



Japan's Friendship Ties Program "MIRAI" 2026/2027 Application Guidelines (Visiting Japan Program)

1. Overview

Japan's Friendship Ties Program "MIRAI" (**M**utual understanding, **I**ntellectual **R**elations and **A**cademic Exchange **I**nitiative) invites groups of promising young leaders from Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus who study Diplomacy, Security Policies, Economics, Science and Technology, Arts and Culture, International Relations, Environmental Sciences, SDGs related studies, Asian Studies, Japan Studies or other related fields, and also who are expected to play an active role in international society and provides opportunities to have intellectual exchanges with Japanese students of the same generations and scholars. This program is entitled as the "MIRAI" with the Japanese word MIRAI (pronounce like / "me-rye") which means "Future".

2. Objectives

The program aims to deepen participants' understanding of Japan and its policy, to promote mutual understanding, and thus build a basis for future friendship and cooperation between Japan and their regions. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) hopes that the program will offer a great opportunity to

- (1) Promote a deeper understanding of Japan's economy, society, history, diverse cultures, politics, and diplomatic relations among participants,
- (2) Foster supporters and experts of Japan,
- (3) Strengthen public relations through proactive dissemination of Japan's diplomatic policy and attractive points by participants,
- (4) Strengthen relations between Japan and the participants' regions, and build a basis for future friendship and cooperation

3. Program Overview

- (1) Themes and duration of each group

Group #	Theme	Program term in Japan	# of Participants
1	Peacebuilding	Jan 20-Jan 26, 2027	14
2	Diplomacy and Security Policy	Dec 2-Dec 8, 2026	19
3	Economy and Business	Dec 2-Dec 8, 2026	17
4	Science and Technology	Jan 20-Jan 26, 2027	15
5	AI Startup	Dec 1-Dec 7, 2026	12

- (2) Contents: (Please see the Annex 4)

- a) Online pre-exchange program (two days)

(The first program is scheduled in November, and the second program is scheduled about two weeks before the departure.)

All participants are required to attend two online pre-exchange program sessions before departing for Japan.



The online pre-exchange program consists of: (1) an overview of the program's objectives and content; (2) participants' missions, including sharing their learnings and findings through social media; and (3) a lecture designed to enhance understanding of Japan. The pre-exchange program sessions are designed to help participants prepare for the program and participate smoothly and confidently.

b) Program in Japan

The program may contain the following. JICE will arrange the program with consideration for the theme of each group.

- Lectures on the theme-related contents and discussions with Japanese students at one of the most prestigious universities in Japan.
- Site visits to educational and research institutions, related to the program theme or specific area, cutting-edge technology, traditional industries, exhibitions, cultural heritage, and local governments, etc. Exchange events such as workshops and exchanges of opinions with people related to the above site visits.
- Visits to local areas which offers a courtesy visit to the local government, guided tour of the local featured industry, traditional culture experience and exchange with local people.
- Workshop and reporting session (presentation of "action plans", i.e., activity plan after returning home)
- Dissemination of information on what participants learned in the program and the attractions of Japan, during/after the program through reporting session and Social Networking Services (online).

(3) Language used during the program: English

(4) Due to the situation of infectious diseases or unforeseen events, the program may be suspended, or the implementation period/format may be changed.

4. Qualifications for Participants

Applicants should meet the entire criteria as follows.

- (1) Applicants must understand the aims of "MIRAI" and are expected to disseminate information on Japan's attractions through various communication tools including social media and/or their publications after the online pre-exchange program, during their stay in Japan and after returning to home countries. Publication results should be shared with Japan's Foreign Missions.
- (2) Applicants must have a nationality of one of the following countries and do not have a Japanese nationality.

[EU] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden [West Balkans] Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, [Others] Andorra, Belarus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom [Central Asia] Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan [Caucasus] Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia



(3) Applicants must attend a university/organization located in the following countries.

The location is not necessarily the same as the applicants' nationality.

