



Graduate Institute for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI
Application Guidelines for



NIG Global Scholar (NIG-GS) Selection

October 2027
[Genetics Program]

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Regarding the Use of Generative AI in the Entrance Examination Process (Important Notes)

Information on the use of generative AI in the entrance examination process (Important Notes) is available on our university website. When preparing your application, please review this information as well.

https://www.soken.ac.jp/en/admission/file/use_ai_entranceexam_en20251117.pdf

Application Guidelines for NIG Global Scholar (NIG-GS) Selection

The National Institute of Genetics (NIG) serves as the Genetics Program of the Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI, and offers graduate programs in Genetics.

***NIG-GS Selection is only for the five-year doctoral program.**

A limited number of NIG-GS applicants who pass the Secondary Screening and meet certain conditions will be recommended by SOKENDAI to the Japanese Government (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; hereinafter referred to as “MEXT”) as candidates for the MEXT Scholarship. Other applicants who pass the Secondary Screening will be offered the same financial support as students admitted through General Admission.

1. General Prospectus

The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI, was founded as a national university in Japan on October 1, 1988. The basic concept of SOKENDAI is to develop a new postgraduate education system in Japan. Its key features are as follows:

- 1) SOKENDAI offers both three-year and five-year doctoral programs.
- 2) SOKENDAI consists of 20 programs under one institute operated by 20 Inter-University Research Institutes and Independent Administrative Institutions (“parent institutions”).
- 3) Research and education are carried out in close cooperation with the parent institutions.
- 4) Broad and international perspectives are fostered by enhanced interchange between various institutions and universities in Japan and abroad.

The parent institutions provide Japanese and foreign scientists with opportunities to conduct advanced joint research in various scientific branches. They are equipped with extensive research facilities and function as centers for advanced studies. Presently, they cooperate to establish a world-class program for postgraduate education at SOKENDAI.

[Admission Policy]

<What SOKENDAI expects of our grad students>

SOKENDAI tends to attract students who have a strong interest in research, who constantly hone their abundant intellect and sensitivity with the aim of conducting research in the new era, while taking a “bird's-eye view” of the entire field of study, and who have the will and enthusiasm to be active on the international stage.

<Basic policy for the selection of our grad students>

In selecting students for admission, SOKENDAI places importance on basic academic ability and logical thinking ability to actively promote research in the cutting-edge 20 research institutes affiliated with SOKENDAI. In order to properly judge such abilities, various selections will be made according to the respective fields of specialization.

2. Genetics Program Outline

The Genetics Program offers education and research opportunities in a variety of cutting-edge disciplines aimed at investigating biological phenomena through genetic information. Study and research fields include molecular, cellular, developmental, behavioral, population, and evolutionary genetics, as well as genome biology and bioinformatics. Students have access to a wide range of databases and genetic resources maintained by the National Institute of Genetics (NIG). To foster independent researchers, the Genetics Program adopts an educational philosophy in which each student is supervised by the entire faculty. For example, graduate students meet with their thesis committee twice a year to receive advice from faculty members outside their host laboratories. Other features of the Program include the Scientific Presentation/Writing Program and ample financial assistance opportunities.

3. Doctoral Degree Requirements

A Doctor of Philosophy degree shall be conferred on students who have satisfied the requirements of their respective doctoral programs, as prescribed below:

Students must be enrolled in SOKENDAI for at least five years, earn the necessary credits, receive the necessary research guidance, and pass the examination for a doctoral thesis. Students who are recognized as having achieved significant progress may be able to graduate in a shorter timeframe.

4. Qualifications for Application

NIG-GS is designed for foreign students residing outside Japan at the time of application and the Genetics Program should be the applicant's first-choice for graduate studies.

Applicants must fulfill one of the following conditions:

- 1) Have completed or are expected to complete at least 16 years of formal education in a foreign country by the month preceding enrollment
- 2) Have graduated or are expected to graduate from a Japanese university as specified in Article 83 of the School Education Law by the month preceding enrollment
- 3) Have been conferred or are expected to be conferred a degree equivalent to a bachelor's degree by the month preceding enrollment by completing an educational course of three or more years in a foreign university or in a foreign educational institute
- 4) Have completed 15 years of formal education in a foreign country by the end of the month preceding enrollment (Note)
- 5) Have been recognized as having academic ability equivalent to a university graduate or higher by the individual screening of Admission Qualifications of SOKENDAI, and have attained the age of 22 years by the end of the month preceding enrollment (Note)

Note 1: Applicants who intend to apply under Provisions 4) or 5) are required to undergo qualification screening before the application can be submitted. If applicable, please contact the Student Affairs Section via email in advance.

