

Graduate Institute for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI
[Integrative Evolutionary Science Program]
Doctoral Program 2026
Special Admissions for Applicants Residing Abroad
(Privately Financed International Students)

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 visions 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 are cooperating 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. Integrative Evolutionary Science Program Outline

The Integrative Evolutionary Science Program at SOKENDAI (the Graduate University for Advanced Studies) offers stimulating multidisciplinary educational programs for graduate students. Our aim is to cultivate students with deep knowledge of evolutionary science, together with a strong awareness of the role and impact of their studies within our society. A varied study program is provided by skilled professors and lecturers in the fields of Integrative Anthropology, Behavioral Biology, Evolutionary Biology, Theoretical Biology, and Science and Society.

Our students follow multidisciplinary education programs covering Evolutionary Studies, and Science and Society. We provide a wide range of dissertation courses for students. The sub-thesis is a key feature of our educational program. Students who choose a biological topic for their primary research are required to write a sub-thesis in the field of Science and Society (and vice versa). Our educational supervision follows the maxim of "all-for-one": every student is supervised by all the professors and lecturers of our program.

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:

[Three-year doctoral program]

Students must be enrolled in SOKENDAI for at least three 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 time frame.

[Five-year doctoral program]

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 time frame.

4. Doctoral Programs and Number of Students Accepted

Doctoral Programs	Number of Students Accepted	
	April 2026	October 2026
Three-year doctoral program	A few students	A few students
Five-year doctoral program	A few students	A few students

5. Qualifications for Application

[Qualifications for the three-year doctoral program]

Applicants must fulfill one of the following conditions:

- 1) A master's degree or a degree equivalent to a professional degree has been conferred or is expected to be conferred in a foreign country by the month preceding enrollment;
- 2) Have been recognized by SOKENDAI as having academic ability equivalent to or superior to those who have a master's degree or a professional degree by the individual screening of the Admission Qualifications of SOKENDAI and have attained an age of 24 years by the end of the month preceding enrollment.

Note:

*The qualifications do not concern the date of completion of the master's course of study, but the date of conferral of a master's or equivalent professional degree.

*Applicants who intend to apply under the above provision (2) are required to have a qualification screening to confirm "having academic ability equivalent to those who have a master's degree or a professional degree" before the application can be submitted.

Additionally, those who have completed or are expected to complete a master's course before the time of enrollment in the doctoral program but are not expected to be granted a master's or professional degree by that time must undergo extra screening procedures before the application. If applicable, please contact the Student Affairs Section via email before the application period.

*Besides the above qualifications 1) and 2), 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.

[Qualifications for the five-year doctoral program]

Applicants must fulfill one of the following conditions:

- 1) Have completed or are expected to complete a 16-year course of school 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 at a foreign university or in a foreign educational institute;
- 4) Have completed a 15-year course of school education in a foreign country by the end of the month preceding enrollment.

- 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 an age of 22 years by the end of the month preceding enrollment.

Note:

*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 before in advance.

*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.

6. Required Conditions and Notes

Applicants are expected to satisfy each of the following conditions.

- 1) Nationality and Residency: Must be foreign nationals currently residing outside Japan
- 2) Arrival in Japan: Must be able to arrive in Japan in time for the semester starting in either April 2026 or October 2026.
- 3) Health: Must be physically and mentally healthy enough to complete graduate studies at a university in Japan.
- 4) Language Ability: Must have a good command of either English or Japanese.
- 5) Security Export Control: Depending on the nature of the education and research they intend to pursue after entering the doctoral program, applicants may be subject to regulations concerning the export and transfer of controlled technologies under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Law. Please consult the Student Affairs Section of SOKENDAI for further details.

7. Application Procedures

[Application Period]

First Round (April and October 2026 Admission)	June 19 to June 25, 2025, 12:00 pm JST*
Second Round (October 2026 Admission)	November 27 to December 3, 2025, 12:00 pm JST*

*The application must arrive no later than the last day of the application period, without failure.

[Contact the prospective supervisor]

Before applying, the applicant must contact the prospective supervisor and confirm whether he/she can accept the applicant if the applicant passes the examination.

[Application Method]

The applicant must submit a complete set of application documents either by mail or email. For details, please confirm the following points 1) and 2). The application must reach SOKENDAI no later than the application deadline.

1) Application by Mail

The complete set of application documents must be submitted by registered express mail or a similar service. If there are any problems with the submitted documents, SOKENDAI will contact the applicant via email.

Mailing address:

Student Affairs Section, Division of Academic and Student Affairs
The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI
Shonan Village, Hayama, Miura, Kanagawa 240-0193 JAPAN
Telephone number +81-46-858-1526

2) Application by Email

The complete set of application documents must be submitted via email. If the attached files contain more than 10 megabytes, please send them separately, and number each email subject. Additionally, when sending files, please attach them to your email directly without using uploaders.

After receiving the applicant's email, SOKENDAI will send the applicant a confirmation email. If the applicant does not receive our email within a week of submitting the documents, please contact us.

