



# **JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Program for Long Term Participants (JICA Development Studies Program)**

## **General Information on Local Governance for Building Resilient States and Societies JFY2026**

**「強靱な国・社会づくりのための行政能力強化（2026年度）」**

This handout provides an overview of the “Local Governance for Building Resilient States and Societies” program/course, which is one of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)’s Knowledge Co-Creation Program (Long-Term). The program will be implemented as part of the Official Development Assistance of the Government of Japan based on bilateral agreement between respective governments.

The objective of the Knowledge Co-Creation Program (Long-Term) is to offer opportunities to people from developing countries to study at higher educational institutions in Japan and to help them build their network of people. This is intended to assist in the human resource development plans of the governments of developing countries and Japan, and eventually to expand and strengthen bilateral ties between the developing countries and Japan.

## 0. Background

### **What is JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP)**

The Japanese Cabinet revised the Development Cooperation Charter in June 2023, which stated, "In its development cooperation, Japan has maintained the spirit of jointly creating things that suit partner countries while respecting ownership, intentions and intrinsic characteristics of the country concerned based on a field-oriented approach through dialogue and collaboration. It has also maintained the approach of building reciprocal relationships with developing countries in which both sides learn from each other and grow and develop together." JICA believes that this 'Knowledge Co-Creation Program' will serve as a foundation of mutual learning process.

### **What is JICA Development Studies Program (JICA-DSP)**

Japan is the very first country and still is one of the very few countries that has modernized from a non-Western background to establish a free, democratic, prosperous, and peace-loving nation based on the rule of law, without losing much of its tradition and identity. With such belief, JICA invites future leaders from partner countries to Japan under KCCP, and offers them opportunity to learn about Japan's unique modernization and development experiences. This special program is called, JICA Development Studies Program (JICA-DSP).

JICA-DSP is provided to all participants of KCCP during their stay in Japan. JICA will offer participants various opportunities through which they can learn about Japan's modernization and development experiences.

<https://www.jica.go.jp/english/activities/schemes/dsp-chair/index.html>

## 1. Overview

Until now, JICA has provided training programs as a part of technical cooperation in various fields. In order to strengthen networks between the target countries in respective fields, JICA established a new long-term training program to foster young/middle-aged bureaucrats, academicians and leading human resources in various fields of target countries who are capable of influencing policy making processes in their countries or contributing to socioeconomic development in the near future.

For this purpose, good governance at every level from national to local governments, creation of democratic institutions and systems guaranteeing inclusive and functional public service delivery and building a country where national peace and security is maintained become important. These are mechanisms necessary to prevent anxieties and frustrations, which derive from political / economic instability or domestic disparity, from driving people to violent extremism in a country where the political regime is unstable, or where the development of social safety nets including social security system is insufficient.

It is also necessary to “build a resilient state” which prevents outbreaks and recurrences of violent conflicts. It means that the government offers inclusive and efficient social services to the people, the people provide confidence to the government, and there establishes a coexistent society where confrontation is avoided among different groups within the community. Once such a system is established, the country would be resilient enough to various risks and shocks coming from within the country and abroad, and probability of such occurring or recurring conflicts would become extremely low.

JICA works on capacity development and institution building to create governments that are trusted by the people, as well as to promote community reconciliation and the recovery, reconstruction, and development of social and human capital.

## 2. Objectives

- (1) To develop high level human resources who are capable of contributing to appropriate policy decisions and its implementation for tackling political and developmental issues in respective fields.
- (2) To establish and maintain mid and long-term amicable relationships between target countries and Japan.
- (3) This program is for regional/local and central government officers to improve their comprehension with reference to the local development and governance for building resilient state/society in order to enhance their policy formulation, planning and implementation capacity.

## 3. Course Outline

The program consists of two components: A) Education and Research Program and B) Common Program.

A) Education and Research Program (Master's degree course at Yokohama National University, Graduate School of International Social Sciences)

#### 【Educational Philosophy】

Yokohama National University (YNU) is an urban institution of higher education deeply rooted in the city of Yokohama, the birthplace of Japan's Westernization during the Meiji era (1868 to 1912) and home to a cluster of advanced industries. With a steadfast academic tradition of upholding freedom and autonomy, the university undertakes education and research guided by four fundamental principles: Be Active, Be Innovative, Be Open, and Be Global. It has contributed to society by cultivating a large number of human resources who play pivotal societal roles and by disseminating research findings helpful to society at large.