Note 2: Besides the above qualifications 1) to 5), eligible applicants include those who otherwise satisfy or will satisfy the qualification requirements for General Admission to SOKENDAI. If you have any questions regarding the qualifications for admission, please contact the Student Affairs Section in advance.

Note 3: If the applicant is accepted for enrollment, the applicant must submit the original official transcript and certification of graduation.

5. Application Procedure

[Application Period]

October 12 to November 4, 2026, 12:00 noon (Japan Standard Time)*

*The application must be submitted no later than the end of the application period above, without failure.

[Contact the prospective supervisor]

Before applying, applicants must contact the prospective supervisor to confirm whether the supervisor will accept the applicant if the applicant passes the examination.

*Please note that faculty members who will retire within the standard period of study (5 years from the time of admission) cannot be appointed as supervisors.

Faculty list: <https://www.nig.ac.jp/en/students/faculty/>

[Application Method]

The applicant must submit the application through the online entrance examination system, “The Admissions Office (TAO),” no later than 12:00 noon (JST) on November 4, 2026.

Please refer to our university website:

https://www.soken.ac.jp/en/admission/application_info/genetics/file/Nig_TAOmanual.pdf

Please note that, in principle, all correspondence related to the application process will be conducted through “The Admissions Office (TAO)”. If you receive an email from “no-reply@admissions-office.net” at the email address you have registered for “The Admissions Office (TAO)”, please be sure to click the “Check Message” link and review the message.

You can also view your message by following the steps below:

- (i) Log in to “The Admissions Office”
- (ii) Select “Message”
- (iii) Select “The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI” / Graduate Institute for Advanced Studies / Genetics Program / NIG Global Scholar (NIG-GS) Selection [October 2027]

6. Selection Schedule and Method

Primary Screening

November 21, 2026: Online Writing Examination

Applicants who meet the eligibility requirements will be notified by email or through “The Admissions Office” on or after 12:00 noon on November 13 (JST) and invited to take the online written examination on November 21 (JST). Further details will be provided to eligible applicants. In this examination, applicants will be required to submit a mini report. The mini report is designed to assess analytical ability rather than specific academic background or prior knowledge. Therefore, no special preparation is necessary.

Applicants are not allowed to contact any faculty member of the Genetics Program from 1:00 p.m. on November 21 (the date of the online written examination) until 12:00 noon on December 2 (JST).

Secondary Screening

January 18 - January 20, 2027: Online Examination

Applicants who proceed to the Secondary Screening will be notified after 12:00 noon on December 16, 2026 (JST). These applicants will take an online written examination on January 18 and attend an interview on January 19 or 20. Depending on the number of applicants, interviews may be conducted only on January 19.

7. Announcement of Result

- Preliminary admission and scholarship announcements will be sent in April 2027.
- Final announcements will be sent by July 2027.

8. Security Export Control

Based on the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act (*), SOKENDAI has established regulations and conducts examinations for the provision of technology and the acceptance of researchers and students. For this reason, if it is determined that your intended education or research activities fall under, or are likely to fall under, the regulations, you may be asked to modify your proposed education or research content. Additionally, admission may not be granted, regardless of the entrance examination results.

Please consult the program office for further details.

* <https://www.meti.go.jp/policy/anpo/englishpage.html>

9. Privacy Policy

(1) Any personal information, including the applicant's name and address, submitted to SOKENDAI as part of the application documents shall be used during the application process, such as applicant/examination procedures, notification of results, and admission procedures. After enrollment, personal information shall also be used for student affairs (school register and course registration), student services (health care, tuition exemption and scholarship application, and career support), and administrative purposes of processing payments for entrance and tuition fees.

(2) Personal information obtained in the screening process, such as examination results, shall be used for aggregate analyses of examination results and research for use in the screening process.

10. Contact Details for Inquiries

Inquiries regarding selection processes must be directed to:

Academic Services Division, National Institute of Genetics (Genetics Program, SOKENDAI)

Email: info-soken@nig.ac.jp

Other inquiries must be directed to:

Student Affairs Section, Division of Academic and Student Affairs

The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI

E-mail: gakusei@ml.soken.ac.jp

Application Guidelines for MEXT Scholarship Student

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) offers the following Japanese government scholarship to foreign students who wish to study at SOKENDAI.

