

JAPANESE GOVERNMENT (MEXT) SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2026

Research Students (recommended by universities) (General Program)

Please note that these Application Guidelines have been created based on the 2025 Application Guidelines published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) last year. As the 2026 Application Guidelines have not yet been officially published, the content is subject to change.

1. Definition of Research Student

A person who is enrolled as a **regular student** in a Master's, Doctoral, or Professional Degree program at a graduate school, or a person who is enrolled as a **non-regular student** (such as a research student, non-degree student, or auditing student) at an undergraduate school, graduate school, or affiliated research institute of a university, for the purpose of conducting research in a specialized field with the aim of advancing to a regular course.

2. Applicant Qualifications and Conditions

MEXT seeks outstanding international students who satisfy the following qualifications and conditions, with the aim of fostering human resources who will serve as bridges between Japan and their home countries through research conducted in Japan, thus contributing to the development of both countries and the world.

(1) Target

Outstanding individuals (※) newly coming from overseas to study at the graduate level.

(※) For those currently employed, the GPA of their final education is required; for those currently enrolled, the GPA of their current course of study must be **2.30 or higher**, with the expectation that this will be maintained during the scholarship period. Furthermore, the applicant must meet any of the conditions in "(6) Language Ability" below.

(2) Nationality

Must hold the nationality of a country that has diplomatic relations with the Japanese government. As a rule, those who possess Japanese nationality at the time of application are not eligible. However, Japanese citizens with dual nationality who have their main base of life outside Japan at the time of application are eligible only if they plan to choose their foreign nationality and renounce their Japanese nationality by the time they arrive in Japan (when their student status is officially established at the accepting university).

(3) Age

In principle, **the applicant must be born on or after April 2, 1991**. Exceptions are limited to cases where MEXT judges that the applicant was unable to apply at the eligible age due to the system or circumstances of their country of nationality (e.g., compulsory military service, loss of educational opportunity due to war/conflict). Personal circumstances (e.g., financial situation, family reasons, health condition, convenience of university or workplace) are not accepted.

However, graduates of the Young Leaders Program (YLP) who do not meet the above age requirement but wish to enroll in a Doctoral course may apply within five years of completing the YLP.

(4) Academic Background

Must be qualified to enter a Japanese graduate school Master's, Doctoral (first stage), or Doctoral (second stage) program (including those who are reasonably expected to meet this condition by the time of enrollment).

(5) Field of Study

The field of study must be the one specialized in at the university or a related field, and it must be a field in which research can be conducted at the accepting university.

(6) Language Ability

Must possess proficiency in either **Japanese or English** and satisfy one of the following conditions:

○ Japanese

- ① Passed the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) at level N2 or higher.
- ② Completed an educational program where Japanese was the primary language of instruction, satisfying the qualification for admission to a Japanese graduate school Master's, Doctoral (first stage), or Doctoral (second stage) program.
- ③ Judged by the accepting university to possess Japanese language proficiency equivalent to or higher than ①.

○ English

- ① Possesses a qualification/examination score equivalent to B2 or higher on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).
- ② Completed an educational program where English was the primary language of instruction, satisfying the qualification for admission to a Japanese graduate school Master's, Doctoral (first stage), or Doctoral (second stage) program.
- ③ Judged by the accepting university to possess English language proficiency equivalent to or higher than ①.

※ Both regular and non-regular students must satisfy condition ①, ②, or ③ of either Japanese or English language ability at the time of recommendation. Non-regular students who are accepted with language ability condition ③ must meet condition ① (Japanese or English) when applying for an extension to advance to a regular course. Condition ③ will not be accepted for the extension application.

※ Both regular and non-regular students who are expected to graduate/complete a course satisfying language ability condition ② by the time of acceptance can be recommended as satisfying condition ②.

(7) Health

Must be judged by the university to be physically and mentally able to study in Japan without impediment.

(8) Arrival in Japan

In principle, the applicant must be able to arrive in Japan on the date designated by the accepting university, which must be within the two weeks before or after the start date of the respective semester (September or October) designated by the accepting university.

