

**APPLICATION GUIDELINES**  
**JAPANESE GOVERNMENT (MEXT) SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2024**  
**YOUNG LEADERS' PROGRAM (YLP) STUDENT (SCHOOL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE)**

**I OUTLINE**

1. Objectives

The Young Leaders' Program (YLP) aims to contribute to cultivate future national leaders in Asian and other countries, moreover, to contribute to establish friendly relationship among various countries and to improve policy planning activities by forming a network among national leaders through deepening their understanding of Japan. The YLP is one of the Japanese Government (MEXT\*) Scholarship Programs.

\*MEXT: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

2. Eligible Countries and Participants

Participants are selected from the countries listed below. They should be young public administrators and government officials who are expected to play active roles in the future as national leaders in their home countries.

Eligible Countries:

P. R. China, Rep. of Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam, Laos, Cambodia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan, Turkey, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania (19 Countries)

3. Host University

National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS)

4. Number of Students

Approximately 10 students

5. Recruitment and Selection

(1) Method of Recruitment

Recruitment will be conducted through the recommending authorities of each eligible country. Please ask the Japanese Embassy for further information.

(2) Screening Procedure

- ① First screening by the recommending authorities
- ② Second screening by GRIPS
- ③ Final screening by the YLP committee organized by MEXT

6. Curriculum (Please refer to "Curriculum Guidelines".)

(1) Basic Concepts

The curriculum is designed to train and cultivate young leaders in their respective fields of government, who are seeking to take advantage of Japan's experiences of interaction with both Western and Asian countries and also to establish a human network through various activities, such as special lectures, colloquium, independent study, workshop, etc.

(2) Course Duration and Qualification

Course duration is one year, resulting in the conferral of a Master's Degree in Public Administration/Public Policy by GRIPS.

(3) Language

All lectures are conducted in English.

7. Commencement of the Program

October 2024

**II INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS**

MEXT will offer scholarships to foreign students who wish to study at GRIPS as YLP students in local governance for the academic year 2024 under the MEXT Scholarship Program. The conditions are as follows:

## 1. Field of Study

Local Governance

## 2. Qualifications

- (1) Nationality: Applicants must be nationals of countries eligible for the YLP (School of Local Governance). An applicant who has Japanese nationality at the time of application is not eligible.
- (2) Age: Applicants must be, in principle, under 40 years of age as of October 1, 2024 (i.e. born on or after October 2, 1984).
- (3) Academic Background: Applicants must hold a Bachelor's degree or equivalent from a recognized/accredited university or college, and have achieved excellent academic performance.
- (4) Work Experience: At least 3 years of full-time work experience in total as of October 1, 2024 in public administration (preferably 5 years or more).
- (5) English Ability: One of the following test scores is required:
  - ① TOEFL iBT
  - ② IELTS Academic
  - ③ Other equivalent testAdmission priority will be given to applicants who have a TOEFL iBT score of 79 or higher, or an IELTS Academic score of 6.0 or higher, or other equivalent test scores.
- (6) Health: Applicants must be judged that you are medically adequate to pursue study in Japan by an examining physician on a prescribed certificate of health.
- (7) Arrival in Japan: In principle, applicants must be able to arrive in Japan during the period specified by GRIPS, within two weeks before and after the first day of the course conducted by the accepting university. If the applicant cannot arrive in Japan during the specified period for personal reasons, travel expenses to Japan will not be paid.
- (8) Visa Requirement: In principle, a selected applicant must obtain a “Student” (留学) visa at the Japanese diplomatic mission located in the applicant’s country of nationality, and enter Japan with the residence status of “Student.” Applicants who change their residence status to any states other than “Student” (留学) after their arrival in Japan will immediately lose their status as a MEXT Scholarship student. Moreover, as the Japanese government requires pre-arrival tuberculosis screening for some countries, applicants obtaining a visa shall follow guidance at the overseas establishment of Japan located in the applicant’s country of nationality.
- (9) Return to home country and resumption of work after the scholarship period: In accordance with the objectives of the YLP, after the scholarship period, applicants are expected to make efforts to build friendly relationships among various countries, including Japan, by creating human and intellectual networks among leaders in countries across the world. To this end, applicants should, in principle, return to their home countries by the end of the final month of the scholarship period and resume their work at the recommending authorities or the organization designated by the recommending authorities among others.
- (10) Non-Eligibility: Applicants who meet any or all of the following conditions are not eligible. If identified after acceptance of the scholarship grantees, the applicants 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 or during the period of the payment of the scholarship;
  - ② Those who cannot arrive in Japan by the last date of the period designated by GRIPS;
  - ③ Those who are already enrolled in a Japanese university or other institution with a residence status of “Student” (留学) or who are going to be enrolled, or plan to enroll, in a Japanese university or other institution as a privately-financed international student from the time of application to the MEXT scholarship program in the applicant’s country until the commencement of the period for payment of the MEXT scholarship. However, this stipulation does not apply to privately-financed international students who, even though they are enrolled, or are planning to enroll, in a Japanese university, verifiably complete their studies before the start of the scholarship payment period, return to their home country at the time of the scholarship application, and newly acquire the “Student” residence status and come to Japan;
  - ④ Those who are planning to receive scholarship money from an organization other than MEXT (including a government organization of the applicant’s country) on top of the scholarship money provided by MEXT after the start of the scholarship payment period;
  - ⑤ 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;