The advent of the 21st century has heralded a "new global age" in which the focal point of economic development is shifting to Asia. Social systems, cultures, religions, and customs are becoming ever more complex in their diversity and a range of issues standing in the way of sustainable global development have become apparent. In such circumstances, it is necessary to cultivate innovative human resources who contribute to solving the issues faced by Japanese society from an international perspective in order to generate new knowledge and disseminate such knowledge to the rest of the world.

Moreover, the challenges of the new global age are simultaneously local challenges. Like elsewhere, the area of Yokohama in Kanagawa Prefecture where YNU is located faces structural changes in industry and the problems associated with large cities. It is also beset by other local issues such as dilapidation of suburban homes and apartment complexes resulting from demographic aging, as well as a declining population, deterioration in water sources and nearby forested areas, and increasing risk of natural disaster such as volcanic eruption or earthquake.

In light of these circumstances, YNU is drawing on its traditional strengths and distinctive institutional character to further enhance and reinforce its education and research capabilities. This will enable it to better meet its obligations as a national university that can contribute globally on behalf of the international city of Yokohama.

#### 【About School】

The Graduate School of International Social Sciences (GSISS) was established in 2013 to educate and prepare future leaders for the global challenges of the 21st century. GSISS is composed of three departments: the Economics Department, the Business Administration Department, and the International Business Law Department. Combining the very best in conceptual knowledge and academic theory with practical, real-world application, the three departments provide future leaders with structured and integrated training leading to master's

and doctoral degrees.

GSISS was established on the foundations of the former Graduate School of International Development PhD program. In 1999 it was reorganized as the International Graduate School of Social Sciences, with majors in International Development, Global Economy, Business Management Systems, and International Business Law. Since then, GSISS has been offering a growing selection of courses in English as it has pursued the expansion and internationalization of its academic programs. In collaboration with the World Bank, the IMF, JICA and WCO, GSISS has been welcoming public officials and business professionals from across the developing world, training them to become leaders in a wide range of positions in the public, private and nonprofit sector, leaders who can contribute towards the economic and social development of developing societies and the greater international community.

#### **【About program】**

This degree program provides you with theoretical and practical debates on public policy and local governance. It explores critical issues based on several disciplines such as legal studies, political science, economics, and development studies. It gives a transformative opportunity for current and future leaders with a commitment to public service.

#### **【Course Outline】**

- While applicants are required to take an admission test held in the GSISS, YNU offers graduate courses across the disciplines. YNU commits itself to integrating education in a global and practical manner and developing talented people that the new global era demands.
- At the beginning of the term, students choose their own research theme and supervisor.
- Students plan their concrete research scheme and decide which classes to take, then implement the research activity in accordance with the guidance of supervisor.
- Certificate is awarded when students acquire the required credit.
- When students complete the program, the Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Master of Laws, or Master of International Business Law, will be received.
- All courses in the program can be taken in English. However, international students can take Japanese language courses to meet the diverse needs of them on campus.

#### **【Course Rules】**

##### **1. Program Requirement**

To complete the Master Course Program on Local Governance for Building Resilient States and Societies, participants are required to acquire 32 credits and more from Core Subjects (3 credits), Elective Subjects (21 credits) and Seminars (8 credits).

##### **(1) Core Subjects: 3 credits or more**

Core Subjects must be taken by all participants on the program.

- Decision Making Process: 2 credits
- Research Methodology: 2 credits

- Legal Bibliographic Information: 1 credit
- Introduction to Japanese Law 1: 2 credits
- Introduction to Japanese Law 2: 2 credits

(2) Elective subjects: 21 credits or more

Participants are required to take specific lectures, workshop, field work, or internship as elective subjects listed as follows;

