

APPLICATION GUIDELINES
JAPANESE GOVERNMENT (MONBUKAGAKUSHO: MEXT) SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2017
(RESEARCH STUDENTS)

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) offers scholarships to international students who wish to study in graduate courses at Japanese universities as research students (either non-degree or degree students) under the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship Program for 2017 as follows.

1. DEFINITION OF A RESEARCH STUDENT

Those who are enrolled in a master's course, a doctoral course, or a professional graduate course at a graduate school, or who are conducting research in a specialized field at an undergraduate department, graduate school, institute attached to a university, etc. without the aim of completing the course, or who are receiving preparatory education in the Japanese language and other subjects prior to placement at the university, etc. (Excluding the Young Leaders Program(YLP) students or teacher training students.)

2. FIELDS OF STUDY

Applicants should apply for the field of study they majored in at university or its related field. Moreover, the fields of study must be subjects which applicants will be able to study and research in graduate courses at Japanese universities.

The fields of study may be restricted to particular fields by the Japanese Embassy/Consulate General (hereinafter referred to as the "Japanese diplomatic mission") in the applicant's country.

A student who studies medicine, dentistry or welfare science will not be allowed to engage in clinical training such as medical care and operative surgery until he/she obtains a relevant license from the Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare under applicable Japanese laws. Those studying traditional entertainment arts such as Kabuki and classical Japanese dances, or subjects that require practical training in specific technologies or techniques at factories or companies are excluded from this restriction.

3. QUALIFICATIONS AND CONDITION

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) is now accepting applications from overseas students for study in Japan. Our aim is to foster human resources who will become bridges of friendship between your country and Japan through study in Japan and who will contribute to the development of both countries and the wider world.

- (1) Nationality: Applicants must have the nationality of a country that has diplomatic relations with Japan. An applicant who has Japanese nationality at the time of application is not eligible. However, persons with dual nationality who hold Japanese nationality and whose place of residence at the time of application is outside of Japan are eligible to apply as long as they choose the nationality of the foreign country and give up their Japanese nationality by the date of their arrival in Japan. Applicant screening will be conducted at the Japanese diplomatic mission in the country of applicant's nationality.
- (2) Age: Applicants generally must have been born on or after April 2, 1982.
- (3) Academic Background: Applicants must be a graduate from a Japanese university or have academic ability equal or superior to that of a Japanese university graduate. A person will be deemed to have academic ability equal or superior to that of a university graduate, if he/she:
 - ① has completed or will complete 16 years of school education in a foreign country (or 18 years of school education if he/she desires to enroll in a doctoral course in the field of medicine, dentistry or veterinary science, or pharmacy which is based on a 6-year course in a department or faculty); or
 - ② is or will be aged 22 or older and has taken an individual entrance qualification examination and has been judged by a Japanese graduate school as being equal or superior in academic ability to a university graduate (or 24 or older if he/she desires to enroll in a doctoral course in the field of medicine, dentistry or veterinary science, or pharmacy which is based on a 6-year course in a department or faculty). Eligible applicants include those who otherwise satisfy or will satisfy qualification requirements for admission to a Japanese graduate school. As a general rule, a person who has completed a doctoral course may not apply unless he/she seeks to obtain a degree.
- (4) Japanese Language Ability: Applicants must be willing to learn Japanese. Applicants must be interested in Japan and be willing to deepen their understanding of Japan after arriving in Japan. Applicants must also have the ability to do research and adapt to living in Japan.
- (5) Health: Applicants must be free from any mental or physical disabilities that would impede the pursuit of study at Japanese graduate school.