- ⑥ Those wishing to engage in fieldwork or an internship in a country other than Japan after submission of Application; or
- ⑦ Those who will lose their status as public administrators or government officials following the time of application or before completion of the program.

### 3. Period of Scholarship

One year, from October 2024 to September 2025

### 4. Scholarship Benefits

- (1) Allowance: 242,000 yen per month. Due to the situation of the Japanese Government's budget, the amount of payment may be subject to change each fiscal year. The scholarship will not be paid to a grantee who is long absent from the assigned university.
- (2) Traveling Costs:
  - ① Transportation to Japan: In principle, MEXT stipulates the travel schedule and route, and provides an economy-class airline ticket from the international airport nearest to his/her home address (in principle, the country of nationality) to Narita or Haneda International Airport. The grantee shall bear at his/her own expense all costs related to domestic travel from his/her home address to the nearest international airport, airport taxes, airport usage fees, special taxes necessary for travel, travel expenses within Japan (including airline transit costs), travel insurance expenses, carry-on luggage or unaccompanied baggage expenses, etc. The present address in the country of the grantee's nationality stated in the application form is in principle regarded as the recipient's "home address". If, however, the address stated in the application form will be changed at the time of leaving from his/her country, the changed address will be regarded as the "home address".
  - ② Transportation from Japan: Based on the application by the grantee, MEXT will provide an airline ticket to grantees who shall graduate the accepting university and return to the home country by the end of the final month of the period of scholarship (See "3. Period of Scholarship") designated by MEXT. MEXT, in principle, shall provide an economy-class airline ticket from Narita or Haneda International Airport to the international airport (in principle, in the country of nationality) nearest to the returning grantee's residence. The grantee shall bear at his/her own expense all costs related to travel from the grantee's residence in Japan to Narita or Haneda international airport, airport taxes, airport usage fees, special taxes necessary for travel, travel expenses within the country of nationality (including airline transit costs), travel insurance expenses, carry-on luggage or unaccompanied baggage expenses, etc.
- (3) Education Fees: Fees for entrance examination, matriculation and tuition will be paid by MEXT.
- (4) Accommodations:

In principle, grantees may reside at residence halls provided by GRIPS, which plans to arrange TIEC (Tokyo International Exchange Center Residence Hall). Kindly be noted (a) spouse, (b) spouse and child/children, are allowed to live with grantees due to TIEC policy.

### 5. Suspension of Payment of Scholarship

Payment of the scholarship will be topped for the reasons given below. Should any of the following reasons apply, the grantees may be ordered to return a part of, or all of, the scholarship paid up to that time. Payment of the scholarship may also be stopped during the period up to the decision on the disposition of the matter.

- ① A grantee is determined to have made a false statement on his/her application;
- ② A grantee violates any article of his/her pledge made to the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology;
- ③ A grantee violates any Japanese laws and is sentenced and imprisoned for an indefinite period or for a period of exceeding 1 year;
- ④ A grantee is suspended from his/her university or receives other punishment, or is removed from enrollment; as a disciplinary action in accordance with school regulations of the accepting institution;
- ⑤ It has been determined that it will be impossible for a grantee to complete the course within the standard time period because of poor academic grades or suspension or absence from the university;
- ⑥ A grantee came to Japan without newly acquiring the "Student" (留学) residence status, or changed his/her residence status to one other than "Student";

- ⑦ A grantee has received another scholarship (excluding those specified for research expenses);
- ⑧ If a grantee's government and/or other state institutions request such cancellation.