1. Qualifications and Conditions

1) Applicants

The scholarship is offered to new foreign students who have earned the equivalent level of an undergraduate (bachelor) degree with outstanding academic performance and a minimum **GPA of 2.3** on a 3.0 scale **or higher**. The applicant is expected to maintain the equivalent level for the duration of the scholarship period.

*In cases where the applicant's GPA cannot be calculated using the Japanese government formula, the applicant must submit a letter of recommendation from the Dean (or a person of higher rank than the Dean) of the university or institution attended that includes a statement confirming that the applicant is ranked within the top 30% of their university or institution.

2) Nationality

The applicant must hold the nationality of a country with diplomatic relations with Japan. An applicant who holds Japanese citizenship at the time of application is not eligible.

The applicant must hold the nationality of a country specified by MEXT. An applicant who holds Japanese citizenship or the nationality of a country not specified by MEXT at the time of application is not eligible.

To see the list of "specified nationalities", please refer to the following webpage:

https://www.soken.ac.jp/en/admission/file/List_of_Specified_Nationalities.pdf

According to the MEXT scholarship selection rules, priority will be given to applicants who hold nationality of one of these countries (especially Southeast Asian countries).

The number of scholarship positions are limited (25% or less) for applicants holding nationalities not on the list of "specified nationalities".

<Applicants from Taiwan>

Applicants from Taiwan may apply for NIG-GS Selection, although they are not eligible for the MEXT Scholarship. Before applying, please refer to the following webpage for conditions and other information:

<https://www.nig.ac.jp/en/students/exam/fromtaiwan/>

3) Age

The applicant must have been born on or after April 2, 1992.

4) Academic Background

The applicant must have completed at least 16 years of formal education in a foreign country or be expected to have done so by September 30, 2027.

For more details, please see “4. Qualifications for Application” in the Application Guidelines for NIG Global Scholar (NIG-GS) Selection.

5) Study Area

The study area must be in the same field that the applicant has already studied or in a related one. This field of study must be available at SOKENDAI.

6) Language Ability

The applicant must fulfill at least one of the requirements listed below:

- (a) Holds an English proficiency test score equivalent to **B2 or above on the CEFR** (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

To see the CEFR Equivalency Chart, please refer to the following webpage.

<https://www.soken.ac.jp/en/admission/file/CEFRquivalencyChart.pdf>

- (b) **Has completed an educational program whose primary language of instruction is English and** that satisfies the entrance requirements for the five-year doctoral program at SOKENDAI

7) Health

The applicant has no physical or mental conditions hindering the applicant's study in Japan.

8) Arrival in Japan

The applicant must be able to arrive in Japan on the dates designated by SOKENDAI between mid-September and early October 2027. Applicants who are unable to arrive in Japan within the designated period should decline the offer of admission. Those who arrive in Japan before the designated date for personal reasons will NOT be provided with travel expenses to Japan.

9) Visa Requirement

If selected, the applicant must obtain a “Student (ryugaku)” visa in their home country prior to entering Japan and enter Japan with “Student” status. Therefore, the successful applicant who is already in Japan under a different residence status must change his/her residence status to “Student” by the end of September 2027 and re-enter Japan with “Student” status. (The applicant who comes to Japan with a visa or residence status other than “Student” will NOT qualify for the Japanese government scholarship. Additionally, please note that the applicant who changes his/her residence status to any status other than “Student” after entry into Japan will lose his/her status as a Japanese government scholarship student.) Please be informed that after the MEXT scholarship period concludes, there is no guarantee that your application to reacquire the original residence status will be approved.

