

Application Guidelines 2025 For Doctoral Degree Program (Selection process during JFY2025)

The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS)

1. Purpose (Basic Principle)

This project aims at fostering future leaders with a good-understanding of Japan and are capable of;

- 1) Making policy formulation and decision from a broader perspective by drawing on their advanced knowledge and expertise,
- 2) Leading international discourses on various policy issues on behalf of their countries, and
- 3) Exercising their positive influence within their countries and beyond from the global viewpoints by fully utilizing personal networks developed through this doctoral program,

Prospective Applicants must have the potential for becoming future leaders rather than academic researchers who can substantially influence policy affairs.

2. Eligibility Requirements and Conditions

【Eligibility Requirements】

The applicant must;

1. Have a citizenship of Kingdom of Bhutan
2. Have obtained a master's degree in related fields below* (in any country):

- Economics
- Engineering
- Seismology
- Flood Disaster
- Data Analytics/mining or AI



* MA obtained in Japan or ex-participant of JICA training are preferable.

* *The specialization will depend on the field of study chosen by the applicant and approved by the respective institution, according to the critical needs of the institution and the country.*

3. Be the **age of 45 or younger as of April 1st, 2026.**
4. Be a regular (permanent) civil servant or a regular (permanent) faculty of RUB. (If there are applications from both civil servant and RUB, civil servant is preferred in the selection process.)
5. Have served for twice the duration of the LTT (long-term training) to obtain the master's degree.
6. Have a **recommendation from the supervisor of his/her current duty office.**
(Reference Letter should contain evaluation of applicant's performance at work and relevance of his/her research theme to his/her career.)
7. Have a **recommendation from the expected academic adviser(s) of the applying university**
(Submission of a draft academic guidance outline or a supervisory plan is desirable.)
8. Not have already obtained a doctoral degree.
9. Not be currently awarded or to be awarded a scholarship from other foreign donors.

10. In principle, have published at least one peer-reviewed article/ paper* in a related field of the research plan.
 * The following applicants are included under the requirement:
- 1) an applicant who has a prospect for publication of a peer-reviewed article/ paper (who has a paper under peer-review).
 - 2) an applicant who has a concrete plan to publish a peer-reviewed article in an academic journal in collaboration with his/her intended faculty supervisor.
11. Have proficiency in English, sufficiently fluent for studying in Japan.

【Other Conditions】

The applicant must;

1. Present a research proposal relevant to the development issues of their country referred to in the framework of Sub-Programs and Components.
2. Must work in his/her country at least nine years after return.
3. Be in good health both physically and mentally.
4. **Complete the course within, and not exceeding, three (3) years. However, if it is judged that the Doctoral degree is likely to be obtained, extension up to 6 months will be accepted.**

3. Application and Selection Process

Call for application and selection will be conducted as below.

1. Application Period

Step 1: Please submit a set of application documents **to RCSC**
by Oct 10, 2025.

Step 2: **Apply through online JDS application form**
Oct 22 - Dec 19, 2025

**Only those shortlisted by RCSC may apply for JDS*

- a. Duly filled in LTT review checklist;
- b. Copy of system generated CV;
- c. Class XII Certificate and Mark sheet;
- d. Degree Certificate and Mark sheet;
- e. Merit certificates
(Leadership, Volunteerism, Publication, and Professional Recognition- after entry into Civil Service);
- f. Research thesis topic/proposal
(should be aligned to the agency's needs and the applicants current job responsibilities and approved by the supervisor)

Online Application Flow



1. Download the prescribed forms from JDS Website
 Please access JDS Bhutan Website, then download the prescribed forms.



2. Prepare the required documents
 Make sure to start preparing the documents well in advance.



4. Receive an email
[Submission Succeeded] You will receive a confirmation email.

[Submission Failed]
 You will receive an error message - please contact JICE JDS Project Office immediately, and make sure to complete your application before the deadline. You will receive a password from JICE JDS Project Office by email to make the corrections.

NOTE for those who plan to apply to Ritsumeikan University

Please inform JICE **before** contacting Ritsumeikan University about your plans in seeking a recommendation letter from Ritsumeikan University's expected academic advisor(s) .

Important Notice

- *If you cannot access the JDS online application system, or you have any problem filling out the form, please contact JICE JDS Project Office.*
- *Once you submit your application, you will not be allowed to modify it.*
- *Application lacking necessary documents will not be accepted.*
- *Application after the deadline will not be accepted.*
- *Applicant will be disqualified in case any false statement or plagiarism is found.*

2. Selection:

(1) Basic Check by JICE

* This is not a selection but a verification of eligibility and submitted documents.

(2) (If required) Document screening by the Committee (January 2026)

* This screening will be conducted only when the number of applications exceed a certain upper limit.

(3) **Health check-up (February 2026)**

(4) **Interview by the JDS Operating Committee (March 2026)**

(5) **Approval of the final candidates by the Committee (March 2026)**

* This will be a "conditional acceptance" at this stage since further selection process by each university will follow.

(6) Application to the universities (March – June 2026)

(7) Screening by the universities (April – July 2026)

*The application and screening process (6) and (7) will vary depending on the university. Some will require an interview or written exam in Japan (the traveling cost for those exams will be covered by JDS).

(8) Notice of acceptance by the universities (July 2026)

* Upon acceptance by the university, the candidate will be awarded the status of JDS Fellow.

