



JDS

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

THE PROJECT FOR
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP
BY JAPANESE GRANT AID IN MALDIVES 2022



From
the People of Japan



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For Inquiries

JDS Website

<http://jds-scholarship.org/>

JICE JDS Project Office in Maldives

Email: jds.maldives1@jice.org

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Office Hour: 8:30-12:30 / 13:30-17:00, Sunday to Thursday
3rd Floor, G. Rose Island, Lily Magu, Male' 20128, Maldives

I. General Information

1. About JDS Scholarship

The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship by Japanese Grant Aid (JDS) was launched by the Government of Maldives with the assistance of the Government of Japan in 2020.



JDS is funded by the Government of Japan through its ODA (Official Development Assistance) budget.



JDS targets young government officials who are expected to play a leadership role in the development of their countries.



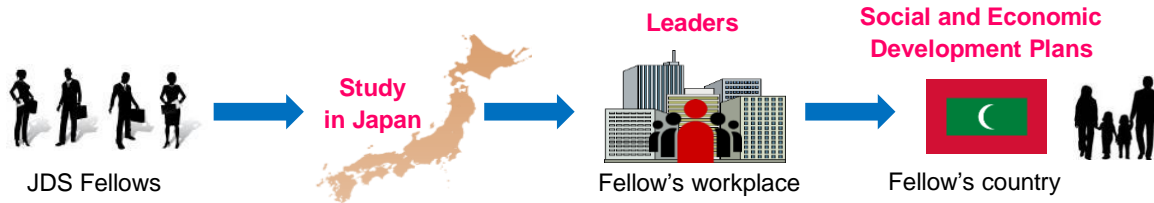
JDS provides scholarships to Maldives government officers to study at Master Degree courses (instructed in English) of Japanese universities

Objectives of JDS

- To support for Human Resource Development**
JDS's objective is to strengthen the government's administrative capacities in Maldives through providing the opportunity to obtain the Master's degree to the young capable government administrators who are expected to engage in formulating and implementing social and economic development plans and to play a leadership role in the development of the country.
- To Enhance Bilateral Relationships**
JDS fellows are expected to solidify foundations to further bilateral relations with Japan by utilizing their human network developed through academic and social activities while in Japan.

Beneficiaries of JDS

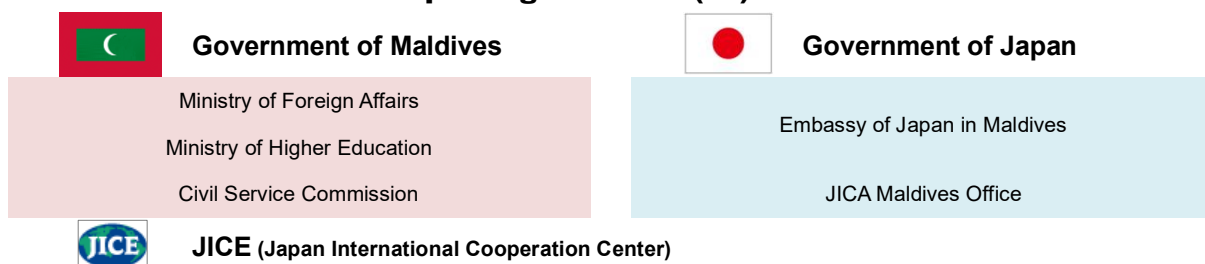
- For the participants (JDS Fellows)**
JDS Fellows will acquire expertise to use for policy making and institutional building for the development of their country, and also build human network in and out of Japan through the one or two-year study in Japan
- For the organizations (The Fellows' workplace)**
The Fellows' workplace will attain highly-capable and motivated returnees (JDS Fellows) who can effectively contribute to the organizational missions
- For the Country (The Fellows' country)**
The Fellows' country will improve institutional capability of the target organizations which leads to foster country's development



2. JDS Operating Committee (OC)

JDS Operating Committee (OC) is the decision-making committee of JDS Project. It consists of both members of Maldives and Japanese governments. The OC not only sets the framework and selection policies but also evaluates candidates in final selection.

