

**SOKENDAI International Priority Graduate Program in Life and
Information Sciences, “SOKENDAI-PGP”
SOKENDAI (The Graduate University for Advanced Studies)
Department of Basic Biology, School of Life Science
Application Guidelines 2018 (SOKENDAI Recommendation)
(Monbukagakusho: MEXT Scholarship Student)**

Admission Date: October 1, 2018

Types of Programs: Five-year and three-year doctoral programs

Number of Scholarships Available: there are nine scholarships in total: six for the five-year doctoral program and three for the three-year doctoral program.

SOKENDAI-PGP at SOKENDAI (The Graduate University for Advanced Studies) is inviting applications for Japanese Government Scholarships (MEXT scholarships) to provide outstanding international students with an opportunity to pursue doctoral degrees in our program.

1. General Prospectus

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

- 1) SOKENDAI offers both three- and five-year doctoral programs.
- 2) SOKENDAI consists of 6 schools with 20 departments operated by 18 Inter-University Research Institutes and Independent Administrative Institution (“parent institutions”).
- 3) Research and education are carried out in close cooperation with the parent institutions.
- 4) A broad and international vision is fostered by enhanced interchange among all departments and other universities in Japan and abroad.

The parent institutions provide Japanese and foreign scientists with opportunities to conduct advanced joint research in various branches of science. They are equipped with extensive research facilities and function as centers for advanced studies. At present, they are cooperating in establishing a world-class program of postgraduate education in SOKENDAI.

2. Program Outline

This program aims to foster the next generation of scientists by providing interdisciplinary education in both life and information sciences, two academic fields that create “fusional reactions of intelligence.” Given the benefits conferred by its high faculty-student ratio, the program provides the ultimate tailor-made education and career support suitable to each student’s capabilities and professional goals. The language of instruction is English, enabling Japanese and international students to cooperate and learn together.

3. Department Outline

Advanced training and research are conducted in the field of basic biology with emphasis on cell biology, developmental biology, neurobiology, evolutionary biology, environmental biology, and theoretical biology. Fundamental biological phenomena are studied by using a variety of model organisms and approaches, such as techniques in cell biology, molecular biology, physiology, biochemistry, and mathematics.

4. Monbukagakusho: MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan) Scholarship

The MEXT scholarship provides one round-trip airfare to Japan and a monthly stipend, in accordance with the regulations of MEXT. MEXT scholarship recipients are not expected to pay entrance examination, admission, or tuition fees.

For details on the qualifications required and scholarship benefits, please refer to the “Application Guidelines for a Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho: MEXT) Foreign Research Student Scholarship 2018 (SOKENDAI Recommendation).”

5. How to Apply

Contact a faculty member whom you would like to be your academic advisor before preparing the application documents. A complete set of application documents must be sent to the International Affairs Section, SOKENDAI, between Friday, October 13 and Thursday, November 9, 2017 via registered mail, courier service, or similar service. Please be advised that incomplete applications will not be accepted, any changes or alterations to the submitted documents will not be allowed after filing, and the submitted documents will not be returned under any circumstances.

6. Method of Selection

Schedule

Monday, December 11, 2017

Method

Three-year doctoral course:

Document screening and an interview will be conducted.

(a) Document screening will be conducted regarding the contents of the applicant’s academic transcripts, Master’s thesis, and associated materials.

(b) The interview will take 30 minutes. The first 15 minutes will be spent exploring the applicant’s previous research and future research aspirations. During the interview, a whiteboard will be available; however, slides, overhead projectors, and posters will not be allowed. The remaining 15 minutes will be used to conduct a question-and-answer session covering the content of the applicant’s presentation and submitted documents.

Five-year doctoral course:

Document screening, a written examination (i.e., short essay), and an interview will be conducted. The written examination will take one hour. The interview will take 30 minutes. The first 15 minutes will be spent exploring the applicant’s reasons for applying, previous research (or details of his/her studies), future research aspirations, and other applicable topics. During the interview, a whiteboard will be available; however, slides, overhead projectors, and posters will not be allowed. The remaining 15 minutes will be used to conduct a question-and-answer session covering the applicant’s presentation, submitted documents, and the results of the written examination.

The face-to-face interview is to be conducted at the National Institute for Basic Biology (NIBB).

We do not give applicants any support in obtaining a visa and airline tickets and arranging accommodations when visiting Japan for the entrance examination. Applicants of foreign nationalities who live abroad who have the entrance examination must prepare the necessary procedures for visiting Japan by themselves.

For details, please contact the Department of Basic Biology.

7. Announcement of Acceptance

Preliminary admission and scholarship announcements will be mailed in March 2018. Final announcements will be mailed in July 2018.