If the applicant cannot arrive in Japan by the final designated date, they must withdraw their acceptance, unless MEXT determines there are unavoidable circumstances. Furthermore, if the applicant arrives outside the specified period due to their personal reasons, no travel expenses will be provided for their arrival.

(9) Visa Acquisition

The applicant must newly obtain a "Student" visa at the Japanese diplomatic mission in their country of nationality, in principle, before coming to Japan, and enter Japan with the status of residence of "Student". Note that if an accepted applicant is exceptionally residing in Japan with a status of residence other than "Student" at the time of acceptance, they must change their status of residence to "Student" by the end of the month preceding the scheduled start month of the scholarship payment. Also, please understand that even if an application is made for a status of residence such as "Permanent Resident" or "Long-Term Resident" after the termination of the MEXT Scholarship status, it is not automatically certified.

Furthermore, as there is a possibility that the Japanese government may implement pre-departure tuberculosis screening in some countries in the future,

applicants must follow the instructions of the Japanese diplomatic mission in their country of nationality when applying for a visa.

(10) Ineligibility

Those who fall under even one of the following items are **not eligible** and must withdraw if this becomes known after acceptance:

- ① Currently active military personnel or civilian employees of the military during the time of arrival in Japan and throughout the scholarship period.
- ② Those who cannot arrive in Japan by the date designated by MEXT or the accepting university.
- ③ Those who were previously Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship students (including those who withdrew after their student status was established).

However, this does not apply to those who fall under any of the following. Note that receipt of the MEXT Honors Scholarship is not equivalent to being a MEXT Scholarship Student, so applicants with a history of receiving it are eligible to apply.

- Those who have a study or work history of 3 years or more between the month following the final month of the previous scholarship payment and the start month of the current scholarship payment.
- Those whose last MEXT Scholarship was for Japanese Studies Students (limited to those who have graduated or are expected to graduate from their enrolled university after returning home), Japan-Korea Joint Government Scholarship Program for the Students in Science and Engineering Undergraduate Course, or Young Leaders Program (YLP) Students.
- Those who have obtained or are expected to obtain a Bachelor's degree as an undergraduate student under the MEXT Scholarship (University Recommendation/Special Framework).

- ④ Those who have applied for another MEXT Scholarship program scheduled to start payment in the 2026 academic year.
- ⑤ Those who are currently staying in Japan at the time of application.
- ⑥ Those who plan to receive a scholarship or fellowship from the Japanese government or Japanese government-affiliated institutions after the start of the scholarship payment (after student status is established at the accepting university).
- ⑦ "Those expected to graduate" but who fail to meet the academic qualifications and conditions by the specified date.
- ⑧ Dual nationals at the time of application who cannot prove that they have renounced their Japanese nationality by the time of arrival in Japan (when student status is established at the accepting university).
- ⑨ Those who plan to engage in long-term research activities outside Japan (e.g., fieldwork, internships) or take a long leave of absence from the time of application.
- ⑩ Those whose objective is not to advance to a regular course.
- ⑪ Those whose objective is not to obtain a degree.

(11) Other

MEXT selects students who, during their study in Japan, will contribute to mutual understanding between their home country and Japan by widely participating in local schools and community activities as human resources who contribute to the internationalization of Japan, and who will maintain close contact with the university they studied at after graduation, cooperate with post-graduation questionnaires, and endeavor to promote relations between their home country and Japan by cooperating with various projects conducted by diplomatic missions abroad upon returning home.

3. Scholarship Payment Period

The scholarship payment period varies depending on the course of study the student is enrolled in after arriving in Japan.

Note that for those whose acceptance date is determined by MEXT separately due to the start date of the respective semester set by the university or other circumstances from the perspective of educational and research guidance, the period will be as designated by MEXT.

However, if the semester starts (student status is established) in the middle of a month, the scholarship for that month will not be paid.

(Example) If the semester start date is September 2, 2026, the scholarship payment start month will be October 2026.