- (6) Arrival in Japan: In principle, applicants must be able to arrive in Japan between the 1st and 7th of April 2017, or by the date specified by the accepting university, which will fall within two weeks of the starting date for each semester (in general, in September or October) in that year designated by the accepting university. "Arrival in Japan" is considered to be the arrival period specified in the application form; changes will not be permitted after submission of the application.
- (7) Visa Requirement: Applicants must acquire College Student (ryugaku) visas before entering Japan. They then enter Japan with the College Student (ryugaku) residence status. Please also note that those who change their visa status to one other than College Student after arrival in Japan will lose their qualification to be Japanese Government Scholarship recipients from the date when their visa status changes.
- (8) While the applicant is studying in Japan, he/she shall contribute to mutual understanding between Japan and the home country by participating in activities at schools and communities with the aim of contributing to the internationalization of Japan. The applicant shall make efforts to promote relations between the home country and Japan by maintaining close relations with the university attended after graduation, cooperating with the conducting of surveys and questionnaires after the return home, and cooperating with all relevant projects and events conducted by Japanese diplomatic missions in the applicant's home country.
- (9) Any applicant who meets any or all of the following conditions is ineligible. If identified after the start of the scholarship period, the applicant will be required to withdraw from the scholarship.
 - ① Those who are military personnel or military civilian employees at the time of their arrival in Japan;
 - ② Those who cannot arrive in Japan during the period designated by MEXT or the accepting university;
 - ③ An applicant who is a previous recipient of a Japanese government scholarship, but does not have educational research experience exceeding more than three years from the first day of the month following the final payment of the previous scholarship to the beginning of the payment of this scholarship, as of April 1, 2017. This does not apply to the past recipients of Japanese studies scholarships and Japan-Korea Joint Government Scholarship Program For The Students In Science And Engineering Departments who have graduated or are going to graduate from universities in their home countries and past participants in the Young Leaders Program;
 - ④ Those who are currently enrolled at a Japanese university with a College Student (ryugaku) residence status; those enrolled, or scheduled to be enrolled, at a Japanese university as a privately financed international student during the period when the scholarship application was filed in the home country until prior to the start of the provision of the scholarship; This does not apply to current self-financed international students at Japanese universities who will complete their courses of study and return to their countries before the end of the current fiscal year;
 - ⑤ Recipients of scholarships from institutions other than MEXT (including government institutions in their home countries) that overlap with the Japanese Government Scholarship (Prospective beneficiaries are included);
 - ⑥ Applicants who are expected to graduate at the time of application and cannot satisfy the qualifications and the conditions related to academic background by the deadline given;
 - ⑦ Holders of dual nationality at the time of application who cannot verify that they will give up Japanese nationality by the time of the arrival in Japan; or
 - ⑧ Applicants who wish, from the time of application, to conduct fieldwork or participate in an internship outside of Japan, since this scholarship program is intended for overseas students who wish to enroll in a Japanese university and do graduate research in Japan.

4. PERIOD OF SCHOLARSHIP

The period of the scholarship will differ as follows depending on the student category the applicant is accepted under at a Japanese university.

- (1) In the case where a grantee will enroll as a research student, part-time non-degree student, or auditor, etc. (hereinafter referred to as a "Research Student (non-regular student)") after coming to Japan:
 - ① If a grantee comes to Japan in April 2017, his/her scholarship will be payable for 24 months from April 2017 through March 2019;
 - ② If a grantee comes to Japan in October 2017, his/her scholarship will be payable for 18 months from October 2017 through March 2019.

(In either case, the above-mentioned scholarship period includes a 6-month Japanese language training period for grantees who require such training.) In cases of arrival in Japan other than those periods specified above, MEXT will decide such cases separately on a special basis.
- (2) If a grantee enrolls as a regular student in a master's course, doctoral course, or professional graduate course for a degree after coming to Japan, regardless of the time of his/her arrival in Japan the scholarship will be payable for a period necessary for him/her to complete his/her regular course (standard course period). (Period includes a 6-month Japanese language training period for the grantees who need such training.)