- Japan's Development Experiences: 2 credits
- Aging and Law: 2 credits
- Governance and Development: 2 credits
- Public Administration and Management: 2 credits
- Local Governance: 2 credits
- ODA and Practical Issues: 2 credits
- International Public Administration: 2 credits
- Critical Thinking and Discussion: 2 credits
- Academic Writing: 2 credits
- Professional Communication: 2 credits
- Oral Communication Workshop: 2 credits
- Presentation Skills: 2 credits
- Overseas Fields Work on Development Cooperation: 2 credits
- Workshop: 2 credits
- Fieldwork in Society: 2 credits
- Fieldwork at Research Groups and Conferences I: 2 credits
- Fieldwork at Research Groups and Conferences II: 2 credits
- World Trade Law: 2 credits
- The Rule of Law in Developing Countries: Theory and Practice: 2 credits
- Intellectual Property Law & Policy 2 : 2 credits
- Emerging Technologies and Law : 2 credits

※Up to 8 credits can be taken as elective subjects from the courses offered in other program, department, and school in YNU.

(3) Seminars: 8 credits

Participants are required to join designated Seminar conducted by their supervisor.

2. Master's thesis

All the students in master's degree course must submit a master's thesis without exception. To submit a master's thesis, the students will need to acquire total 16 credits besides Seminars. After an oral examination is conducted, the committee of the Graduate school determines whether to approve the Master's degree.

※Prospective Supervisors

The following academics are active researchers and keen to supervise your research.

Name		Title	Specialization / Research Field
KOBAYASHI	Takaaki	Assoc. Professor	Development Cooperation Policy
SASAOKA	Manami	Professor	Commercial Law
SEKINE	Takemasa	Professor	Economic Law, International Economic Law
SHIGA	Hiroaki	Professor	International Public Administration

#### B) Common Programs

In addition to the above mentioned program at YNU, JICA will implement the Common Programs for all JICA-DSP Participants. Some programs will be conducted by JICA Domestic Offices to promote international exchanges and cultural understandings between JICA participants and regional residents.

Also, JICA will conduct a program, offering participants opportunities to gain a deep understanding of the Japanese development experience, and to draw lessons and gain insights that will support their development work in their home countries and internationally.

## 4. Duration

Total Duration: From October 2026 to April 2029

Academic Year: From April 2027 to March 2029 (2 years in principle)<sup>1</sup>

## 5. Number of Participants

6 participants from the following candidate countries; Pakistan, Palestine, Jordan, South Sudan, Somalia and Ukraine

## 6. Language to be used in this Program

English

## 7. Eligibility

Candidate applicants must satisfy the following requirements:

(1) Current Duties: young or middle-career government officials, prospective academics, who are expected to contribute policy formulation or its implementation for tackling sustainable developmental issues in respective fields.

※ In principle, candidates without affiliations are not eligible for acceptance.

(2) Nationality: citizen of the following countries eligible for Japan's ODA

<sup>1</sup> The preparatory period as a research student or credited auditor prior to the regular student up to 6 months may be added.

Pakistan, Palestine, Jordan, South Sudan, Somalia and Ukraine

- (3) Age:  
Thirty five (35) years of age or under in principle (As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026).
- (4) Educational Background:  
A Bachelor's Degree holder
- (5) Language: adequate English skills both in written and oral communication to complete master's courses
- (6) Physical Presence: must physically come to Japan to carry out research activities to complete this program.
- (7) Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: JICA seeks more female applicants due to the past records of fewer applications from women. JICA is committed to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and provides equal opportunities for all applicants regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- (8) Others: must not be receiving nor plan to receive other scholarships from Japanese government, such as Japan Student Service Organization (JASSO), Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), The Japan Foundation (JF) during the program during the program.

## 8. Admissions

Candidates must be selected as JICA's official candidate through JICA's internal selection procedure and must pass the general entrance examination<sup>2</sup> of the university they have applied to, including examinations to enter the applicants' desired master's degree.

## 9. Application Guidelines

Candidate applicants must apply through the procedures as described below, which are necessary requirements by both applicant's Government and the Government of Japan for the Official Development Assistance.

- (1) Procedures and Required Documents for Application:  
Each applicant is required to submit the "Application Documents<sup>3</sup>" listed in (2) below to JICA overseas office in charge of the applicants' country.
- (2) Application Documents
  - Personal Information
  - Educational Background
  - Present Organization and Nomination
  - Work Experience
  - Declaration (Terms and Conditions needed to be agreed by candidate applicants)
  - Research Plan (Annex 2)

<sup>2</sup> The results of JICA's screening procedure and University's general entrance examination will not accept any inquiry.