JDS Operating Committee (OC) Maldives



JICE supports a smooth implementation of JDS project, which covers a wide range of services such as arrangements of recruitment and selection, and assistances for JDS Fellows studying in Japan.

3. Applicant Eligibility

Nationality	Citizens of the Republic of Maldives
Age	Between 22 and 39 years old as of 1 st April 2023 (Born on/after 2 nd April 1983 and born on/before 1 st April 2001)
Academic Background	Hold a Bachelor's Degree from universities authorized by the Government of Maldives or other countries
	Other requirements of academic background <u>University of Tsukuba</u> Those who have less than 16 years of formal education (from primary school to university) need to go through the eligibility screening after being selected as Final candidate.
Occupation	Civil Servants Permanent Staff at Independent Institutions Permanent Staff at Court and its related organizations
Work Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently employed in the Target Organizations as a full-time employee (Except contract staff). Have a minimum of 2 (two) years of work experience. <p>< Note ></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probation period can be included in the 2 years. 2 years of work experience can be counted as a total in different Target Organizations. The service period as a contract staff, part-time staff, and volunteer cannot be included in the 2 years.
English Proficiency	Have a good command of both written and spoken English. IELTS 6.0 or higher is preferable ※JDS office will arrange IELTS test for those who do not have valid score. ※It is required for all GRIPS Fellows to obtain IELTS 6.0 or higher by the time of university application (Mar 2023).
Health Condition	Mentally and physically in good health.
Others	Must understand the objective of JDS project well, and have a strong willingness to work for the development of Maldives and contribute to the friendly relations between Maldives and Japan after their return
Ineligibility	A person corresponds to the followings is not eligible to apply <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those who are currently receiving (or is scheduled to receive) another scholarship (including other scholarships of Japan). Those who have obtained a master's or higher degrees



4. Selection Process

Schedule	Steps	Description
12 Oct – 13 Dec 2022	Application	Closing Date: 4:00 p.m. on 13 December (Tue) 2022 Further details → P6 "How to Apply"
	▼	
Early Jan 2023	Academic aptitude test	English (IELTS) and Math tests¹ . The test results will be reviewed by the universities in later selection stages
	▼	
Late Jan – Early Feb	1 st Selection	Document Screening: Application Documents and research plan will be examined by the Japanese universities. Those who passed the 1st selection will proceed to the 2nd selection.
	▼	
Mid - Late Feb	2 nd Selection	Technical Interview: Faculty members of the Japanese Universities will conduct their interview exams. Those who passed the 2nd selection will proceed to the 3rd selection.
	▼	
Mid - Late Feb	Health Checkup	The health checkup will be arranged at a hospital in Male'
	▼	
Early Mar	3 rd Selection	Comprehensive Interview: The Operating Committee members will conduct the interview exams.
	▼	
Mid Mar	Approval by the OC	Successful candidates will be approved and notified
Mar – Apr	Application Procedure	JICE will support application for each university
May - Aug	Orientations	Provided by JICA and JICE (including 100 hours of Japanese Language Course)
Aug	Departure for Japan	JICE will arrange air-ticket, visa, and also support after the arrival in Japan

*The selection schedule and implementation method are subject to change.

<Important Notes>

- ✓ All the selection costs will be covered by JDS project.
- ✓ Limited transportation and accommodation allowance will be provided to candidates coming from provincial areas for the selections.
- ✓ Application Documents will not be returned (Please keep a copy of your documents for yourself).
- ✓ Application Documents with false statements or plagiarism will be immediately disqualified.
- ✓ After each selection, JICE JDS Project Office will notify the result to the candidates who passed by Email.
- ✓ In principle, reasons for the selection-results will not be disclosed.



TOEFL & Math test



1st Selection
Document Screening



2nd Selection
Technical Interview



3rd Selection
Comprehensive Interview

¹ Applicants who have valid IELTS score will be exempted from the English test.
Applicants for the Ritsumeikan University will be exempted from the Math test.

