

---

## **APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR Ph.D. TRACK AY2027-28**

---

### **PH.D. TRACK**

---

The Japan-IMF Scholarship Program for Asia (JISPA) offers scholarships to junior government officials from emerging and developing economies in the Asia-Pacific region to pursue graduate studies in economics and public policy in Japan. The Ph.D. Track<sup>1</sup> provides the opportunity to pursue doctoral studies at any accredited university in Japan.

### **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

---

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: JUNE 1, 2026, 23:59, JST (Japan Standard Time)**

Online Application Window: May 1 – June 1, 2026

### **ADMISSION TIMING**

---

This round of application targets applicants seeking admission in **September/October 2026 or April 2027**.

### **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

---

Applicants must meet **all** the following criteria:

1. **National of one of the following countries:**

Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao P.D.R., Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pacific Island Countries, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

2. **Officials currently employed and nominated by one of the following or related government agencies**

- a. central bank, ministry of economy, ministry of finance, ministry of planning/development, ministry of trade/commerce, tax administration, national statistics bureau, financial regulatory agencies, or similar government bodies.
- b. other government areas that significantly influence macroeconomic policy formulation or implementation may also be considered.

---

<sup>1</sup> For applicants who are interested in pursuing a Master's degree through JISPA, please refer to the JISPA Master's Track.

A nomination from the applicant's government agency is required. This must be submitted as part of the application through a signed nomination and certification form, confirming the agency's support for the applicant's participation in the program and assurance of reinstatement upon completion.

**NOTE:** Officials who are (will be) on leave or out of duty for a cumulative total of more than three months, within the 12-month period leading up to September 1, 2026, are not eligible to apply (due to the long-term study leave requirement of JISPA).

### 3. Hold a Master's degree with strong academic record

Applicants must have a master's degree or equivalent and demonstrate strong academic record, with at least 17 years of formal education. Names of schools and dates of attendance for the most recent three schools must be listed in the application. In some cases, 16 years of formal education may be accepted if there is an official explanation (for example, a country's educational system or other exceptional circumstances).

### 4. English Proficiency

Applicants must demonstrate to have English language proficiency, equivalent to official iBT score of 79-80 or higher, or an overall IELTS score of at least 6.0.

### 5. Commitment to National Development

Applicants must demonstrate a clear commitment to contributing to the development of their home country. If selected, they are required to return to their agency upon completion of their studies to utilize the knowledge and skills gained through the JISPA for their country's development.

### [Priority Applicants]

Priority is given to the following applicants:

- Under 38 years old
- Have a minimum of 2 years of work experience in the public sector at the time of application.

## APPLICATION PROCEDURES

---

Applicants to the JISPA Ph.D. Track are asked to apply through the following steps:

1. Apply through the online application system, which will be available from May 1 – June 1, 2026. **Please make sure to save your responses and save this as a PDF.**
2. Send the following to [jispa@imf.org](mailto:jispa@imf.org) via email (see Section "I. Application Materials"):
  - a. All application documents combined in one PDF file in the order below
  - b. Separate file of the thesis/equivalent paper.
3. Reference Letters should be directly sent to [jispa@imf.org](mailto:jispa@imf.org) by referees (see Section "II. Reference Letter

## I. APPLICATION MATERIALS

Applicants are required to provide their application information and send the following documents to [jispa@imf.org](mailto:jispa@imf.org).