(3) The extension of scholarship period: If a grantee desires to proceed to a regular graduate course for a degree from a Research Student (non-degree) course, or to a doctoral course from a master's course or a professional graduate course, he/she may have the term of his/her scholarship extended upon a successful examination by MEXT and provided that he/she has made outstanding academic achievement that meets certain criteria. However, note the following;

- ① A grantee cannot have the period of his/her scholarship extended as a Research Student (non-degree) course.
- ② If a grantee proceeds to a more advanced level of education without receiving approval for an extension of the period of the scholarship, the scholarship will be cancelled. He/she may, however, proceed to a more advanced level of education or continue with his/her study as a privately-financed student.
- ③ A Research Student(non-regular students) is not eligible to apply for an extension of the scholarship period if he/she cannot proceed to master's or doctoral course by the end of the term of the Research Student's scholarship. However if he/she who wish for admission in April 2019 and withdraw traveling costs (transportation from Japan), he/she is eligible to apply for an extension of the scholarship period. Regular students enrolled in master's or doctoral course in April 2019 and returns to his/her home country within the fixed period after the expiration of his/her scholarship can also apply 5. (2)② for transportation costs to travel back to their home country as stated below.

5. SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS

(1) Allowance: 143,000yen (Research Students (non-regular students), 144,000yen (regular students in Master's courses or professional graduate courses), or 145,000yen(regular students in doctoral courses) per month. (In case that the recipient research in a designated region, 2,000 or 3,000 yen per month will be added. The monetary amount each year may be subject to change due to budgetary reasons.) The scholarship is cancelled in principle if the recipient is absent from the university for an extended period. The scholarship will be also cancelled in principle in the following situations. If the recipient has been receiving the scholarship despite his/her falling under any of the following situations, the recipient will be ordered to return the amount of scholarship that he/she received during the period wherein he/she was involved with any of the following situations.

- ① The recipient is determined to have made a false statement on his/her application;
- ② The recipient violates any article of his/her pledge to the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology;
- ③ The recipient violates any Japanese laws and is sentenced to imprisonment with or without work for life or for a period of exceeding 1 year. However, this shall not apply to those who were found guilty with suspension of execution of sentences;
- ④ The recipient is expelled from his/her university or preparatory educational institution or receives other punishment, or is removed from enrollment; (The scholarship payment may be stopped during the period up until punishment is decided by the university, etc.)
- ⑤ It has been determined that it will be impossible for the recipient to complete the training course within the standard time period because of poor academic grades or suspension from the university;
- ⑥ The recipient's residence status has changed to one other than College Student as defined in the Appended Table I-4 of the Immigration Act;
- ⑦ The recipient has received a scholarship from another institution (excluding those specified for research expenditures).
- ⑧ If he/she proceeds to a more advanced level of education without receiving approval for an extension of the period of the scholarship.

(2) Traveling Costs

- ① Transportation to Japan: The recipient will be provided, according to his/her itinerary and route as designated by MEXT, with an economy-class airplane ticket from the international airport nearest to his/her home country residence * to the New Tokyo International Airport or any other international airport that the appointed university usually uses. Expenses such as inland transportation from his/her home address to the international airport, airport tax, airport usage fees, special taxes on travel, or inland transportation within Japan will NOT be covered. (*The address in the country of the recipient's nationality stated in the application form is in principle regarded as the recipient's "home country residence.")
- ② Transportation from Japan: In principle, the recipient who returns to his/her home country within the fixed period after the expiration of his/her scholarship will be provided, upon application, with an economy-class airplane ticket for travel from the New Tokyo International Airport or any other international airport that the appointed university usually uses to the international airport nearest to his/her home address.

Note 1: In principle, transportation costs to return to home country are not paid if the student who wish for admission in April 2019 and failed or withdrew to proceed to a regular graduate course for a degree from a Research Student (non-degree) course, or to a doctoral course from a master's course or a professional graduate course, despite applying for extension of the period of the scholarship, as stated "4. Scholarship Payment Period (3) ③," so please note this when applying for such an extension.

Note 2: Any aviation and accident insurance to and from Japan shall be paid for by the recipient.

Note 3: If a grantee continues to stay in Japan after the scholarship period has ended, he/she will not be paid travel expenses to return to the home country for a temporary return.

(3) Tuition and Other Fees: Fees for the entrance examination, matriculation, and tuition at universities will be paid by the Japanese government.

6. SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION

(1) The Japanese diplomatic missions will conduct a primary (preliminary) screening of applicants by means of submitted application documents, written examinations (language) and interviews.

(2) Written examinations will be English and Japanese language tests. The Japanese and the English language examinations must be taken by all applicants.

Note 1: The result of the Japanese language examination will be used as reference data for placement at a university and for Japanese-language education to be provided upon the applicant's arrival in Japan.

Note 2: In particular, if an applicant with limited proficiency in Japanese desires to pursue studies in fields such as Japanese linguistics, Japanese literature, Japanese history, or Japanese law —fields that require sufficient knowledge of the Japanese language — he/she will not be selected as a grantee unless there are exceptional circumstances.

(3) The following policy will apply to each stage of screening:

① Application documents: Must show that the applicant's academic achievement at the university he/she last graduated from equaled or exceeded the minimum specified level, and state the applicant's desired research program in a detailed and concrete manner.

② Written examination: Must show that the applicant obtained scores that cleared the fixed cut-off level in both Japanese or English.

③ Interview: Must reveal that the applicant has a clear sense of purpose relating to his/her study in Japan and has gathered information about Japanese universities. The interview must also reveal that the applicant has sufficient Japanese or English language ability to communicate with his/her adviser in Japan. If the applicant desires to study a subject that requires advanced Japanese language proficiency, the interview must show that the applicant has a considerable degree of Japanese language proficiency.

(4) Results of the primary screening will be notified to the applicants on the date separately designated by the Japanese diplomatic mission.

(5) Each person who has passed this primary screening is required to contact directly the Japanese university of his/her choice in order to obtain admission as a regular student for a degree or as a Research Student (non-regular student) in a graduate course, or a letter of provisional acceptance as a research student (hereinafter referred to as "Admission") by the 31th of August. In order to obtain the Admission, candidates can gain information regarding the contact office for international students of each university, websites of universities and researchers, etc. from the Japanese diplomatic mission. Candidates are not allowed to contact Japanese universities after the 1st of September.

(6) Each candidate must submit to the university of his/her choice a set of the documents that are submitted to and returned by the Japanese diplomatic mission (application, academic transcript of the university attended, research program plan, etc.) all with a confirmation seal of the Japanese diplomatic mission affixed, and a certificate of the primary selection issued by the Japanese diplomatic mission. Additional documents may have to be submitted upon request of the university.

(7) MEXT will conduct a secondary screening based on the results of the primary screening conducted by the Japanese diplomatic mission, and select applicants as MEXT scholarship grantees whose placement at a university of their choice has been decided.

Note 1: Applicants who have passed the primary screening at a Japanese diplomatic mission are not necessarily accepted as MEXT scholarship grantees.

Note 2: Applicants who were not accepted by any universities which the applicants named in their Placement Preference Form will not be selected as MEXT scholarship grantees.

7. PLACEMENT AND RESEARCH GUIDANCE AT UNIVERSITY

(1) Placement of a grantee at a university will be made following a relevant request which was made to the university by the applicant who has passed the primary screening and obtained Admission to the university. MEXT will request the universities listed in the Placement Preference Form to accept the grantee, and place him/her in the requested course upon its approval in principle (candidate who has received admission to a regular course for a degree will be placed directly in such course without needing to pass through a Research Student (non-degree) period).

If a candidate wants to enter either a public or a private university other than a national university, the grantee's preference specified in the Placement Preference Form may not be met due to budgetary reasons concerning school fees, etc. Moreover, any objection by a candidate to the decision will not be accepted.

In case a candidate is not able to gain Admission to any universities due to poor communication, MEXT will discuss the matter with the universities that the candidate listed in the Placement Preference Form. However the candidate may not be accepted [nor may not be selected] by the universities [and then by MEXT] if his/her research program plan is vague, unclear, or insufficient in content, or his/her desired major field presents difficulty from the perspective of research guidance in Japan. In this case, any objection by a candidate to the decision will not be accepted.