10) Others

Applicants to which any of the following conditions apply will NOT be considered:

- (a) Military personnel or military civilian employees registered on the active list
- (b) Is not able to arrive in Japan on the appointed dates

- (c) Has received the MEXT scholarship within the past three years. However, this restriction does not apply to the following:
- (1) Those who have been enrolled as scholarship students in a Japanese language and culture program or as a scholarship student in the Japan-Korea Joint Undergraduate Course for Science and Engineering
 - (2) Those who have obtained or are expected to obtain a degree as undergraduate students of the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship programs (university recommendation/special selection)
- (d) Has applied for another MEXT scholarship
- (e) Has enrolled in a Japanese university with “Student (ryugaku)” status at the time of the application or will be enrolled in a Japanese university as a privately-financed foreign student between the time of application and the beginning of the scholarship payment
- (f) Has already won a scholarship that is prohibited from being received in conjunction with the MEXT scholarship, such as a JSPS DC Research Fellowship

2. Terms of Scholarship

Because MEXT scholarship students are classified as either “Master’s Program” or “Doctoral Program,” even if a student enrolls in the five-year doctoral program, the initial scholarship period will cover only the first two years of the standard program term (from October 2027 to September 2029).

To extend the scholarship period to the end of the standard program term (September 2032), the grantee must apply for a scholarship extension and obtain MEXT’s approval. Please note that approval is not guaranteed and depends on the student’s academic performance and MEXT’s budgetary conditions.

3. Scholarship Benefits

1) Scholarship amount

The scholarship amount for 2027 has not been fixed yet.

For reference, the scholarship amount for 2026 is as follows:

Enrolled Doctoral Program	Amount of Stipend per Month
1 and 2-year student of 5-year doctoral program	144,000 yen*
3 to 5-year student of 5-year doctoral program	145,000 yen*

* The amount for 2027 may change depending on the budget conditions.

* The scholarship will NOT be paid to the grantee who takes a leave of absence from the university or does not attend classes for an extended period.

2) Transportation to Japan

According to his/her itinerary and route as designated by MEXT, the grantee will be provided with an economy-class air ticket from the international airport nearest to his/her home address to Narita/Haneda airport, or the international airport in Japan nearest to the campus of SOKENDAI where the grantee is placed. Other expenses, such as inland transportation from his/her place of residence to the international airport, airport tax, and any special taxes on overseas travel, will NOT be provided.

(The address stated in the application is considered as “home address of the grantee”).)

No air tickets will be issued to a grantee for a route from any country other than the country of his/her nationality.

3) Transportation from Japan

For a grantee who returns to his/her home country by a specified date after the scholarship has ended, MEXT will pay for an economy class air ticket from Narita/Haneda airport or the international airport in Japan nearest to the campus of SOKENDAI, where the grantee is placed, to the international airport nearest to his/her home address.

* The grantee should purchase air travel insurance at his/her own expense.

* The airports for departure and return should be in the country of the grantee's nationality.

4) Education fee

The admission and tuition fees at SOKENDAI will be paid by MEXT.

4. Recommendation and Selection

1) Scholarship Recommendation

After screening at SOKENDAI, the President of SOKENDAI recommends applicants who have shown academic excellence to MEXT.

2) Scholarship Selection

Candidates are screened and selected by a selection committee from a pool of applicants recommended by the presidents of all universities in Japan. Based on the committee's screening and selection results, MEXT selects grantees and their scholarship terms.

5. Application Documents

Please first read “Application Checklist” on our website.

Please complete the following applicant information in "The Admissions Office (TAO)".

The following items must be registered:

Name (Surname, First Name, Middle Name), Date of Birth, Gender, Admission Date, Postal Code, Address, Email, Phone Number, and Past Enrollment Status at SOKENDAI

a) Application Form 1 (attached): NIG-GS Format

Download Application Form 1-1 from the university website, complete it, and upload the completed form.

b) Field of study and Research Plan (attached)

Download Form “Field of study and Research Plan” from the university website, complete it, and upload the completed document in PDF format.

c) Photograph

Please upload an image of the document (.png, .jpeg, or .jpg).

Photograph or digital image sized 4.5 cm x 3.5 cm taken within the past six months (Full-faced

photograph. When photographed, the applicant must not wear a hat or cap that covers any part of his/her face or head).

d) Proof of nationality (preferably a copy of the applicant's passport).

Please upload a scanned image of the document (.png, .jpeg, or .jpg).

e) Certified academic records (originals or certified copies)

Please upload the document in PDF format.

The applicant must submit certified academic records (issued by the university) for each academic year of all universities attended.

Applicants must submit Official Transcripts for all academic years from undergraduate school.

Applicants with master's or doctoral degrees must submit Official Transcripts from graduate schools.

f) Diploma or degree certificate (original or certified copies)

Please upload the document in PDF format.