<sup>3</sup> Submitted documents will not be returned.

- Career Plan (Annex 2)
- 2) Graduation certificate from your college/university
  - \* Officially certified copies of the original
  - \* Written in English or accompanied with official translation
- 3) Academic transcript
  - \* Must contain all the grades earned at the university attended by the applicant
  - \* Officially certified copies of the original transcript
  - \* Written in English or accompanied with official translation in English
- 4) TOEFL or IELTS result (Required for all applicants. For exceptions please read [Special Remarks] below)

[Special Remarks on the English language requirement waivers and the university certificate for your English proficiency]

1) The English language requirement will be waived if the applicant is a native of or completed his/her bachelor or master's degree in English as the medium of instruction within the last five years in the U.S., the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand or English medium universities in Canada or South Africa.

2) Applicants who completed their bachelor or master's degree in English as the medium of instruction within the last five years in other countries, such as India, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Singapore, etc., are not exempt from the English language requirement. Instead of submitting TOEFL or IELTS scores, these applicants can provide an official letter from the university certifying that English was the language of instruction.

5) A copy of Passport or ID with photo (for checking nationality, name, sex, and date of birth).

6) 2 ID photos (4cm × 3cm) pasted on application form (Original and copy)

7) Health certificate (must be submitted with Medical History in JICA format to JICA office of your country at the applicants' expense, no later than April 30 2026. The date of Health Certificate should be on or after April 1 2026<sup>4</sup>)

### (3) Procedures in General

Based on the above documents, candidate applicants are nominated and approved by their country's government, and later approved by JICA.<sup>5</sup> After this procedure, screening will be conducted at the university.

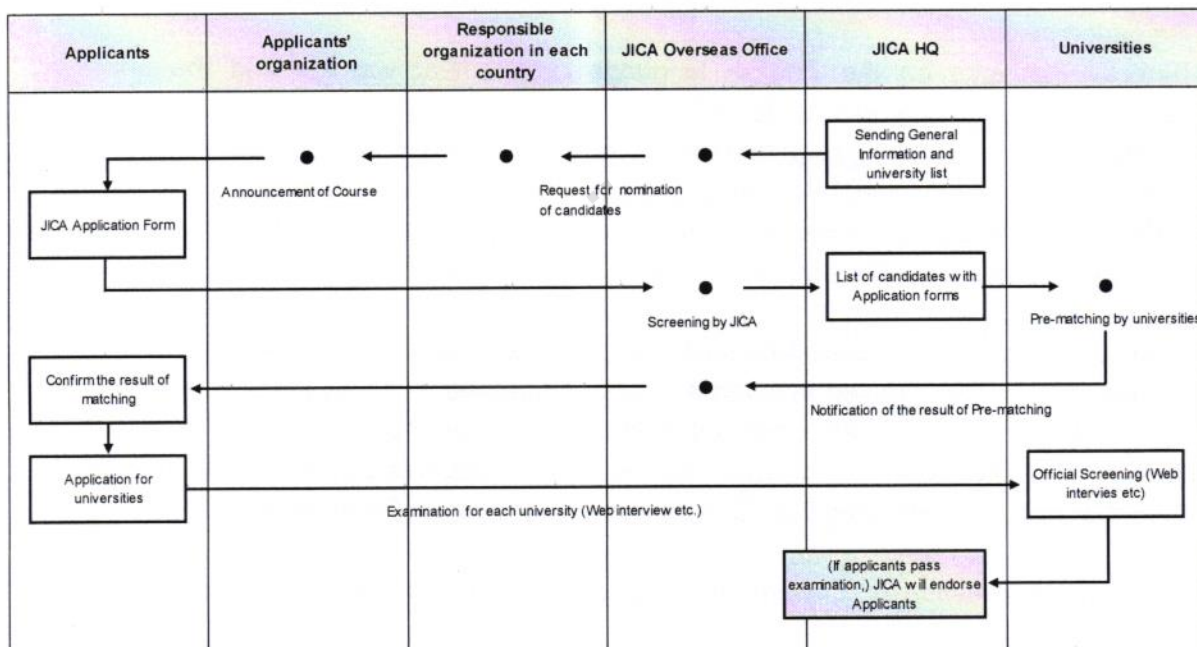
Please kindly note that universities may reject the applicant's application when the

<sup>4</sup>Without the certificate, admission may become rejected.