(1) For those enrolled as Research Students, Credited Auditors, Auditing Students, etc. (hereinafter, "Research Students, etc. (Non-Regular Students)") after arriving in Japan, the period is generally as follows:

○ For those arriving in Japan in October 2026: Maximum of 1 year and 6 months (from October 2026 to March 2028).

※ For arrivals other than the above, the period will be separately determined by MEXT.

(2) For those enrolled in a Master's, Doctoral, or Professional Degree program after arriving in Japan, the period required to complete the respective regular course (standard enrollment period) shall apply.

However, for integrated doctoral programs, the first two years will be treated as the Master's course and the remaining three years (3rd to 5th year) will be treated as the Doctoral course for the scholarship payment period.

(3) Applicants accepted under the SATREPS Framework shall, in principle, be enrolled in a Doctoral course (latter stage) (or the 3rd year of an integrated doctoral program), and enrollment in a non-regular course is not permitted. However, enrollment in a non-regular course may be permitted on the condition that the student enters the Doctoral course (latter stage) within

one year of acceptance, if MEXT deems it to be of special significance in light of the purpose of the MEXT Scholarship Program and the SATREPS program, and the content of the research project the candidate will participate in.

(4) Applicants accepted under the e-ASIA Joint Research Framework shall, in principle, be enrolled in a Doctoral course (latter stage) (or the 3rd year of an integrated doctoral program). However, enrollment in a Master's course, Professional Degree course, Doctoral course (first stage) (or the 1st year of an integrated doctoral program), or a non-regular course may be permitted if MEXT deems it to be of special significance in light of the purpose of the MEXT Scholarship Program and the e-ASIA Joint Research Program (e-ASIA JRP), and the content of the research project the candidate will participate in.

(5) Research Students, etc. (non-regular students) who wish to advance to a regular graduate course, or Master's/Professional Degree students who wish to advance to a Doctoral course, may apply for an extension of the scholarship payment period (hereinafter, "Extension Application") if they meet certain criteria and have excellent academic records. The extension is subject to MEXT's screening and approval, and is not guaranteed for all applicants. Please note the following:

- ① The extension of the scholarship payment period is conditional upon the approval of the Extension Application, passing the entrance examination for the desired regular graduate course, and being admitted.
- ② The scholarship payment period for Research Students, etc. (non-regular students) cannot be extended.
- ③ Those who advance to a higher course without MEXT approval of the Extension Application will have their scholarship payment suspended (however, they may enroll or be enrolled as a privately financed international student).
- ④ Advancing to a graduate school at a different university is not permitted when advancing from a Research Student, etc. (non-regular student) status to a regular graduate course, or from a Master's or Professional Degree course to a

Doctoral course (however, advancing to a different university as a privately financed international student is possible).

4. Scholarship and Other Payments

(1) Scholarship Amount

The following monthly amounts will be paid, depending on the course of study. An additional ¥2,000 or ¥3,000 per month is added for those studying/researching in specific regions. The amount is subject to change based on the Japanese government's budget situation in each academic year. The scholarship will not be paid during periods of leave of absence or long-term absence from the university.

Course	Monthly Amount
① Research Students, etc. (Non-Regular Students)	¥143,000
② Master's and Professional Degree Programs	¥144,000
③ Doctoral Programs	¥145,000

(2) Travel Expenses

① Travel Expenses for Arrival in Japan

MEXT will, in principle, provide an airline ticket, specifying the travel schedule and route, for students arriving during the specified period as defined in "2. (8) Arrival in Japan."

The ticket will be an economy class ticket from the international airport nearest to the student's residence (in principle, in the country of nationality) to the international airport in Japan normally used by the accepting university.

Domestic travel expenses from the student's residence to the nearest international airport, airport tax, airport user fees, special taxes required for travel, domestic travel expenses in Japan (including connecting flight costs), travel insurance fees, and expenses related to carry-on/separate baggage are the student's responsibility. Furthermore, in cases (a) or (b) below, domestic

travel expenses and accommodation fees in the stopover country shall be the student's responsibility, and MEXT will only provide an economy class airline ticket from the country of nationality to the stopover country and from the stopover country to the international airport in Japan normally used by the accepting university.

