link to the official ranking page)

(4) Proof of English proficiency

- an official test score report (IELTS, TOEFL, or Duolingo are all accepted); or
- a confirmation from your supervisor attesting to your language ability (this may be included in the recommendation letter; if so, no separate document is needed).
- Native English speakers are exempt from this requirement.

(5) CV (including a list of selected publications)

(6) Detailed Research Proposal (A minimum of 500 words is recommended)

(7) Certificate of Non-criminal record

8. Contact Information

For inquiries, please contact the International Affairs Office:

Email: nicolehuang@hit.edu.cn

Phone: 86-755-26033075