1. **PDF Version of the Application Information:** Save your application information entered into the online system as a PDF. Please refer to the Sample Application Form for the required information.
2. **Agency Nomination and Certification Form:** This form must be signed by the authorized official responsible for nominating and endorsing applicants for overseas study and must bear the agency's official seal. This confirms the agency's support of the candidate and guarantees the candidate's position will be maintained upon completion of their studies in Japan.
3. **Declaration Form:** The letter must be completed, signed, and dated by the applicant.
4. **Statement of Purpose:** This statement should explain your purpose for applying to the JISPA, including your short-term and long-term career goals. Please describe why you have chosen your selected university and the area of study you wish to pursue. Explain how your qualifications, experience, and research will contribute to your professional growth and career development as well as how they will help your country's development, aligning with the JISPA objectives. (400-600 words; text only, no equations or formulas. A4 or Letter size, Word file only. The file size should not exceed 1MB)
5. **Research Proposal for Dissertation:** The proposal should clearly describe the project you wish to undertake, grounded in important policy issues and challenges facing your country. It should demonstrate how your research will contribute to macroeconomic stability, economic growth, and/or overall development. Plagiarism will lead to disqualification from the JISPA selection process. The proposal must be typewritten and no more than 500 words. Note that you cannot substitute your proposal by listing courses you intend to take. (A4 or Letter size, it must be a Word file with the macros disabled, and the file size should not exceed 1MB)
6. **Official copies of diploma or degree certificates:** Please include official copies of diplomas or degree certificates from all undergraduate and graduate schools. An official copy means a certified copy of the original document with an official seal obtained from the administration office of the university attended. Copies attested by organizations/persons not having notarized/legal bearing will not be accepted. Official English translations are required if supporting documents are not presented in English. Each translation must be attached to the original document written in the native language
7. **Official Transcripts:** Please include official transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate schools. An official copy means a certified copy of the original document with an official seal obtained from the administration office of the university attended. Copies attested by organizations/persons not having notarized/legal bearing will not be accepted. Official English translations are required if supporting documents are not presented in English. Each translation must be attached to the original document written in the native language.
8. **University's acceptance letter or a copy of the submission confirmation of the application to the university:** Please note that Applicants must notify the IMF of the admission result of the university(ies) to which they are applying prior to receiving a final decision on the scholarship award.

9. **TOEFL/IELTS certificate:** Test reports must be from an examination taken after June 1, 2024. Alternatively, applicants can submit test reports included in the application package to the university.

The JISPA institution code as listed below can be registered when applicants take the test.

- i. TOEFL: "C626 – Japan-IMF Scholarship Program for Asia"
- ii. IELTS: "JISPA: Japan-IMF Scholarship Program for Asia"

**English Test Requirement Exemption Policy:** The applicants who meet one of the following criteria are exempt from submitting the English test report.

- i. Countries where the official language is English: India, the Philippines, and selected PIC countries
- ii. Education: English medium programs (undergraduate and/or graduate-level) in selected English-speaking countries (Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the UK, and the US)

10. **Passport Copy:** Please attach a copy of your valid national passport. If the passport is unavailable, please attach a photocopy of your official national ID with photo.
11. **Check list:** The check list must be completed by the applicant.
12. **Thesis or equivalent paper from Master's Degree**

## II. Reference Letters

1. References must be both from the applicants' supervisor at work and an academic advisor or professor.
2. The letters must be completed, signed, and dated by the referees.
3. The letters should be directly sent by the referee to [jispa@imf.org](mailto:jispa@imf.org) from their official email account provided in the section 9 of the application form (p.V) (public domains, such as "Gmail.com" or "Yahoo.com", are not acceptable).
4. The file name of the reference letter needs to be the full name of the applicant (e.g., "Mr. Taro Tanaka.pdf").
5. The reference letter must be sent to [jispa@imf.org](mailto:jispa@imf.org) by June 1<sup>st</sup>, 23:59 JST.

The letter as well as the email to the JISPA secretariat must contain the following information:

1. Name of the applicant
2. Country of the applicant
3. Email address of the applicant (the applicant's email address should be the one used for a primary account for the online application)

### [Important Notices]

1. All submitted application materials must be presented in English or be accompanied by an official English translation.
2. Submitted materials will be considered under the control of the IMF and provided to the universities applicant and the Government of Japan as deemed appropriate. None of the materials will be returned to applicants.

3. Incomplete applications, including missing two reference letters or passport copy, will not be processed.
4. If selected, applicants must submit original copies of their diploma and transcripts directly to the university of enrollment. Failure to do so will result in the revocation of the university's admission and cancellation of the scholarship offer.

### IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE PH.D. TRACK

---

See the table below for important dates. Please note that these dates are indicative, and subject to change.

<b>Application Process</b>	<b>Date</b>
Application Opening	May 1, 2026
Application Closing	June 1, 2026
Interviews with selected applicants	Late June-early July, 2026
Notifications to selected applicants	Mid-July, 2026
Deadline to accept the scholarship	Mid-late July, 2026
Enrollment in Ph.D. programs	September/October 2026