(a) Those who stop over in a third country for visa application because there is no Japanese diplomatic mission in their country of nationality, or the mission is temporarily closed.

(b) Those for whom there is no direct flight from their country of nationality to Japan.

The "student's residence" shall, in principle, be the "current address" stated in the application form, but in case of relocation within the country of nationality before arrival, the address stated in the "Address Before Arrival" section of the application form will be accepted as the "residence," and the airline ticket will be arranged from the nearest international airport. Note that an airline ticket will not be provided if the student arrives from outside their country of nationality due to personal reasons, except for a stopover in a third country for visa application. Furthermore, if the student arrives outside the specified period defined in "2. (8) Arrival in Japan" due to their personal reasons, no travel expenses will be provided for their arrival.

② Travel Expenses for Return to Home Country

MEXT will, in principle, provide an economy class airline ticket upon application for students who graduate/complete their program and return home within the final month of the scholarship payment period defined in "3. Scholarship Payment Period." The ticket will be an economy class ticket from the international airport normally used by the accepting university to the international airport nearest to the student's final destination (in principle, in the country of nationality). Expenses for travel from the student's residence in Japan to the nearest international airport, airport tax, airport user fees, special taxes required for travel, domestic travel expenses in the country of nationality (including connecting flight costs), travel insurance fees, and expenses related to carry-on/separate baggage are the student's responsibility. No return travel

expenses will be provided if the student returns home before the end of the scholarship period due to personal reasons or reasons listed in "5. Scholarship Suspension Items."

Furthermore, if the student continues to stay in Japan after the end of the scholarship period (e.g., advancing to a higher course in Japan, finding employment in Japan, or continuing to be enrolled at the university as a privately financed international student), return travel expenses for temporary returns will not be provided.

(3) Educational Expenses

The accepting university shall bear the costs of the entrance examination fee, matriculation fee, and tuition fees at the university.

5. Scholarship Suspension Items

MEXT will **stop the scholarship payment** in the following cases. In such instances, the student may be ordered to **repay** part or all of the scholarship received. Furthermore, the scholarship payment may be stopped until a final decision on the disciplinary action is made.

- ① If false or dishonest information is found in the application documents.
- ② If the terms of the pledge to the Minister of MEXT are violated.
- ③ If the student violates Japanese law and is sentenced to imprisonment or confinement for an indefinite period or more than one year.
- ④ If the student is subjected to disciplinary action such as expulsion, suspension, or reprimand, or is dismissed from the university in accordance with its rules.
- ⑤ If it is confirmed that the student cannot complete the program within the standard enrollment period due to poor academic performance, suspension, or leave of absence.
- ⑥ If the student arrives in Japan without newly obtaining a "Student" visa or if their status of residence changes from "Student" to another status.

- ⑦ If the student receives a scholarship (other than this one) or fellowship from the Japanese government or government-affiliated institutions that is not permitted for concurrent receipt.
- ⑧ If the student advances to a higher course without MEXT approval of the extension application after acceptance.
- ⑨ If the student withdraws from the university or transfers to another graduate school.

6. Recommendation Procedures and Selection

(1) Recommendation

Each university president shall, after internal screening, attach a priority ranking for each recommendation slot to applicants who are particularly outstanding and in need of scholarship support, and recommend them to the Minister of MEXT with the required documents using the attached format. Note that the recommendation must follow the "Notes on Recommendation for the **2026 Academic Year** Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship Students Research Students (University Recommendation) [General Framework, SATREPS Framework, e-ASIA Joint Research Framework]."

(2) Selection

Among the applicants recommended by the university presidents, MEXT will determine the final candidates based on the screening by the MEXT Selection Committee, and MEXT will decide the scholarship recipients and the duration of the scholarship payment.

(3) Required Documents, etc.