- (2) Research guidance such as lectures, experiments and practical training at universities is basically conducted in Japanese.
- (3) If a grantee is judged to be insufficient in Japanese language proficiency by the accepting university, usually he/she will be placed in a Japanese-language training institution designated by the university of placement or MEXT for the first six-month period after his/her arrival in Japan. Upon completion of the language training the grantee will be placed at a university for advanced education. If a grantee has poor achievement in the language training course and is considered incapable of advanced education at the university, scholarship payment will be stopped. (See 5. (1).)
- (4) If a grantee is initially deemed by his/her accepting university to be sufficient in Japanese language proficiency to conduct his/her research in Japan, he/she may be placed in the university as a Research Student (non-degree) or a graduate student studying for a degree without going through Japanese-language training.
- (5) If a grantee desires to move on to a regular course for a degree from a Research Student (non-degree) course, or to a doctoral course from a master's course or a professional graduate course, he/she needs to take an entrance examination administered by the relevant university and pass it. To continue receiving the MEXT scholarship after advancing to a higher level, the grantee must undergo another screening examination and be awarded an extension of the scholarship. (See 4.(2).)

A grantee cannot apply for an extension of the scholarship period while enrolled in a Research Student (non-degree) course.

- (6) If a grantee desires to advance to a regular course for a degree from a Research Student non-degree course, in principle, he/she must move on to the graduate school of the university at which he/she is studying as a Research Student. If proceeding to the graduate school is deemed to be inappropriate given the grantee's major field or ability, he/she may be allowed to transfer to another graduate school provided that he/she is admitted to it.

Note 1: Under the educational system of Japan, a typical master's degree course lasts for two years subsequent to graduation from a university (i.e. after completion of 16 years of school education), and a typical doctoral degree course lasts for three years after completion of a master's course. If a student has completed such a two-, or three-year course, obtained the necessary credits, and passed the final examination after submitting his/her graduation thesis, he/she will be granted the relevant degree.

Note 2: In the fields of medicine, dentistry and veterinary science, and pharmacy which is based on a 6-year course at a department or faculty, most of the universities offer only 4-year doctoral courses. For admission to such a doctoral course an applicant is required to have completed 18 years of school education. If an applicant completed 16 years of school education, he/she is required to have engaged for two or more years in research activities at universities or research institutions subsequent to completion of the 16 years of education, and to be deemed by a graduate school in Japan as being academically equal to an applicant who completed a 18 years of formal education.

Note 3: Professional graduate schools were opened in 2003 with the aim of developing individuals with deep knowledge and outstanding ability in their field in order to support professions that require sophisticated expertise. The standard required duration of study is two years. In some fields of study, the duration is less than two years but more than one year. Upon completion of the course a master's degree (specialized occupation) is conferred. Among the professional graduate schools are "graduate schools of law." These schools require a standard duration of study of three years. Upon completion of the course a student will be granted the degree of "Doctor of Law (specialized occupation)."

Note 4: Entrance examinations given by a graduate school vary from one university to another. In general, applicants have to take examinations in two foreign languages, his/her major subject, and an essay test.

8. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applicants must submit the following documents to the Japanese diplomatic missions by the required date. The submitted documents will not be returned.

- ① Application Form 【original 1, copy 2】※photo (use FY 2017 form)
- ② Placement Preference Form (a prescribed form) 【original 1】※photo (use FY 2017 form)
- ③ Field of Study and Research Program Plan (a prescribed form) 【original 1, copy 2】(use FY 2017 form)
- ④ Certified grade transcript for each academic year from the last university attended (transcript issued either by alma mater or by applicant's national government) 【original 1, copy 2】
- ⑤ Graduation certificate or degree certificate of the last university attended (or an attested document certifying that the applicant will graduate from the school, where applicable) 【1 original , 2 copies 】

- ⑥ Recommendation from the president/dean or the adviser of the last university attended【1 original, 2 copies】(free format; samples available)
- ⑦ Medical certificate 【original 1, copy 2】(use FY 2017 form)
- ⑧ Abstracts of theses【1 original, 2 copies】
- ⑨ Recommendation from the present employer (if currently employed) 【1 original, 2 copies】
(free format, sample available)
- ⑩ Photograph(s) showing applicant's own works of art or a recorded CD of musical performance
(only for those majoring in fine arts or music) 【1 original, 2 copies】

Note 1: These documents must be written in Japanese or English, or translations in either of these languages should be attached.