Email address: gakusei@ml.soken.ac.jp (Student Affairs Section, SOKENDAI)

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

8. Application Documents

Please read "Application checklist" on our website.

1) Application Form (Attached)

Please attach a photograph (sized 4.5 cm x 3.5 cm taken within the past six months, upper body, full-faced with no hat) on the Application Form. Your signature is required on the Application Form.

2) Examination fee: JPY 30,000

For payment details, please refer to “Instructions on how to make a payment” on our website.

3) Official Transcripts

- Applicants applying for the three-year doctoral program must submit the Official Transcripts for each academic year from both undergraduate and graduate schools.
- Applicants applying for the five-year doctoral program must submit the Official Transcripts for each academic year from their undergraduate school.

4) Certificate of Graduation or Expected Graduation (originals or certified copies)

- Applicants applying for the three-year doctoral program must submit Certificates of Graduation for both undergraduate and graduate schools.
- Applicants applying for the five-year doctoral program must submit a Certificate of Graduation for undergraduate school.
- Applicants who have not yet graduated from a university must submit an attested document certifying that the applicant will graduate before entering the doctoral program.

5) Certified copy of degree diploma

Applicants who have already graduated from a university must submit certified copies of degree diplomas, as follows:

- Applicants applying for the three-year doctoral program must submit certified copies of their bachelor's and master's degree diplomas.
- Applicants applying for the five-year doctoral program must submit a certified copy of their bachelor's degree diploma.

6) Recommendation letter from a person who knows the applicant's research/academic activities well (e.g., the applicant's academic supervisor at the university in which the applicant is currently enrolled or the university that the applicant previously attended). addressed to the President of SOKENDAI. (Original, free format)

7) Your past research work and activities (if applicable)

8) Summary of your graduation thesis

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

9) Field of Study and Research Plan (Attached)

10) Photocopy of the applicant's passport pages showing the applicant's name, date of birth, nationality, gender, photograph, and passport number.

Note:

- The application documents 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 application documents mentioned above must be prepared using word processing software. Print all the required documents on A4 size paper (if possible).
- Your admission may be rescinded at any time, even after enrollment, if the application documents are found to be invalid or contain false information.

9. Selection Schedule and Method

1) Schedule

First Round	August 7 to August 8, 2025
Second Round	January 26 to January 27, 2026

2) Method

The examination will be given online. The examination schedule and information will be communicated directly to the applicants.

Five-year doctoral program:

(i) Screening

Screening will be conducted based on the submitted application documents.

(ii) Interview

The interview will be given online.

Applicants will explain their current research (graduate research or other relevant work) and what you wish to study in this program within 10 minutes. Subsequently, a question-and-answer session will be conducted based on the information provided. The Q&A may include questions to assess foundational knowledge relevant to the proposed research.

Note: Applicants are allowed to submit supplementary materials in advance, in addition to the required application documents. The supplementary material is limited to one A4 page. Applicants are allowed to bring the submitted supplementary materials into the examination; however, bringing any other materials, such as presentation drafts, is not permitted.

Three-year doctoral program:

(i) Screening

Screening will be conducted based on the submitted application documents.

(ii) Interview

The interview will be given online.

Applicants will explain their master's course research or previous research within 10 minutes. Next, they will explain their future research plans within 10 minutes, including research objectives, significance, and methods. Subsequently, a question-and-answer session will be

conducted based on the information provided. The Q&A may include questions assess foundational knowledge relevant to the proposed research.

Note: Applicants are allowed to submit supplementary materials in advance, in addition to the required application documents. These materials are limited to two A4 pages: one page outlining the applicant's master's course or previous research, and one page describing their future research plans. Applicants are allowed to bring the submitted supplementary materials into the examination; however, bringing any other materials, such as presentation drafts, is not permitted.

Please contact the Integrative Evolutionary Science Program (hayamajimu@ml.soken.ac.jp) for details.

10. Announcement of Result

First round: The result will be announced to all applicants in Late August 2025 via email.

Second round: The result will be announced to all applicants in Early February 2026 via email.

11. Admission Procedures

1) Admission Procedure Period:

The admission procedures are scheduled as follows:

The Mid-March 2026 for the enrollment of April 2026

Late September 2026 for the enrollment of October 2026

Successful applicants must complete the admission procedures within the prescribed period.

Further details will be provided separately to those who are accepted.

2) Fees required for admission:

Entrance Fee: JPY 282,000

Tuition Fee (for six months): JPY 267,900

Note: If the entrance or tuition fees are revised at the time of enrollment or during the period of study, the revised fees will apply from the date of the revision.

3) Student Visa

Candidates selected as privately financed students are required to apply for a visa in person at the nearest Japanese consulate, upon receiving the Certificate of Eligibility issued and mailed by SOKENDAI.

4) Contact Details for Inquiries

Student Affairs Section, Division of Academic and Student Affairs

The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI

Email: gakusei@ml.soken.ac.jp