Group	Theme	Target Countries	Target Group *1)
1	Peacebuilding	[West Balkans] Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia	Graduate and Undergraduate students
		*Applicants for Group 1 (Peacebuilding) for the Western Balkans should contact the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) in charge of recruiting and selection.	
2	Diplomacy and Security Policy	[EU] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden	Graduate and Undergraduate students
3	Economy and Business	[Others] Andorra, Belarus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Norway, San Marino, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom	Graduate and Undergraduate students
4	Science and Technology	[Central Asia] Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan [Caucasus] Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia	Graduate and Undergraduate students in engineering and information-related fields, as well as young IT professionals and entrepreneurs.

*1) The status of applicants eligible to participate in this program (university students, graduate students, or young professionals), as listed above, must remain unchanged both at the time of application and upon arrival in Japan. If there is a possibility of a change of status, it must be clearly stated at the time of application.

(4) Those who have an experience of residing in Japan for a continuous period of more than 6 months are not eligible.

(5) Those who have participated in "MIRAI" Visiting Japan Program and/or similar programs funded by the Japanese government are not eligible.

(6) Applicants must be in good health.

- Applicants must be physically and mentally healthy.
- Applicants whose body temperature is 38°C (100.4°F) or higher on the day of departure, will not be permitted to travel to Japan and will not be eligible to participate in the program.
- Applicants should be physically capable of maintaining a busy schedule that requires extensive walking each day.

(7) Applicants must be 20 years old or older (for Group 5, between 20 and 30.).

* Regarding the above age requirement (20 years old or older), you are eligible to apply for MIRAI if you are 20 years old at the time of your travel to Japan (when you leave your own country).

(8) Applicants must have a satisfactory command of English to discuss relevant topics with fellow participants.



- (9) Applicants must have good academic achievements such as top 20%.
- (10) Applicants must be able to effectively share the charms of Japan based on the experiences in Japan from the pre-exchange program, during the stay in Japan and after returning home. Methods of dissemination include the use of various social media, contributions to public relations publications and presentations at one's institutions.
- (11) Applicants with ties to Japan-related fields will be preferred in the selection process.

5. Mandatory Assignments for All Participants

Each participant must implement all the requirements from (1) to (3).

(1) Presentation and implementation of your action plan

Participants are required to make action plans about what they learned in this program and how they might stay connected to Japan after returning to their home country and report their implementation to JICE. Participants will wrap up their findings in Japan, and each group will present action plans in the reporting session. The contents of the presentation will be collected from consultation with all participants during the workshop.

Each member will implement the action plan within 3 months after returning to their countries, and send an After-Action Report (AAR) on their implementation to JICE through an online submission link. If it is difficult to implement the action plan in 3 months, (e.g. Writing graduate/research thesis including this program experience, work/study in Japan, and in other comparatively medium- or long-term situations), please report the reason and expected implementation schedule to the Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE), an implementing agency of the MIRAI Program within 3 months.

(2) Share Experiences through social media

Each participant will actively share their experience during both the online pre-exchange program and the stay in Japan as well as convey information about Japan including one regarding Japanese society, history, culture, politics, economics, and diplomatic relations through social media such as Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, and so on, during both the program and within 3 months after the program.

(3) Responding to questionnaires

Participants will submit answers to online questionnaires (after the online pre-exchange program, during the program in Japan, and after 3 months) to JICE on time. The survey link will be sent to their email address.

* MIRAI is one of the people-to-people exchange programs promoted and 100% backed by the Japanese government. Please contribute to the program with your inputs through your action plans and reporting so we can assure the effectiveness of the program in the future.

6. Required application documents and Deadline for Application

Required application documents

(1) Valid Passport Copy

Applicants must upload a copy of the photo page of their passport (in color or black and white). The copy must be clear, complete, and sufficiently enlarged so that all information on the page is legible.



If the applicant does not have a passport valid for the duration of the program, they must promptly renew or extend its validity and submit a copy no later than one month prior to the start of the program.

(2) **Letter of Understanding** (Please see Annex 1)

Applicants are required to carefully read and agree to the conditions set forth in the “Letter of Understanding” prior to applying for the program.

Applicants must sign the document and upload all pages of the Letter of Understanding (not only the signed page).

(3) **Handling of Personal Information and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Privacy Policy** (Please see Annex 2 and Annex 3)

Applicants must read “Handling of Personal Information and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Privacy Policy” before applying for the program. Applicants must sign it and upload the documents.

