

Department of Astronomical Science, School of Physical Sciences
SOKENDAI (The Graduate University for Advanced Studies)
Application Guideline October 2019 (SOKENDAI Recommendation)
(Monbukagakusho: MEXT Scholarship Student)

1. General Prospects

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

- 1) SOKENDAI offers both three-year and five-year doctoral programs.
- 2) SOKENDAI consists of six schools with 20 departments operated by 17 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) 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. Department Outline

The Department of Astronomical Science, School of Physical Sciences, SOKENDAI, is a graduate school based at the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan, a member institute of the National Institutes of Natural Sciences. The goal of the department is to train researchers capable of doing cutting-edge research, to train specialists capable of developing advanced technologies, and to develop human resources with the highly—specialized knowledge needed to work in the scientific field. To this end, graduate students conduct observational and theoretical research and research on the development of new instruments related to astronomical science in an environment equipped with state-of-the-art observational instruments and supercomputers.

Webpage: <http://www.guas-astronomy.jp/eng/Intro/outline.html>

3. Doctoral Degree Requirements

Doctor of Philosophy shall be conferred to students who have satisfied the requirements of their respective programs as prescribed below.

[Three-year doctoral program]

Students must be enrolled in SOKENDAI for at least three years; additionally, they must earn the necessary credits, receive 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 within a shorter time frame.

[Five-year doctoral program]

Students must be enrolled in SOKENDAI for at least five years; additionally, they must earn the necessary credits, receive 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 with in a shorter time frame.

4. Qualifications for Application

[Qualifications for the three-year doctoral program]

Applicants must fulfill one of the following conditions;

- 1) Applicants on whom 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 preceding month of enrollment.
- 2) Applicants who hold or are expected to obtain a Master's degree or Professional degree by the preceding month of enrollment in Japan.
- 3) Applicants who 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 Admission Qualifications of SOKENDAI, and attain the age of 24 by the end of preceding month of enrollment.(Note)

Note

*Applicants who intend to apply under the provision (3) above are required to have 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. If applicable, please contact the Student Affairs Section by email before October 14, 2018.

* The qualifications concern not the date of completion of the master's course of study but the date of conferral of a master's or equivalent professional degree. 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 must take extra screening procedures before the application.

*Other than those qualifications above (Qualification 1 to 3), eligible applicants include those who otherwise satisfy or will satisfy qualification requirements for admission to SOKENDAI. If you have any questions regarding the qualifications for admission, please contact the Student Affairs Section before October 14, 2018.

[Qualifications for the five-year doctoral program]

Applicants must fulfill one of the following conditions;

- 1) Applicants who have completed or are expected to complete a 16-year course of school education in a foreign country by the preceding month of enrollment.
- 2) Applicants who have graduated or are expected to graduate from a Japanese university specified in Article 83 of the School Education Law by the preceding month of enrollment.
- 3) Applicants who have been conferred or are expected to be conferred a degree equivalent to a Bachelor's degree by the preceding month of enrollment by completing an educational course of three or more years in a foreign university or in a foreign educational institute.
- 4) Applicants who have completed a 15-year course of school education in a foreign country by the end of preceding month of enrollment (Note).
- 5) Applicants who 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 by the end of preceding month of enrollment.(Note)

Note

Applicants who intend to apply under the provisions (4) or (5) are required to have qualification screening before the application can be submitted. If applicable please contact the Student Affairs Section by email before October 14, 2018.

*Other than those qualifications above (Qualification 1 to 5), eligible applicants include those who otherwise satisfy or will satisfy qualification requirements for admission to SOKENDAI. If you have any questions regarding the qualification for admission, please contact the Student Affairs Section before October 14, 2018.

5. Application Procedure

[Application Period]

From 15 October 2018 to 14 November 2018*

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

[Application Method]

Please contact a faculty member of the department whom you would like to study under in advance. The complete set of application documents must be enclosed in the designated envelop and generally must be submitted **by registered express mail, or a similar service.** The application must reach SOKENDAI no later than the last day of the application period.

Mailing address;

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

6. Selection Schedule and Method

We will carry out the selection by two steps. The first step is paper screening and the second step is interview. Only the applicants who passed the paper screening can proceed to the interview.

[Five-year doctoral course]

(1) Paper screening

We will review English score record (TOEFL iBT or IELTS), GRE Subject Test (Physics) Score Record and other application forms carefully and decide whether the applicant can proceed to the interview or not. We will notify the result of the paper screening to the applicants via e-mail by two weeks ahead of the interview day.

(2) Interview

We will ask applicants of their past study, research plans and other general matters. The interview will be held on December 14, 2018.