The applicants must submit a diploma or degree certificate from all the universities attended (or a document certifying that the applicants will graduate from the university by September 2027).

- Applicants must submit the Certificates of Graduation from their undergraduate schools. Applicants who graduated from graduate schools must also submit their Certificates of Graduation.
- Applicants who have not yet graduated from a university must submit an attested document certifying that the applicants will graduate before entering the doctoral program.

g) Proof of the applicant's academic level in his/her previous university (e.g., grading scale, grading system).

Please upload the document in PDF format.

h) A recommendation letter from the applicant's home institution, addressed to the President of SOKENDAI (original)

Please upload the document in PDF format.

- A recommendation letter must be issued by the Dean or equivalent (or higher) of the applicant's current university or the most recent university the applicant attended if he/she is not currently enrolled in any university. SOKENDAI cannot accept a recommendation letter from the department head or the applicant's academic supervisors.
- Please attach a document indicating the position of the person who wrote the recommendation letter.

i) Abstracts of thesis

Please upload the document in PDF format.

If the applicant has no theses or publications, please submit a summary of his/her current research project.

j) Certificate of English proficiency

Please upload the document in PDF format.

The applicant must submit either of the following (I. or II.) to demonstrate their proficiency in English in either one, as shown below.

- I. Official score report, such as TOEFL iBT and IELTS, proving that applicants have English

proficiency equivalent to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) B2 level or above. Please note that the applicant must have taken the test after January 18, 2025.

- II. A document certifying that the applicant has completed his/her bachelor's course in English as the main language

[How to submit score record]

i. TOEFL iBT

Please submit the original official score report by one of the following methods:

- Applicants arrange for ETS to send the original official score report directly to SOKENDAI.

The Institution Code and Institution Name are as follows:

- ◆ Institution Code: 7564
- ◆ Institution Name: SOKENDAI (The Graduate University for Advanced Studies)

*Score reports from ETS may be sent either electronically or by paper. However, they must arrive at SOKENDAI by the application deadline.

- If applicants submit the original official score report in paper form, please upload the document in PDF format.

ii. IELTS

Please submit the official score report by one of the following methods.

- Submit a copy of the official score report with the application documents.

*The score will be verified through the IELTS Verification Service.

Please upload the document in PDF format or image format.

- Arrange for the administering organization to send the original official score report directly to SOKENDAI.

The Institution Name is as follows:

Institution Name: The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI

k) Proof of the applicant's specific knowledge and capability in his/her field, such as a commendation for research achievement (Optional)

Please upload the document in PDF format.

l) An essay describing why and what you want to study in the Genetics Program (no more than 1,000 words) (Form 2: Attached)

Download Form 2 from the university website, complete it, and upload the completed document in PDF format.

m) Books, papers, or lectures that were particularly interesting to you (Form 14-1: Attached)

Download Form 14-1 from the university website, complete it, and upload the completed document in PDF format.

6. Additional considerations

- The documents mentioned above must be prepared in Japanese or English. If the documents are prepared in languages other than Japanese or English, an official English translation must be

included.

- The documents above (except photograph) must be prepared using word-processing software and saved as A4-size documents. (if possible)
- Admission may be withdrawn at any time, even after enrollment, if the application documents are found to be invalid or contain false information.

7. Notes

- 1) The recipients of the MEXT scholarship may have his/her scholarship revoked in the following cases:
If the recipient wrongly receives the scholarship under the following circumstances, he/she may be required to return the scholarship for that period.

- a) When the recipient has made false statements on the application.
- b) When the recipient violates his/her contractual agreement with MEXT.
- c) When the recipient has been the subject of disciplinary action at SOKENDAI.
- d) When it becomes definitive that the recipient will not be able to graduate (or complete the program) within the standard program terms because of poor academic achievement or suspension.
- e) When the recipient changes his/her "Student" visa status to some other status of residence.
- f) When the recipient receives another scholarship (a scholarship or fellowship from the Japanese government, a Japanese government-related organization, or others) not approved for acceptance in conjunction with the MEXT Scholarship.
- g) When the recipient proceeds to a higher course without approval for the extension of the scholarship by MEXT.
- h) When the recipient withdraws from SOKENDAI or transfers to a different graduate school.

- 2) If the recipient takes a leave of absence from SOKENDAI or does not attend classes for an extended period, he/she will NOT receive scholarship payments during that period.