5. Selection Criteria

Selection process	Criteria	Intent and Purpose
1st Selection Document Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic records and background Possibility of future contribution by utilizing acquired knowledge Contents of Research Plan Relevance between Research Plan and Sub-Program / Component (Development issues set by JDS) Reference Letter (Annex in the Application Document) 	The Japanese universities evaluate applicants' basic knowledge, ability and academic background. Compatibility to the university course will be also examined.
2nd Selection Technical Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic background and learning ability Capacity for completing the study in Japan Possibility of contributing to the development of the country Compatibility to the university course 	The universities mainly evaluate <u>academic knowledge, candidates' idea about research plan</u> , etc. Communication and logical thinking skills are also checked through the interview.
3rd Selection Comprehensive Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibility of contributing to the development of the country and strengthening bilateral relations with Japan Capacity to utilize outcomes of the study over the long term Capacity for completing the study in Japan 	After the universities check the candidates' academic abilities, the Operating Committee evaluates the <u>candidates' capacity of future contribution to the development of the country and strengthening bilateral relations with Japan</u> , such as purpose of study in Japan, career plan after the study, etc.

* The English and math test results will be reviewed by the universities in the selection stages

6. Award Benefits

The awards are offered for the minimum period necessary for the individual to complete the academic program specified by JDS project. The following benefits generally apply:

- Full tuition fees
- Air fare
- Arrival allowance
- Accommodation allowance
- Monthly Scholarship
- Book allowance
- Shipping allowance
- Travel and seminar attendance allowance
- Overseas travel insurance
- Supports from the agent
 - Finding accommodation
 - Initial settlement of your life in Japan
 - Emergency situation etc.



7. 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

- The Fellows are allowed to bring their family members to Japan only after 3 months from the date of arrival.
- The Fellows are prohibited from
 - Working
 - Driving motor vehicles, and
 - Applying for further studies such as a doctoral course in Japan
- The Fellows must complete the study within the predetermined period of study, and return to his/her country immediately after the study completion.

After returning to home country

- The Fellows must attend a report back meeting held by the Operating Committee.
- The Fellows are obliged to return and work in Maldives at least the period of twice the studying period (at least four years for Tsukuba and Ritsumeikan University and two years for GRIPS) in the Target Organizations

Further details will be explained in an orientation conducted after the selection.

II. How to Apply

1) List of Required Documents

You are required to upload the following documents in the online application system. Please make sure that you have prepared all the documents before you start your application.

- Only one file can be uploaded for each document, therefore please combine the documents into a **SINGLE PDF** in advance, if necessary.
- All documents written in other languages than English need official English translation. (Self-translation is not acceptable.)
- If any of the documents cannot be submitted by the deadline for unavoidable reasons, or any wrong information (e.g. wrong spelling of name, birthday, etc.) is contained in the ID or official documents due to administrative errors, submit "Reason Letter".
- As for University Certificate/Transcript, you are requested to submit the attested copy to JICE if you are selected as the final candidate (You will be disqualified if you are unable to). JICE may also request you to submit the originals of reference letter and IELTS certificate if you are selected as the final candidate

Doc No.	Required Documents	File Type	Remarks
1	Short Essays	PDF (One file only)	* <i>Prescribed form</i> - Short essays on "Responsibilities of your work", "Reason for applying the Graduate School", and "Future Contribution"
2	Research Plan	PDF (One file only)	* <i>Prescribed form</i>
3	University Certificate of Degree	PDF (One file only)	- Upload the copies of the original certificate/ transcript - Written in English or accompanied with official translation - Certificates/ transcripts of all the degrees you have obtained, including Diploma and second bachelor
4	University Transcript of Academic Records	PDF (One file only)	
5	Reference Letter	PDF (One file only)	* <i>Prescribed form</i> - Must be issued by the supervisor of your workplace. - JICE may contact your referee for verification
6	Employment Certificate	PDF (One file only)	- Must be issued and authorized by Personnel (or Superior) Department of your workplace
7	Permission Letter	PDF (One file only)	* <i>Prescribed form</i> - Must be issued and authorized by the superior of your workplace
8	Photocopy of Passport	PDF (One file only)	National ID Card is NOT acceptable as passport copy is necessary for IELTS registration
9	ID Photo	JPG, JPEG, PNG, GIF	- A Color photo, taken within the last 3 months - 4:3 (height: width) aspect ratio - Must be taken against a plain background
(10)	[If any] IELTS Certificate	PDF (One file only)	- Must be valid until 31 May 2023 (exam taken on/after 1 June 2021)