## 6. Selection

- (1) Based on the recommendation of authorities, GRIPS will select initial candidates from among applicants by means of a review of the submitted documents, and an interview. Depending on the evaluation of the submitted documents, applicants may not proceed to an interview. If it is not possible to hold an interview in the applicant's home country, an interview may be conducted by telephone or the Internet.
- (2) Those who have been selected initially by GRIPS will be put forward to the YLP committee established by MEXT for the final selection.
- (3) The final result will be notified to applicants through the Japanese Embassy/the recommending authorities.

## 7. Education at GRIPS

All lectures and practical training are conducted in English.

## 8. The Application Process

Selection for admission is based on the evaluation of supporting documents submitted. Before starting your application, please carefully review the following application process.

You will NOT be registered as an applicant until we have received a complete set of your required supporting documents.

If you have applied to GRIPS in previous years and wish to reapply this year, any supporting documents you submitted previously cannot be used for this year's application.

Please note that if you provide any false or misleading statement or incomplete or inaccurate information in your application, your application may not be screened, you may be denied admission or, if you have been admitted, you may be dismissed from GRIPS.

A complete set of your required supporting documents must reach your recommending authority by the designated deadline. Incomplete applications and applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

All materials submitted by an applicant become the property of GRIPS and will not be returned. Please make sure to keep one copy of your application for your records.

## 9. Supporting Documents

All documents must be in English.

Supporting documents to be prepared solely by the applicant, should be typed on computer wherever possible (A4 size paper and single-sided printing are preferable). If circumstances require, documents legibly handwritten with a ballpoint pen are acceptable.

If your name as written in your application is different from that on the document(s) you submit, and if there is some reason (e.g. marriage) for the difference, please submit official documentation of that reason (e.g. marriage certificate).

Digital copies sent by e-mail will not be accepted.

Do not attach any additional documents apart from the items listed below.

Number the documents from ① to ⑩ (the items numbered in the list below) in the upper right corner of each document.

- ① Application for Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship (1 original, use the designated form)  
Please prepare a photograph of your face, in accordance with the stipulations on the form, and paste it onto the form.
- ② Recommendation letter from the recommending authority (1 original)
- ③ Two (2) letters of recommendation (1 original for each letter, use the designated form)  
Your letters of recommendation must be written by faculty members or job supervisors who are familiar with your academic and/or professional abilities. At least one and preferably two should be written by your immediate superiors at work.

You are required to request each of your recommenders to write a letter of recommendation using the designated form and submit them. Each of your letters must contain four A4 pages provided. Letters submitted that do not use our designated forms will not be accepted. They must be submitted in sealed, unopened envelopes signed across the flap by the recommender.

- ④ • ⑤ Official transcripts of academic record and graduation/degree certificates (1 original for each document)  
You are advised to show the instructions below to registrars at each of the universities that you attended when you request issuance of transcripts/certificates in accordance with our requirements.

You must submit official transcripts of academic record and graduation/degree certificates from all undergraduate and graduate institutions that you attended/graduated from. These must be documents issued by the university and bearing the seal or signature of the registrar, and they must be submitted in sealed, unopened envelopes with the university logo and address noted; the envelopes must be signed or stamped across the flap by the issuing school authorities.

④ Official transcripts of academic record

Official transcripts should contain the following information:

- Name of the degree program/course
- Enrollment period
- Names of all courses taken and grades received
- Grading scale including the maximum grade point/score

If you are currently attending a university, please submit your most recent transcript.

⑤ Official graduation/degree certificates

Official certificates should state the name of your degree and the date the degree was awarded. Provisional or temporary graduation/degree certificates are not acceptable. DO NOT send your original diploma, as documents will not be returned.

If you are currently attending a university, you must submit an authorized statement certifying the specific date of graduation and the title of the expected degree.