8. Application Submissions and Contact Address

Applications must be submitted to/general inquiries regarding application and scholarships must be directed to the following:

International Affairs Section
SOKENDAI (The Graduate University for Advanced Studies)
Shonan Village, Hayama, Kanagawa 240-0193 JAPAN
Telephone: 81-46-858-1519/1527
E-mail: kokusai@ml.soken.ac.jp
Web page: <http://www.soken.ac.jp/en/>

Application Guidelines for Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho: MEXT) Foreign Research Student Scholarship 2018 (SOKENDAI Recommendation)

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) offers a Japanese government scholarship to foreign students who wish to study at SOKENDAI by its recommendation as follows.

Memorandum

1. Qualifications and Conditions

(1) Applicants

The scholarship is offered to new foreign students who have earned the equivalent level of a graduate student with outstanding academic performance. The applicant must have a minimum GPA of 2.3 or higher and is expected to maintain the equivalent level during the scholarship period.

(2) Nationality

The applicant must hold a nationality of a country that has diplomatic relations with the Japanese government. Applicants holding a Japanese citizenship at the time of application are not eligible.

(3) Age

The applicant must be under 35 years old as of April 1, 2018 (i.e., born on or after April 2, 1983).

(4) Academic Background

Applicants for a five-year doctoral program must have completed a 16-year course of study in the educational institutions of a foreign country or expect to complete such a course of study by September 30, 2018.

Applicants for a three-year doctoral program must have been granted or be scheduled to be granted a master's degree or a professional degree by September 30, 2018.

* Other than the criteria above, eligible applicants include those who otherwise satisfy or will satisfy qualification requirements for admission to SOKENDAI. Those with questions or concerns regarding the qualification are advised to contact their prospective academic advisors well ahead of the application deadline.

* The qualifications concern the date of conferral of a master's or equivalent professional degree (not the date of completion). Those who have completed or are scheduled to complete a master's course before the time of enrollment in the program but are not scheduled to be granted a master's or professional degree by that time should undertake extra screening procedures before applying.

(5) Study Area

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

(6) Health

Applicants must be physically and mentally healthy enough to undertake graduate studies at universities in Japan.

(7) Arrival in Japan

The applicant must be able to arrive in Japan on the date(s) designated by SOKENDAI in the period between the middle of September and the beginning of October 2018. An applicant who cannot arrive in Japan within the designated period should decline the acceptance. Those who arrive in Japan before the designated date for personal reasons will NOT be provided traveling expenses to Japan.

(8) Visa Requirement

If selected, the applicant will be required to acquire a “CStudent (ryuugaku)” visa prior to coming to Japan. Accepted applicants who are already in Japan under a different resident status must change their resident status to “Student” by the end of September 2018. An applicant who comes to Japan with a visa or resident status other than that of “Student” will NOT qualify for the Japanese government scholarship. Further, please note that an applicant who changes his/her resident status to any status other than “Student” after entry into Japan will lose his/her status as a Japanese government scholarship student.

(9) Other

Students under the conditions stated below will NOT be considered as candidates.

- [1] Military personnel and military civilian employees registered on the active list
- [2] Applicants who are not able to arrive in Japan on the appointed dates
- [3] Applicants who have received the MEXT scholarship within the past three years. (This restriction does not apply, however, to students who were enrolled as a scholarship student in a Japanese language and culture program or as a scholarship student in the Japan–Korea Joint Undergraduate Course for Science and Engineering.)
- [4] Applications will not be accepted from those who have already won a scholarship from another institution (including the government of their home country) other than MEXT.
- [5] Applicants who have applied for the MEXT scholarship through another university or for the support system for foreign students by the MEXT and JASSO simultaneously. (This restriction also applies to students who have been selected and are to be registered continuously through 2018 with the support system for foreign students conducted by MEXT and JASSO.)
- [6] Applicants will not be eligible for this scholarship if they will be enrolled in a Japanese university as a privately financed foreign student and are on the register continuously from October 2018.

2. Term of Scholarship

The term of scholarship will differ as follows, depending on the course a grantee takes in Japan.

- (1) If a grantee directly enrolls in a three-year doctoral program after coming to Japan, the scholarship will be payable for three years (standard program term) from October 2018 through September 2021).
- (2) If a grantee directly enrolls in a five-year doctoral program after coming to Japan, the scholarship will be payable for two years (the first two years of the standard program term) from October 2018 through September 2020. For the term of his/her scholarship to be extended until the end of the standard program term (i.e., September 2023), he/she should make an application for the extension of the scholarship to be approved by MEXT. Please note that

depending on academic achievement and the budget condition of MEXT, the application will not necessarily be approved.