[Three-year doctoral course]

(1) Paper screening

We will review English score record (TOEFL iBT or IELTS) and other application forms carefully and decide whether the applicant can proceed to the interview or not. We will notify the result of the paper screening to the applicants via e-mail by two weeks ahead of the interview day.

(2) Interview

Applicants are asked to have a presentation on their past study first. PC projector can be

provided for the presentation. Then an oral examination follows. At the oral examination, applicants are provided with a text about basic physics and astronomy in English and to answer questions based on it. Following that, interview is carried out to review the applicant's research plans and other general matters. The interview will be held on December 14, 2018.

7. Announcement of Result

Preliminary admission and scholarship announcements will be sent in April 2019.

Final announcements will be sent by July 2019.

8. Contact details for inquiries

Student Affairs Section, Division of Academic and Student Affairs

SOKENDAI (The Graduate University for Advanced Studies)

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

Application Guidelines for Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho: MEXT) Foreign Research Student Scholarship 2019 (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.

1. Qualifications and conditions

1) Applicants:

The scholarship is offered to new foreign students who have earned the equivalent level of a graduate with outstanding academic performance. The applicant must have a minimum GPA 2.3 or higher and are 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. The applicant who holds Japanese citizenship at the time of application is not eligible.

3) Age:

The applicant must be under 35 years old as of April 1, 2019 (born on or after April 2, 1984)

4) Academic Background:

Applicants for the 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, 2019.

Applicants for the 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, 2019.

For the detail, please find "4. Qualifications for Application" in application guideline.

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 the one available at SOKENDAI.

6) Language Ability:

The applicant must have sufficient English ability to pursue his/her studies.

In the fields in which Japanese language ability is necessary (Japanese linguistics, Japanese literature, Japanese history, Japanese law), the applicant must have sufficient Japanese ability to pursue his/her studies except under very special circumstances. We strongly recommend you to take a language test to show your language ability objectively.

The recommended tests are TOEFL, IELTS for English language and Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) for Japanese language.

7) Health:

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

8) 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, 2019 (the applicant who cannot arrive in Japan within the designated period should decline the acceptance, and those who arrive in Japan before the designated date for personal reasons will NOT be provided traveling expenses to Japan).

9) Visa Requirement:

If selected, the applicant will be required to acquire a "Student (ryugaku)" visa prior to coming to Japan in the home country and enter Japan with "Student" status. Therefore, accepted applicants who are already in Japan under a different resident status must change their resident status to "Student" by the end of September, 2019 and enter Japan with "Student" status. (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. Also, 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.) Please be informed that there is a possibility that your application for the original resident status may not be approved after the period of MEXT scholarship student.

10) Other:

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

- a) Military personnel and military civilian employees registered on the active list are excluded.
- b) Applicants who are not able to arrive in Japan on the appointed dates are excluded.
- c) Applicants who have received the MEXT scholarship within the past three years are excluded (this restriction does not apply, however, to students who were enrolled as a scholarship student in Japanese language and culture program or as a scholarship student in the Japan-Korea Joint Undergraduate Course for Science and Engineering).
- d) Applicants will not be accepted from those who apply for another MEXT scholarship.
- e) Applicants will not be eligible for this scholarship if they have enrolled in a Japanese university with "Student (ryugaku)" status at the time of the application and have

enrolled (or are going to enroll) Japanese university as a privately-financed foreign student between the time of the application and the beginning of the scholarship payment. If applicants, who have enrolled/are going to enroll in a Japanese university as a privately-financed foreign student, surely know at the time of the application that they will be going back to their home country before the scholarship period starts and will be acquiring "Student" visa and entering in Japan with the visa, the preceding paragraph shall not apply to those applicants.

- f) Applicants 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.

2. Term of Scholarship

1) Non-degree student

If a grantee will enroll as a non-degree student after coming to Japan, his/her scholarship will be payable for 18 months from October 2019 through March 2021.

2) Three-year doctoral program

If a grantee will directly enroll in a three-year doctoral program after coming to Japan, the scholarship will be payable for three years (standard program term) (starting October 2019 and finishing September 2022).

3) Five-year doctoral program

If a grantee will directly enroll 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) (starting October 2019 and finishing September 2021). In order for the term of his/her scholarship to be extended till the end of the standard program term (that is, till September 2024), he/she should make an application for the extension of the scholarship and have it approved by MEXT. Please note that depending on his/her academic achievement and the budget condition of MEXT, his/her application will not necessarily be approved.