Important notes

- Photocopies of transcripts/certificates that have been verified by a notary public are not acceptable.
- If a university has a policy not to issue more than one official transcript/certificate, you may submit official photocopies verified by the university. To be official, these must bear the institution's official stamp or the signature of the registrar. They must be submitted in sealed, unopened envelopes with the university logo and address noted; the envelopes must be signed or stamped across the flap by the issuing school authorities.
- If a university cannot issue an official English version of your transcript/certificate, you are required to submit both:
  - The official transcript/certificate (photocopies are not acceptable), written in its original language and bearing the institution's stamp or the signature of the registrar, and
  - An official verbatim English translation of the document, prepared by an accredited translator.

⑥ Official evidence of English ability (1 original)

One of the following test scores is required:

1. TOEFL iBT
2. IELTS Academic
3. Other equivalent test

Admission priority will be given to applicants who have a TOEFL iBT score of 79 or higher, or an IELTS Academic score of 6.0 or higher, or other equivalent test scores.

Please note that English test scores are valid for two years from the test date, and therefore, tests must have been taken within two years of the time of enrollment at GRIPS. If you submit the results of a different test of English proficiency, please submit a conversion of the score to TOEFL or IELTS.

How to apply for a waiver of the English language proficiency requirement

(There are two categories in our English test exemption policy.)

Category 1: Applicants who have completed or expect to complete an undergraduate or a graduate degree at an accredited institution located in the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, or Ireland will be automatically exempted from submitting an English test score.

Category 2: Applicants who have completed or expect to complete an undergraduate or a graduate degree at an institution where the language of instruction is English may request a waiver of the English language proficiency requirement. If you wish to apply for such a waiver, you must submit official documents issued by the educational institution you attended, certifying that your undergraduate or graduate education was conducted entirely in English. If the official transcript of your academic record or graduation/degree certificate includes that information, you need not submit a separate document. This document must bear the seal or signature of the registrar, and it must be submitted in a sealed, unopened envelope with the university logo and address noted; the envelope must be signed or stamped across the flap by the issuing school authority. You are advised to show these instructions to the registrar at the university that you attended when you request issuance of the document in accordance with our requirements.

⑦ Copy of your passport (1 photocopy)

You must submit a copy of the page(s) with your name, nationality, date of birth and photo. If you do not possess a passport, please submit a copy of your family register or certificate of citizenship.

⑧ Essay explaining applicant's aspirations and future plans following program completion (1 original and 1 photocopy)

You must submit 3-page essay describing your reason/motivation for applying; future plans and expectations from the program as well as future career goals.

⑨ Answer to the essay questions (1 original)

⑩ Certificate of health (1 original, use the designated form)

A certificate of health must be issued by the medical institution designated by Japanese Embassy; all items must be completed, and all comments must be written in English in block letters. If there is a change in your health condition (including any serious changes relating to your life plan) after you have submitted your health certificate, please promptly share this information with the diplomatic mission abroad since it concerns the acceptance system of the accepting university and the Japanese medical institution.

## 10. Unavoidable Circumstances

In the event of unavoidable or unforeseen circumstances, Japanese Government reserves the right to change or cancel the arrival date, scholarship, and contents of the application guidelines here within, at any time before or after notification of the results of the final selection.

Unavoidable Circumstances are defined as events whose effects could not reasonably be prevented or controlled by MEXT or Ministry of Foreign Affairs (including Embassies and Consulate generals of Japan) including but not limited to acts of God, acts of government (including local government, hereafter referred to as government), acts of government authorities (including limitations on travel or immigration enacted by the Japanese government or other foreign countries' government due to the event of infectious disease), compliance with law, regulations or orders, fire, flooding and torrential rain, earthquakes, acts of war (regardless of a declaration of war), revolt, revolution or rebellion, strike, or lockout.

## 11. Notes

- (1) Each grantee is advised to learn some basic Japanese language and to acquire basic information on Japanese climate, geography, customs, university education, and social conditions in Japan, as well as about the differences between the Japanese legal system and that of his/her home country before departing for Japan.
- (2) As the first installment of the scholarship payment will be made from one month to one and a half months after

the grantee's arrival in Japan, the grantee is recommended to bring at least approximately US\$2,000 with him/her to Japan to cover immediate living expenses and other necessary expenses.