3. Scholarship Benefits

(1) Scholarship Amount

The scholarship amount for 2018 has not been finalized.

For reference, the scholarship amount for 2017 was as follows.

Enrolled Program	Amount of Stipend per Month
One- to two-year student of five-year doctoral program	144,000 JPY
Three- to five-year student of five-year doctoral program	145,000 JPY

Amounts for 2018 may change depending on the budget conditions.

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

(2) Transportation to Japan

The grantee will be provided, according to his/her itinerary and route as designated by MEXT, an economy class airline ticket from the international airport nearest to his/her home address to 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 airline ticket 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 period of his/her scholarship has ended, MEXT will pay for an economy class airline ticket from 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 buy 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) Tuition

SOKENDAI will provide all tuition.

4. Recommendation and Selection

(1) Scholarship Recommendation

After screening at SOKENDAI, the president recommends applicants who have shown academic excellence and need for scholarship to the Minister of MEXT.

(2) Scholarship Selection

Candidates are screened and chosen by the selection committee from a pool of applicants recommended by the president of all universities in Japan, and, based on the results of screening and selection, MEXT awards grantees and their term of scholarship.

(3) Documents to be Submitted

	(特別枠用 (Original))	生命・複合) (Copy)
a. Application for Japanese Government (MEXT) Foreign Research Student Scholarship 2018 (double-sided printing)	1	
b. Field of study and study program	1	
c. Proof of nationality (a copy of the applicant's passport is most preferable)		1
d. Dean's recommendation letter from the home institution, addressed to the president of SOKENDAI	1	
e. Passport photographs or digital images (size 4.5 cm × 3.5 cm) taken within the past six months (Full-faced photograph from the waist up. When photographed, the applicant must not wear a hat, cap, or other cover that hides a part of his/her face or head. The applicant must write his/her name and nationality on the back of each photograph and paste them on the application forms.)	1	
f. Certified academic records of each academic year from all universities attended (issued by the university attended)	1	
g. Diploma or degree certificate of all universities attended (or an attested document certifying that the applicant will graduate from the university by September 2018, where applicable)	1	
h. Proof of the applicant's academic level, such as academic ranking in his/her previous university (GPA, ABC grading, ranking of academic achievement, etc.)	1	
i. Abstracts of theses		1
j. Qualifications that prove the applicant's language proficiencies (such as TOEFL, TOEIC).	1	
k. Proof of the applicant's specific knowledge and capability in his/her field, such as a commendation for research achievement (optional)	1	
l. Career Plan	1	

(4) Additional Considerations

- 1) The documents submitted must be prepared in Japanese or English using word-processing software (if possible). For documents prepared in languages other than Japanese or English, attach a Japanese or English translation to each document. Print all required documents on A4-sized paper.
- 2) Prepare and attach abstracts summarizing the contents of theses.
- 3) All required documents must be prepared completely and correctly, and a complete set of attachments must be submitted for the application to be considered.
- 4) SOKENDAI cannot respond to inquiries regarding the receipt of individual application documents. The applicant is responsible for the tracking and receipt of all materials.

(特別枠用 生命・複合)

SOKENDAI strongly encourages sending the documents by registered mail, courier service, or other service that provides tracking numbers and receipt-verification services.

- 5) SOKENDAI will not return the submitted documents nor provide photocopies of the submitted documents under any circumstances. Please keep a copy of all documents for personal reference. In case a document is not re-issuable, please submit an attested (notarized) copy instead.
- 6) Admission may be canceled at any time, even after enrollment, if the application documents are found to be invalid or contain false information.

5. Notes

(1) A recipient of the MEXT scholarship may have his/her scholarship revoked in the following cases. In case a recipient wrongly receives the scholarship under the following circumstances, he/she may be required to return the scholarship for the period.

- [1] When the recipient has made false statements on the application
- [2] When the recipient violates his/her contractual agreement with MEXT
- [3] When it becomes definitive that the recipient will not be able to graduate (or complete the program) within the standard program term because of his/her poor academic achievement or suspension
- [4] When the recipient has been the subject of disciplinary action at SOKENDAI
- [5] When the recipient withdraws from SOKENDAI or transfers to a different graduate school
- [6] When the recipient changes his/her “College Student” visa status to any other status of residence
- [7] When the recipient receives other scholarships (excluding grants for specific research projects)
- [8] When the recipient proceeds to higher courses without approval for the extension of scholarship by MEXT.

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

(3) Depending on the specifics of the education and research instructions they wish to receive upon entering the program, applicants may be subject to regulations on the export/transfer of controlled technologies based on the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Law. Please consult the International Affairs Section for further details.