4) Proceed to degree seeking program

A grantee who desires to proceed from a non-degree student course to a degree seeking program may have the term of his/her scholarship extended upon approval by MEXT, provided that he/she has demonstrated outstanding academic achievement that meets specified criteria. Please note that depending on the budget conditions, not all applications will be approved.

*A grantee who proceeds to a degree seeking program from a non-degree student course may NOT move to another university with a MEXT Scholarship.

3. Scholarship Benefits

1) Scholarship amount:

The scholarship amount for 2019 has not been fixed yet.

For reference, the scholarship amount for 2018 was as follows.

Enrolled Program	Amount of Stipends per month
Non-degree student	148,000 yen
1 and 2-year student of 5-year doctoral program	147,000 yen
3 to 5-year student of 5-year doctoral program	146,000 yen

Amounts for 2019 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 air ticket from the international airport nearest to his/her home address to Narita 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 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 air ticket from Narita 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 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 the tuition.

4. Recommendation and Selection

1) Scholarship Recommendation:

The president of SOKENDAI, after screening in SOKENDAI, recommends an applicant or applicants who have shown academic excellence and need the scholarship, to the Minister of MEXT.

2) Scholarship Selection:

Candidates are screened and selected by the selection committee from a pool of applicants recommended by presidents of all universities in Japan, and, based on the result of screening and selection by the committee, MEXT selects grantees and their term of scholarship.

3) Documents to be submitted:

- a) Application Form (Attached)
- b) Field of study and study program (Attached)
- c) Passport photographs or digital images (size 4.5 cm x 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 or cap hiding a part of his/her face or head. The applicant must write his/her name and nationality on the back of each photograph.)
- d) Proof of nationality (A copy of the applicant's passport is most preferable)
- e) Certified academic records (originals or certified copies)

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

- Applicants who apply for the three-year doctoral program must submit the Official Transcripts from both undergraduate and graduate schools.
- Applicants who apply for the five-year doctoral program must submit the Official Transcript from the undergraduate school.
- Submit Official Transcript of each academic year of all the universities or graduate schools you have attended.
- f) Diploma or degree certificate (originals or certified copies)

The applicants must submit the diploma or degree certificate of all universities attended (or an attested document certifying that the applicant will graduate from the university by September 2019, were applicable).

- Applicants who apply for the three-year doctoral program must submit the Certificate of Graduation both undergraduate and graduate schools.
- Applicants who apply for the five-year doctoral program must submit the Certificate of Graduation from the undergraduate school.

- Applicants who have not yet graduated from a university must submit an attested document certifying that the applicant will graduate from the university before entering the doctoral program.
- g) Proof of the applicant's academic level, such as the academic ranking in his/her previous university (e.g., GPA, ABC grading, ranking of academic achievement).
- h) Dean's recommendation letter from the home institution, addressed to the president of SOKENDAI (original)
- i) Abstracts of thesis
If you have no thesis or publications, please submit a summary of your current research project.
- j) Official TOEFL score report / IELTS Band score (originals)
 - Only the score recorded within two years before the application deadline date is acceptable. The institutional code for TOEFL iBT of SOKENDAI is 7564. The score record should arrive at SOKENDAI on or before the application deadline.
- k) GRE Subject Test (Physics) Score Report (five-year doctoral course only)
 - Note that the minimum GRE Subject Test (Physics) score in the paper screening is 700.
 - Applicants are strongly recommended to take GRE Subject Test (Physics) before September 15. The applicants who will take the GRE test on October 27, 2018, must follow the directions below; (1) include a copy of registration confirmation e-mail from ETS to the application documents, (2) send a screenshot of online GRE Subject Test (Physics) Score Report to the Graduate Student Affairs Section in NAOJ (daigakuin@nao.ac.jp) by e-mail, on or before November 25, 2018 and (3) arrange the official records to be sent to SOKENDAI.

5. Additional considerations

- 1) The documents above must be prepared in Japanese or English. If the documents are prepared in languages other than Japanese or English, the official English translation must be attached.
- 2) The documents above must be prepared using word-processing software. Print all required documents on A4 size paper (if possible)
- 3) SOKENDAI doesn't respond to inquiries regarding the receipt of individual application documents.
- 4) SOKENDAI will not return the submitted documents. In the case that a document is not re-issuable, please submit an attested (notarized) copy instead.
- 5) Admission may be withdrawn at any time, even after enrollment, if the application

documents are found to be invalid or contain false information.

6. Notes

- 1) A recipient of the MEXT scholarship may have his/her scholarships 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.
 - 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 term because of his/her 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 gets other scholarship (excluding grants for specific research projects).
 - 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 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 the period.
- 3) Security Export Control: 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 Student Affairs Section for further details.