【Notes for GRIPS Applicants】

In addition to completing JDS online application form, those who apply for GRIPS are required to submit **the original hard copies** of the following documents **to JICE JDS Project Office**. You may download the detailed instruction sheet, along with the prescribed forms, on JDS Website.

- 1) Reference Letter (Doc No. 5/ JDS prescribed form)
- 2) Employment Certificate (Doc No. 6)
- 3) Letter of Recommendation (GRIPS prescribed form)
- 4) Statement of Purpose (GRIPS prescribed form)
- 5) Original Graduation/Degree Certificate(s) and Academic Transcript(s) in sealed envelopes
- 6) [If any] IELTS Certificate (Doc No. 10)

Online Application (Flow)

1. Download the prescribed forms from JDS Website

Download password will be required - fill out a password request form on the website, then you will receive a password from JICE JDS Project Office by email.



2. Prepare the required documents

Make sure to start preparing the documents well in advance



3. Access the online application system

Link to the Online Application Form is available on JDS Website
Complete your application by filling out the necessary information and uploading the required documents

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.



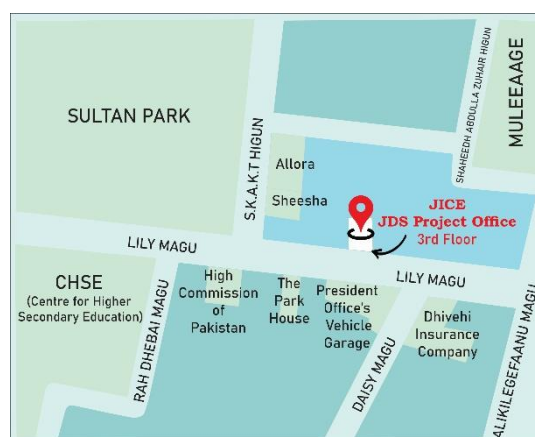
2) Important Notice

- If you cannot access the 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 of necessary documents will not be accepted.
- Application after the deadline will not be accepted.
- Application will be disqualified in case any false statement or plagiarism is found.

Deadline for Application: 4:00 p.m. on 13 December (Tue), 2022

<Contact>

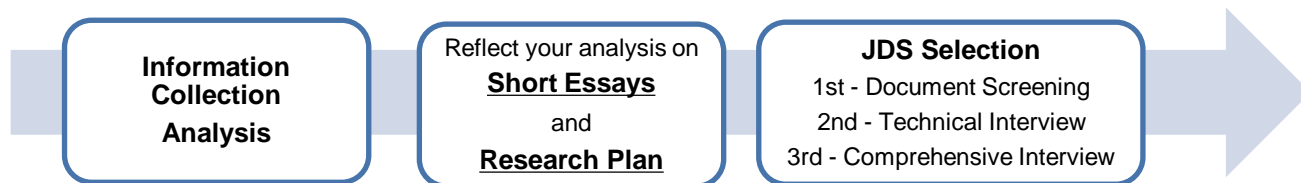
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Mobile (+960) 725 2007
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Sunday to Thursday



1. Tips on Application and Selection (Reference)

The better you prepare for the Application Documents, the more chances to pass the selection you have.

Here are some tips on the preparation of Short Essays and Research Plan (RP).



Before writing short essays and research plan, you are advised to...

Collect information, Analyse the information, and Analyse yourself!

For further details, the video is available on the website.

[Tips for the selection](#)



2. Guidelines for Writing a Research Plan

The tips on how to prepare a research plan are available in this video. It is recommended you watch it for your preparation.