- (3) The scholarship payments will be transferred to the bank account of Japan Post Bank (JP Bank) opened by each grantee after the arrival in Japan. MEXT will not transfer the scholarship payments to other account.
- (4) Grantees must enroll in National Health Insurance (Kokumin Kenko Hoken) upon arrival in 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 regarding MEXT Scholarship Students (excluding date of birth and contact information) may be included in publicity materials prepared by the Japanese Government for promoting the acceptance of overseas students in Japan, particularly in order to introduce former MEXT Scholarship Students who are playing active roles in countries around the world.

These terms and conditions are included in the Pledge stipulating rules and regulations which MEXT Scholarship recipients must comply with and submit when they have been granted the Scholarship.

- (6) All personal information that we receive from applicants will be used for the purposes of admissions screening, collecting statistical information, student registration, and educational affairs.
- (7) If there are any questions about the content of the written text in this Application Guideline or any other matters, applicants/grantees should inquire the Japanese diplomatic mission in the applicant's country and follow their instructions.
- (8) In addition to the regulations stipulated in this Application Guideline, those that are necessary to implement the Japanese Government Scholarship programs shall be determined by the Japanese Government.

## **Young Leaders' Program (School of Local Governance) Curriculum Guidelines**

### **I Basic Concepts**

1. Each subject will deal with theories based not only on the experiences of the so-called modern Western World, but also on those concerned with the historical experiences of Japan and other non-Western countries. While analyzing commonalities in the modernization process along with its various possibilities, the courses seek to find the most desirable method for each country's modernization. (Comparative Approach)
2. Through modernization, our thoughts and ideas undergo deep transformations. However, the curriculum will not be concerned with modern ideas alone, but will also incorporate basic premises from the classical civilizations and ideas of the great thinkers. (Emphasis on liberal arts education aiming at self-relativization and critical thinking)
3. Going beyond instruction that is related to skills and knowledge, the curriculum will emphasize the fostering of students' ideas; identifying problems; and developing the ability to arrive at their own solutions. (Emphasis on discussion and self-study)
4. Through encounters with leading figures from all areas (including other promising young students), the curriculum aims to create human networks and further understanding about Japan.
5. As decentralization progresses in line with a country's economic development, the demand for local governance and government that is capable of responding to various regional issues such as education, health, welfare, and local development rises. This program aims to cultivate leaders and core personnel for such local governance in their respective countries by equipping them with advanced theories on local governance and practices in Japan.

### **II Students**

The course is designed for young public administrators and government officials, who are expected to play active roles in Asia and Central Europe as future leaders in local governance.

### **III Courses (Courses offered are subject to change)**

1. Required Courses (7 credits)
  - The World and the SDGs
  - Local Government System and Finance
  - Local Governance in the Changing World
  - Introduction to Japan
2. Recommended Courses (at least 6 credits)
  - Microeconomics I
  - Essential Microeconomics
  - Economic Development of Japan
  - Government and Politics in Japan
  - International Relations
  - Structure and Process of Government
  - Leadership and Knowledge Creation
  - GRIPS Forum I
  - GRIPS Forum II
3. Elective Courses (Credits for the graduation requirement)
  - Macroeconomics I
  - Government and Market
  - Data Science for Public Policy



- International Trade
  - Development Economics
  - East Asian Economies
  - Japanese Foreign Policy
  - International Security Studies
  - Human Resources Management
  - Social Security System in Japan
  - Small and Medium Enterprise and Technology
  - Introduction to Data Science
  - Data Science in Practice
4. Colloquium (2 credits) (Required Course)  
This course will provide an opportunity to listen and discuss various issues with many distinguished government leaders and business executives. The colloquia will be organized fifteen or sixteen times a year, divided between the fall and spring terms.
5. Independent Study (4 credits) and Tutorial (2 credits) (Required Course)  
Students will produce a research paper on a topic of their choice that pertains to local governance, with a perspective of comparison between their home country and another, such as Japan. Designated advisors will provide them with writing instruction/guidance.  
Also, students will consult in a small-group setting with faculty members by participating in Tutorial.
6. Workshop (2 credits) (Required Course)  
Workshop, including a field trip on local governance in Japan, will be conducted in association with several local governments and NPOs.
7. Other Educational Activities  
Japanese Language Class:  
All lectures are conducted in English, making it unnecessary for students to master Japanese. However, Japanese language courses will be offered to students who wish to further their knowledge of Japanese language and culture.

#### **IV Further information**

For more information on GRIPS, please visit: <https://www.grips.ac.jp/en/>