<sup>5</sup>The Government of Japan will examine applicants who belong to the military or other military-related organizations and/or who are enlisted in the military, taking into consideration of their duties, positions in the organization and other relevant information in a comprehensive manner to be consistent with the Development Cooperation Charter of Japan.

required documents, or the submitted research plan is not accepted by the universities.

Candidate applicants must follow university's application procedure after the screening. If the applicants withdraw their applications after their official applications to the universities, applicants must inform their withdrawal to the university by letter.



#### (4) Points to be Noted regarding Procedures

- 1) Fees for English proficiency test can be reimbursed only within the same Japanese fiscal year (from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March of the next year) when the general entrance examinations are taken. Details of the reimbursement vary by each area and should be consulted with the nearest JICA overseas office of each candidate.

JICA shall determine whether the candidate is eligible to participate in training in Japan. JICA shall make a decision on acceptance or rejection based on several factors such as entrance examination results, planned number of participants, medical examination results and others. Reason for the decision will not be disclosed.

## 10. Schedule

Date	Process
February 28, 2026	"Application Documents" must be submitted to JICA overseas office in respective countries.
By the end of April 2026	The result of document screening process will be notified.
May to June 2026	Interview through Zoom or other means

During July 2026	Final result will be notified
July - September 2026	Preparing for coming to Japan
October 2026	Enroll as a Research Student (at Graduate School of International Social Sciences, YNU)
December 2026 -	Apply for an entrance examination.
February 2027	Take an entrance examination
April 2027	Beginning of Term if applicants pass examination

\*Schedule and program contents might be adjusted appropriately due to unforeseen circumstances.

## 11. Expenses To Be Borne By JICA

Under the JICA Long-term Trainee Allowance standards, JICA will cover expenses and allowance to participants accepted to the program/course. See the table below for further details. Note that the payments (e.g., for tuition, research support expenses, school support expenses) will not be paid to the accepted participants themselves, but directly to the university or other relevant institutions.

Expense category	Payment amount	Payment frequency
Tuition ( examination fees, entrance fees, course fees)	Actual costs	According to the request from universities
Living Allowance	JPY 117,000–148,000 per month*	Every month via university
Airfare	Actual costs	Upon arrival in Japan and upon returning home
Outfit Allowance**	JPY100,000	Once (upon arrival in Japan)
Moving Allowance***	Up to JPY164,000-224,000	Once (during the training period)**
Research Support Expenses****	Actual costs (up to JPY360,000 per year)	
Medical care for participants who become ill after arriving in Japan (the costs related to pre-existing illness, pregnancy, or dental treatment are NOT included).	In accordance with the provisions of the medical insurance	

\*Varies according to living area in Japan, type of accommodation, etc.

\*\*Once, after opening bank account in Japan. As it takes several weeks to have the bank account opened, it is strongly recommended to bring cash for personal expenses during the period.

\*\*\*Depending on the accommodation facility. Consultation with the university is required.

\*\*\*\*Research Support Expenses are allowed to be provided via the university and be disbursed with the consultation and approval of the applicant's supervisor.

## **12. Expenses Not To Be Borne By JICA**

JICA will not bear costs other than the allowances described above. JICA is not responsible for the following expenses:

- (1) Passport fees (for re-issuance and extensions, etc.)
- (2) Visa fees of a transit country and transportation expenses to obtain Visa
- (3) Transportation expenses to obtain Japanese Visa
- (4) Domestic travel expenses at the applicant's home country
- (5) Departure tax
- (6) Airport tax/airport facility charges outside of Japan, including third countries
- (7) Customs duty
- (8) Excess baggage charges
- (9) Compensation for lost and/or damaged baggage
- (10) "No show charge" to the transit airport hotel (non-refundable)
- (11) Lost - ticket fee
- (12) Accommodation fee for day-use hotel in return flight
- (13) Transportation expenses other than official programs
- (14) Telephone bill or mini-bar tab at accommodation
- (15) Medical costs related to pre-existing illness, pregnancy, or dental treatment
- (16) Medical cost related to the same illness over 180days
- (17) National Health Insurance fee

Note: If participant / accepted applicant does not follow the regulation of JICA, the participant may have to bear such other costs of necessary expenses.