- ① Documents to be submitted to MEXT
 - A. MEXT Scholarship Student (Research Student) Recommendation Form [Attached Form 1]
 - B. List of Recommended Candidates [Attached Form 2]
 - C. Comprehensive Academic Evaluation Report [Attached Form 3]
 - D. Investigation Report [Attached Form 4]
 - E. Report on Internal Recruitment and Selection [Attached Form 5]

F. Application Form (with photo attached) [Attached Form 6]

G. Field of Study and Research Plan [Attached Form 7]

※1 Documents A-E are to be prepared by the university; A and C for each recommended candidate, and B, D, and E for each university. The university shall collect F and G from the applicant. The format (paper or electronic) for the collection of F and G is at the university's discretion.

※2 The photo must be taken within the last 6 months, 4.5×3.5cm, upper body, frontal view, no hat, with the nationality and name written on the back, and affixed to the designated spot on the application form. Electronic attachment is permitted.

※3 One original copy of each of the above documents shall be attached to the official letter and submitted to MEXT.

② Documents to be collected from the applicant and kept internally by the university (Keep one copy of each.)

H. Copy of Passport (If no passport, a copy of a public identification card, family register, certificate of citizenship, etc.)

I. Academic Transcript from the final university attended (undergraduate or graduate school) (issued by the source university) for working professionals, and the academic transcript from the final university attended (undergraduate or graduate school) (issued by the source university) plus the academic transcript for the currently enrolled course (issued by the current university) for currently enrolled students.

J. Graduation (or Expected Graduation) Certificate or Diploma from the final university attended (undergraduate or graduate school)

K. Academic transcript proving excellent academic performance at the final university attended

L. Letter of Recommendation from a level higher than the Dean of the Graduate School/Faculty of the affiliated university (addressed to the President of the prospective accepting university)

M. Abstract of Thesis, etc. (A concise summary of the thesis content)

N. Documents providing evidence that the applicant meets any of the conditions in "2. (6) Language Ability" (e.g., Certificates for TOEFL, IELTS, JLPT, etc.)

※4 Regarding L above, if the GPA cannot be calculated, it will be recognized as an academic record equivalent to a GPA of 2.30 or higher only if L clearly states that the applicant's academic ranking in the university or faculty, or graduate school, is considered to be within the top 30%. Therefore, if recommending a person whose GPA cannot be calculated, a copy of L must be submitted to MEXT (Refer also to 7. (4) ③ in the attached "Notes on Recommendation").

※5 Regarding N above, for Research Students who satisfy the language ability condition under Japanese Language Ability Condition No. ③ or English Language Ability Condition No. ③, the university must state the reason why it judged the applicant possesses the said ability in the designated section of "C. Comprehensive Academic Evaluation Report" and submit the documents serving as the basis for the judgment to MEXT. Note that for those who satisfy either Japanese Language Ability Condition No. ① or ②, or English Language Ability Condition No. ① or ②, N shall be kept by the university.

[Notes on ① and ② above]

- These documents must be prepared in either Japanese or English. If prepared in any other language, a Japanese translation must be attached. All documents should be unified to A4 size using word processing software whenever possible.
- Submitted documents will not be returned.
- Input errors in the List of Recommended Candidates and Application Form are frequent. The university must take responsibility to have multiple people carefully check the content of the submitted documents and ensure there are no errors before submission.
- Applications will not be screened if all the above application documents are not complete and accurate, or if the attached documents are incomplete (acceptance may be revoked if deficiencies or false statements are found after acceptance).
- Documents submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.
- In some countries, administrative agencies may issue graduation certificates, etc., on behalf of the university, but the university must ensure the content of the certificate is fully verified by contacting the source university, etc.
- Documents kept by the university must be properly managed so that they can be submitted upon request from MEXT.

7. Submission Period and Result Notification

Submission Period:

General Framework: February 21 (Sat), 2026 to March 4 (Wed), 2026 (must arrive by).

SATREPS Framework / e-ASIA Framework: March 12 (Thu), 2026 to March 21 (Sat), 2026 (must arrive by).

Result Notification: Mid-June 2026 (Planned)

[Notes]

- No submission of documents after the deadline, replacement of documents after submission, withdrawal of application, additional application, or change in recommendation ranking will be accepted.