Note 2: Photographs (4.5×3.5 cm, taken within the past six months, upper body, full-faced, uncapped. Write your name and nationality on the reverse and paste them onto the Application Form and Placement Preference Form) attached to the original application must be originals; copies are not acceptable. It is acceptable to paste the data of photo on each application form (use FY 2017 form) and print it. (To print your photos and paste it on the application form is not allowed.)

Note 3: The Field of Study and Research Program Plan should describe concretely and in detail the applicant's own research program because it will serve as important material for placement of the applicant at a university. Use FY 2017 form.

Note 4: The academic transcripts of the last university attended should show the grade scale applied and the grades earned by the applicant in all the subjects studied for each year of study at a university department/faculty and graduate school. (A degree certificate or a graduation certificate simply showing the ranking of the applicant at graduation will not substitute for academic transcripts.)

Note 5: The graduation certificate and the degree certificate obtained from the last university attended may be photocopies provided that the copies are attested by an authorized person of the university. Do not submit original as no submitted certificates will be returned.

Note 6: For abstracts of the theses, abstracts of the graduation thesis and any presented papers will suffice. Please note that these abstracts will be used as basic data for evaluation of the applicant's academic ability.

Note 7: Number the documents (① through ⑩) in the right upper corner.

9. NOTES

- (1) The recipient is advised to learn, before departing for Japan, the Japanese language and to acquire some information about Japanese weather, climate, customs, university education, and conditions in Japan, as well as about the difference between the Japanese legal system and that of his/her home country.
- (2) As the first installment of the scholarship payment cannot be provided immediately upon the recipient's arrival, the recipient should bring approximately US \$2,000 to cover immediate needs after arrival in Japan.
- (3) Recipient must enroll in National Health Insurance (Kokumin Kenko Hoken) upon arrival in Japan.
- (4) Accommodations:

- ① Residence halls for international students provided by universities.

Some universities have residence halls for international students. The recipients enrolled at such universities may reside at these residence halls under certain conditions. However, due to the limited number of rooms, some of these facilities may be unavailable.

- ② Private boarding houses or apartments:

Those who are unable to find accommodation in the aforementioned facilities may live in regular dormitories of the university or in private boarding houses/apartments. It is difficult for recipients with dependents to find appropriate housing in Japan. The recipient is requested to arrive in Japan alone first to secure housing before having his/her spouse and/or family come to Japan.

- (5) Information regarding the MEXT Scholarship recipient (name, gender, date of birth, nationality, accepting university/graduate school/undergraduate school, field of specialty, period of enrolment, career path after completion of scholarship, contact information [address, telephone number, e-mail address]) may be shared with other relevant government organizations for the purpose of utilization for overseas students programs implemented by the Japanese Government (support during period of study in Japan, follow-up survey, improvement of the overseas student system).

Information in regards to the recipient other than date of birth and contact information may be made public in materials produced by the Japanese Government as publicity information for promoting the acceptance of overseas students in order to introduce the activities of past recipients in countries around the world after their study in Japan.

- (6) The English texts attached to the Application Guideline and the Application Form are for convenience only. The Japanese versions of the Application Guideline and the Application Form take precedence, and any English expressions do not change the Japanese content; if you have any questions about the content of the written text, you should inquire at the Japanese diplomatic mission.
- (7) In addition to the regulations stipulated in this guideline, those that are necessary to implement the Japanese Government Scholarship are determined by the Japanese government.
- (8) More detailed information on this scholarship program is available at the Japanese diplomatic missions.