(9) Announcement of final successful candidate (July 2026)

【Tentative Schedule from Application to Enrollment】

2025		2026					
By Oct. 10	Oct. 22	By Dec. 27	Jan. – Mar.	Mar. – Jun.	Apr. – Jul.	Aug.	Sep. or Oct.
Apply for RCSC	Shortlist Announcement	Apply for JDS	Selection by O/C*	Application for the University	Screening by the University	Arrival in Japan	Enrollment in the University

*O/C=JDS Operating Committee



4. Selection (Evaluation) Criteria by O/C

The JDS Operating Committee will evaluate and select candidates based on the following criteria:

1. Leadership Qualifications

- Track records of demonstrating leadership
- Accomplishments and visions to contribute to the development of the country
- Enthusiasm for future development and growth of the country
- Achievements at work (e.g. work history, contributions, utilization of outcomes of JDS),
- Consistency between the career up to the present and the research theme/future vision in terms of contribution to the policy making and implementation
- Concrete plans to contribute to bilateral relations with Japan
- Positive and cooperative attitude towards strengthening relations with Japan

2. Relevance of the Research Theme to the Development Issues of the Target Country

Prospect of the achievement of research towards improvement of the development issues in his/her country.

3. Academic Transcripts and Academic Accomplishments in the Master's Course

Sufficient academic results, experiences of publishing peer reviewed papers, experiences of presenting at academic conferences/seminars, etc.

4. Readiness of the Accepting University

Availability of a recommendation letter, evaluation by the expected academic advisor(s), academic guidance outline, etc.

5. Award Benefits

1. The scholarship grant is equivalent to that of MEXT Scholarships for Doctoral course
2. Amount for each allowance is equivalent to that of JDS Master's program.
3. Round-trip airfare to and from Japan

6. Expenses Paid to the Accepting University

Application fee, admission fee, tuition fee, and travel costs for the academic advisor(s) visiting Fellow's country to assist his/her research will be borne by the JDS Project.

7. Support for the Fellows while in Japan

Support services for the Fellows in Doctoral courses will be equivalent to those for Master's courses. JICE will provide post-arrival support services including settlement assistance, monitoring, payment of allowances, and emergency assistance.



8. Application Procedures

1. Application Documents:

Applicants are required to submit a set of necessary documents in the following manner.

1) Check list of JDS Application

Application Documents	File Type	Notes
1. Short Essays	PDF (ONE file only)	*Prescribed form
2. Research Plan	PDF (ONE file only)	*Prescribed form
3. University Certificate of Degree <i>* Master's degree course (Attested)</i>	PDF (ONE file only)	Must contain all the grades earned from the university. Written in English or accompanied with official translation.
4. University Transcript of Academic Records <i>* Master's degree course (Attested)</i>	PDF (ONE file only)	
5. Professional Reference Letter	PDF (ONE file only)	*Prescribed form
6. Academic Reference Letter	PDF (ONE file only)	*Prescribed form Must attach: a copy of a peer-reviewed Article/Paper or a concrete plan.
7. Copy of Passport (or CID) <i>*No need to have attested.</i>	PDF (ONE file only)	If you don't have Passport, please submit color soft copy of CID.
8. Photo	JPG, JPEG, PNG, GIF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A Color photo, taken within the last 3 months ✓ 4:3 (height: width) aspect ratio ✓ Must be taken against a plain background
9. [If any] IELTS Certificate	PDF (One file only)	✓ The Test taken on/after 1 Nov 2024.

*Prescribed form can be downloaded from JDS Bhutan HP.

<https://jds-scholarship.org/country/bhutan/index.html>



2) Notes

- All documents written in any language other than English need notarized English translation. (Self-translation is not acceptable.)
- Submit a "Letter of Explanation" in case wrong information (e.g. wrong spelling of name, birthday, etc) is contained in official documents due to administrative errors.

3) Submission of Application Documents

■ Notes

- Application lacking necessary documents will not be accepted.
- Application submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.
- Applicant will be disqualified in case any deliberate falsifications or forgeries are found in the documents.
- Application Documents will not be returned for any reasons.
- [Once you have completed online application, you will receive confirmation email with JDS registration number. Please keep your registration number.](#)

■ Deadline for Online Application at JDS Bhutan website: **Dec. 19 (Fri), 2025**

9. Important JDS Rules

JDS has specific rules in order to realize its project goals and to ensure favorable study environment for the Fellows.

Before departure

- JDS Fellows must submit a JDS pledge to the Operating Committee to commit themselves to follow JDS Rules.

During the stay in Japan

- It is recommended to bring their family members to Japan only after 3 months from the date of arrival in Japan and after the date of admission.
- JDS Fellows are prohibited from working and driving motor vehicles during their stay in Japan.

- JDS Fellows must complete the study within the predetermined period of study and return to their country immediately after the completion of study.

After returning to home country

- JDS Fellows must attend a report back meeting held by the Operating Committee.
- JDS Fellows are obliged **to return and work in Bhutan for at least three times the period of his/her study in Japan. (Which will mean at least nine years in service.)**

*Details will be explained in an orientation conducted after the selection.

10. Contacts

JICE JDS Project Office in the Kingdom of Bhutan

Address: Room 101, Rabten Office & Suites, Street Name- Chang Gumji,

Location- opposite to Drukair office, Thori Road, Thimphu, Bhutan

Office Hour: 9:00-13:00 / 14:00-17:00, Monday to Friday

E-mail: jds.bhutan@jice.org

Phone: 02-350831