Personal information obtained in “MIRAI” shall be treated in compliance with the Personal Information Protection Law and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). JICE ensures the appropriate handling of personal information. JICE may provide personal information to travel agencies, publishers, cooperative organizations, schools, host families, and so on in order to operate and report the program by means of post, fax or email. Personal information will not be used for any purposes other than operating and reporting on the program.

(4) **Academic Transcript or Proof of Enrollment/Employment**

1) Students

- Academic Transcript (required)

*The transcript must clearly indicate the name of your educational institution.

- Certificate of Enrollment (required only in the case below)

If you are a first-year student and do not yet have an academic transcript from your current institution, please submit the most recent transcript from your high school or previous university, together with a Certificate of Enrollment issued by your current university or graduate school.

2) Young Professionals

- Certificate of Employment (required)

*The certificate must clearly indicate the name of your current employer.

(5) **A Headshot**

Applicants must upload a photo taken within the past three months (black and white photographs are acceptable).

(6) **Additional Documents**

If the Embassy or Consulate-General of Japan for the country or region where your school or organization is located requires any additional documents, please submit them together with the



documents listed above. As application requirements may vary by country or region, please be sure to check the website of the relevant Japanese diplomatic mission and follow its instructions when applying.

Application Form

Applicants must fill out the application form with their correct information in English and upload the following necessary documents above (1) to (5) from the online link below.

<https://jice.form.kintoneapp.com/public/mirai2026-af>

Deadline for Application

The application deadline is **August 31, 2026, at 1:00 am (Universal Time Coordinated).**
(August 31, 2026, at 10:00 am (Japan Standard Time))

*Please note that duplicate application will be invalid.

Group	Theme	Application Deadline
1	Peacebuilding	*Group1(Peacebuilding) Call for applications opens at RYCO (https://www.rycowb.org/).
2	Diplomacy and Security Policy	August 31st, 2026, at 1:00 am (Universal Time Coordinated) / August 31st, 2026, at 10 am (Japan Standard Time)
3	Economy and Business	
4	Science and Technology	
5	AI Startup	

7. Terms and Conditions

(1) The following arrangements and expenses are covered by the program

- 1) Round trip economy class international air tickets between Europe and Japan
 - JICE will arrange economy class tickets; however, upgrades to business class at the participant's expense are permitted.
 - Participants are not permitted to change the designated flights, even at their own expense.

The designated airport may not be the nearest airport to each participant.

Please note that the following are NOT covered:

 - Transportation between the participant's residence and the designated airport
 - Excess baggage fees
- 2) Accommodation in transit countries
- 3) Accommodation, transportation, and meals during the program in Japan
 - Transportation and meals during the program are partially covered. Some transportation and meals during the stay in Japan may not be included; in such cases, the participant is responsible for those costs.
- 4) Admission fees for scheduled activities in Japan
- 5) Overseas travel accident insurance
 - This insurance does NOT cover chronic illnesses, dental treatment, pregnancy, or any conditions existing prior to the program.
 - In cases where the insurance does not apply or the insurer declines a claim, the participant shall be responsible for any medical expenses incurred in Japan.
 - Loss of or damage to personal belongings is not covered by the insurance.



Insurance	Coverage	Amount (1,000 JPY)
Accident	Death Benefit	25,000
	Physical Impediment Benefit	25,000
	Medical Expense	10,000
Sickness	Medical Expense	10,000
Rescuer's Expense		3,000
Personal Liability		50,000

Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance Co., Ltd.

* Participants are responsible for all personal expenses, including but not limited to: passport issuance, transit visa acquisition, vaccinations, excess baggage charges, transportation between their residence and the designated airport, accommodation and meals in their home country, transportation and meals in transit countries, and the purchase of souvenirs and other personal goods before or during the program.

* Any costs for vaccinations, PCR tests and/or other medical documents are not covered by the program.