• Result notifications will be sent to each university president in writing; MEXT will not notify applicants directly.

8. Force Majeure

Due to force majeure, the arrival date may be changed, the scholarship may be canceled, or the content described in these application guidelines may be changed at any point, both before and after the acceptance notification.

Force majeure refers to causes beyond MEXT's reasonable control, including but not limited to natural disasters, acts of government (including local government; hereinafter the same in this section) or government agencies (including border control measures such as entry/exit restrictions and travel restrictions by the Japanese government or other governments regarding infectious diseases), compliance with laws, regulations, or orders, fire, storm, flood or earthquake, war (whether declared or not), insurrection, revolution or riot, or strike or lockout.

9. Notes

- (1) The accepting university must fully inform the student of the scholarship payment period, scholarship payment conditions, arrival date, and method of arrival (e.g., how to obtain a "Student" visa) before the student's arrival in Japan. Also, the university should instruct the student to study Japanese prior to arrival and inform them in advance about Japan's climate, customs, local conditions, differences in legal systems between Japan and their home country, and the university's situation.
- (2) The university must provide sufficient guidance on the academic handling procedures at the respective university in advance.
- (3) Since it takes about 1 to 1.5 months to receive the scholarship after arriving in Japan, the student should be instructed to prepare at least 2,000 USD for initial living expenses. (If other costs are necessary due to regional/university circumstances, this must be communicated to the student.)

- (4) The scholarship will be transferred to a Japan Post Bank account opened by the student after arriving in Japan. The scholarship will not be transferred to any other bank account.
- (5) If an infectious disease such as tuberculosis is found through a health certificate, etc., the student must undergo treatment by the time of arrival. If not completely cured by the time of arrival, entry to Japan will not be permitted.
- (6) The student must enroll in the National Health Insurance at their own expense after arriving in Japan.
- (7) It is desirable for the student to obtain a My Number Card after arriving in Japan.
- (8) The accepting university is responsible for the arrangement and implementation of accommodation and Japanese language education for those accepted under the University Recommendation.
- (9) Even if a person is selected as a scholarship recipient, it may become impossible to leave their country due to its circumstances. Therefore, the university must grasp the situation in advance and ensure that the student will be able to travel to Japan by the arrival date (be especially aware that it may take a considerable amount of time to obtain an exit permit or passport in countries like Myanmar, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, or countries without a Japanese diplomatic mission). Furthermore, the university must inform the student in advance that they must withdraw their acceptance if they cannot arrive by the final designated date.
- (10) If the person is accepted as a scholarship recipient, the following handling must be communicated:
- Information about the recipient (name, gender, date of birth, nationality, accepting university/graduate school/faculty, field of study, enrollment period, career path after completion, contact information (address, phone number, E-mail address)) will be shared with relevant administrative organs for the purpose of utilizing it for student exchange projects implemented by the

Japanese government (support during study abroad, follow-up of completed students, and improvement of the scholarship system).

- Furthermore, information about the recipient (excluding date of birth and contact information) may be made public in public relations materials created by the Japanese government to promote the acceptance of international students, especially to introduce former MEXT Scholarship Students who are active globally.
- In the written pledge that MEXT requires upon deciding to accept the recipient, which stipulates the matters to be observed as a MEXT Scholarship Student, consent to this handling will be requested. Those who consent to this handling will be accepted as MEXT Scholarship Students.

(11) If it is found that the person does not meet the conditions for landing in Japan, the person will not be accepted.

(12) For those who apply for a visa at the diplomatic mission in their country of nationality, MEXT will request a Letter of Convenience, so the university should not separately apply for a Certificate of Eligibility (CoE).

For those who apply for a "Student" visa at a diplomatic mission outside their country of nationality, each university is responsible for applying for the CoE and other procedures.

(13) In addition to the above, notes and details regarding the recommendation are based on the attached "Notes on Recommendation."

(14) Apart from what is stipulated in these application guidelines, necessary matters for the implementation of the MEXT Scholarship Program will be separately determined by the Japanese government.