## **13. Conditions for Participation**

The applicants/participants of KCCP are required

- (1) to understand that participants must physically come to Japan to participate in this program at the date designated by JICA,
- (2) not to change the air ticket (and flight class and flight schedule arranged by JICA) and lodging by the participants on their own,
- (3) not to change course subjects or extend the course period,
- (4) to understand that inviting participant's family members is not recommended before their stay in Japan has passed more than 6 months,
- (5) to return to their home country on the designated flight by JICA, when they finish the program/course or when it is deemed impossible to finish the program within the program period, or when the participant is not successful on the regular course examination,
- (6) to carry out such instructions and abide by such conditions as may be stipulated by both the nominating Government and the Japanese Government in respect of the course,

- (7) to enroll and complete JICA-DSP online courses, when you receive JICA's instructions to do so.
- (8) to observe the rules and regulations of the program implementing partners to provide the program or establishments, ("Plagiarism" especially is taken severely by enrolling university, regardless of whether it is direct plagiarism or self-plagiarism and participants may be subjected to disciplinary action such as suspension),
- (9) not to engage in political activities, or any form of employment for profit,
- (10) to agree to be discontinued of the program, should the participant (a)violate Japanese laws, JICA's regulations, or University's regulations, (b)commit illegal or any type of immoral conduct including sexual harassment, (c)become critically ill or seriously injured after arrival in Japan.
- (11) to be responsible for paying any cost for treatment of the said health conditions except for the medical care expenses described in the table of "11. Expenses To be borne by JICA,"
- (12) to return the total amount or a part of the expenditure for KCCP depending on the severity of such violation, should the participants violate the laws and ordinances,
- (13) not to drive a car or motorbike, regardless of an international driving license possessed,
- (14) to observe the rules and regulations at the place of the participants' accommodation,
- (15) to refund allowances or other benefits paid by JICA in the case of a change in schedule,
- (16) to accept that the Government of Japan will examine applicants who belong to the military or other military-related organizations and/or who are enlisted in the military, taking into consideration of their duties, positions in the organization and other relevant information in a comprehensive manner to be consistent with the Development Cooperation Charter of Japan,
- (17) to submit a Health Certificate with Medical History in JICA format to JICA office of your country at the applicants' expense, no later than April 30 2026. The date of Health Certificate should be on or after April 1 2026. JICA will NOT reimburse the cost to the applicants.
- (18) to accept to submit a second Health Certificate in JICA format if deemed necessary by JICA. The cost of acquiring the Health Certificate will be borne by JICA unless it is required due to the candidates' fault.
- (19) to promptly resubmit your medical history, If there are changes in your health condition, such as pregnancy or a pre-existing disease,
- (20) to be in good health to participate in the program. In order to reduce the risk of worsening symptoms associated with respiratory tract infection, please be honest when consulting the doctor for your Health Certificate,
- (21) not to be receiving nor plan to receive another scholarships from Japanese

government, such as Japan Student Service Organization (JASSO), Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), The Japan Foundation (JF) during the program

- (22) to understand not to make other applications for different JICA training courses at the same time,
- (23) to understand that the maximum duration of "Overseas research" and "Temporary Leave (leaving Japan for private purpose)" is 60 days, in principle.
- (24) to accept to take tuberculosis related inspections organized by JICA after arriving in Japan and to submit the results to JICA and university.
- (25) to approve the following conditions on summary of my thesis;
  - ① Summary of the thesis shall be kept at JICA.
  - ② Summary of the thesis can be read by anyone who made a request to JICA .
  - ③ Summary of the thesis can be used for publication by JICA or JICA website.
  - ④ Taking Photocopy of the thesis shall be allowed by anyone with JICA's permission.
- (26) to acknowledge that a leave of absence from school is not permitted in principle,
- (27) to understand that the maximum duration of research student is 6 months for both master's and doctor's courses, and duration of acceptance as a regular student is based on the course years determined by the university,
- (28) To indicate all educational background, including currently enrolled university, if any.
- (29) To understand that the use of Generative AI such as Chat GPT to create Application Forms including Research Plans, and your research papers may not be acceptable and may result in rejection of your application or termination of training if discovered, according to each University policy.



***CORRESPONDENCE***

For enquiries and further information, please contact your nearest JICA office.