(2) Cancellation Policy

- If a participant withdraws from the program for any reason other than a medical emergency or other unavoidable circumstances, the participant shall be responsible for any costs arising from the cancellation.
- If a participant's application has been accepted and flight and/or other arrangements have already been made, any applicable cancellation fees shall be borne by the participant.
- In the event of cancellation due to a medical emergency or other unavoidable circumstances, cancellation fees may be waived upon submission of a medical certificate or other supporting documentation, as requested by JICE.

(3) The following actions are NOT permitted.

- To arrive in Japan before the start of the program or remain in Japan after the program ends
- To use flights other than those designated by the program
- To change accommodations (hotel or room assignments) designated by the program
- To miss any part of the official program, including scheduled meals, visits, or other activities, for personal or business reasons (e.g., meeting relatives, friends, or business partners in Japan)
- To be accompanied by family members, friends, or any other accompanying persons
- To travel to a third country either en route to Japan or on the return journey home

(4) Conditions in Japan

- All participants, including supervisors, must attend all scheduled programs and follow the rules/guidelines/directions given by JICE.
- Participants who are disruptive to the program may be dismissed and are responsible for leaving Japan at their own expense.
- 1) Each 2-3 participants will stay in a twin or triple room at the hotel, except for the chaperon. It depends on various conditions. 2) Each participant will stay in a single room.
- When requested, JICE will try to arrange the following* for religious reasons. However, JICE cannot guarantee their availability in all locations.

*Time and place for prayers



*Meals suitable for food restriction for religious reasons

(5) Photos/Videos Taken During the Program

Participants agree to grant JICE and organizations involved in the program permission to use their voice and likeness in any writings, photographs, films, and recordings taken during the program.

Participants further authorize the use, publication, and distribution, for all purposes, of their name, images, and voice recordings in any form, including film, audio, and electronic (video) media, as well as printed and electronic copies thereof, in any and all media, including, without limitation, television, the internet, and promotional materials such as brochures, advertisements, meetings, and educational conferences.

This permission applies to all languages and formats, whether now known or hereafter developed, and shall remain in effect indefinitely unless and until revoked by the participant in writing and submitted to JICE.

(6) Japanese Laws and Regulations

Participants must comply with all applicable laws and regulations of Japan. Offenders shall be subject to penalties in accordance with Japanese law.

Any dispute arising out of or in connection with the application, participation in, or any matters related to the program between the participant and the Government of Japan or JICE shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Japan, without regard to conflict of law principles, and shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the competent courts in Japan.

(7) Attribution of Responsibility During the Program

Participants agree to release and hold harmless JICE (including its employees and agents) from any and all claims, demands, damages, losses, liabilities, and expenses, including, without limitation, reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses (collectively, "Claims"), arising out of or relating to the participant's participation in the program; provided, however, that this release shall not apply to any Claims arising from JICE's gross negligence, bad faith, or willful misconduct.

Participants further agree to indemnify and hold harmless JICE (including its employees and agents) from any and all claims arising out of or relating to the participant's violation of Japanese laws or regulations, or breach of these Terms and Conditions.

(8) Post-Program Activities and Questionnaires

Participants are expected to share their experiences and insights about Japan, as well as its attractiveness as a destination for travel, study, or work, with their family, relatives, friends, and peers in school or in their communities, including through presentations, written publications, or posts on social media or other platforms.

Participants will be requested to complete a questionnaire and submit a report on their post-program activities to JICE via an online submission form, the link to which will be sent to their email address approximately three months after the program.

Participants will also be encouraged to stay connected with Japan and Japanese people through online community platforms operated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA)* and JICE**

Please follow the following Facebook pages,

*Facebook of Youth Exchange Program of MOFA:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086143020661>

** JICE Youth Exchange Program (MIRAI/ KAKEHASHI Project / JENESYS):

<https://www.jice.org/exchange/en/>



*** Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)**

JICE is the official implementing organization of the MIRAI Program and is responsible for all necessary arrangements, including travel arrangements and the program schedule in Japan, under the direction of the Government of Japan.

<https://www.jice.org/en/about/>

Annex

- 1 - Letter of Understanding for Visiting Japan Program
- 2 - Handling of Personal Information
- 3 - Handling of Personal Information for the GDPR countries (EU, EEA countries and U.K.)
- 4 - Overview and Model Itinerary