[How to write a research plan](#)

- ✧ What is research?
- ✧ How important is the research plan in the JDS selection?
- ✧ How and what theme should be addressed?
- ✧ How to review the previous studies? What is "hypothesis"? etc.



Warnings about "Plagiarism"

"Plagiarism" is a serious offense in the academic field. Plagiarism means using other person's ideas and words without explicitly acknowledging the source of that information.

You may be disqualified from the selection, or even be discharged from the university, if the plagiarism is found in your research plan, or academic work at the university.

Such cases are deemed as plagiarism:

- Copying from books or articles written by other authors without permission
- Copying from an internet source without referring to the attribution text or information
- Misrepresentation of someone's work as one's original

To avoid plagiarism, you must cite sources and give credit whenever you use:

- Other person's idea, opinion, or theory
- Any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings – any pieces of information – that are not common knowledge
- Quotation of other person's spoken or written words, or
- **Paraphrase*** of other person's spoken or written words

* Paraphrase is a re-expression of other person's ideas in your own words






III. Sub-Program (SP) / Component (CP)

1. Framework of JDS Maldives

Sub-Program (Priority Areas)	Component (Development Issues)	Accepting Universities	Course	Degree	Slots
1. Responding to Vulnerabilities	1-1.Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Management	University of Tsukuba Graduate School of Science and Technology	Master's Program in Environmental Sciences / SUSTEP Program (2 years)	Master of Environmental Sciences	2
2. Sustainable Economic Development	2-1.Economic and Industrial Policy	National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) Graduate School of Policy Studies	Master's Program of Public Policy (1 year)	a. Master of Public Policy b. Master of Public Administration (*Depends on fellow's research area)	2
3. Secure Peace and Stability	3-1.Administrative Capacity Development	Ritsumeikan University Graduate School of International Relations	Global International Relations Program (2 years)	Master of Arts in International Relations	2

For the detailed list of target organizations, please check the following website

Civil Servant – Government Offices	
Civil Servant – Local Councils	
Permanent Staff – Independent Institutions & Court and its related organizations	

2. Information of Each Sub-Program / Component

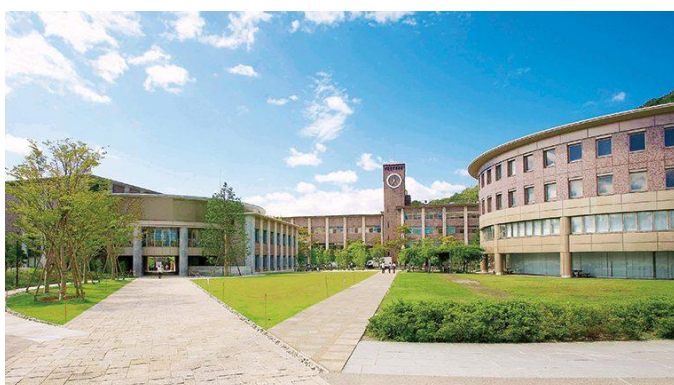
Sub-program (Target Priority Area)	1. Responding to Vulnerabilities
Component (CP) (Development Issues)	1-1. Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Management
Accepting University	<p>University of Tsukuba Graduate School of Science and Technology Master's Program in Environmental Sciences / SUSTEP Program</p> <p><Available degree(s)> Master of Environmental Sciences</p>
Expected Research Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy formulation and institution building for improvement of living environment through environmental consideration, risk reduction to major industries, waste management, etc. • Measures to prevent flood, coastal erosion etc. due to sea level rise and storm surge • Promote utilization of biomass • Sustainable development of marine resources • Policy formulation and institution Building for tsunami and storm surge measures • Strengthen disaster prevention capacity for non-structural measures • Policy formulation and institution building for civil engineering and urban engineering etc.
Direction of Study (Background of CP)	<p>Maldives is a small island state consisting of 1,190 large and small atoll islands and vulnerable to rising in sea levels due to climate change and natural disasters. Climate change is expected to have not only a direct effect on the living environment but also adverse effects on tourism and fishery, which are the main industries. It is likely that the State may have significant influence in its entirety, and disaster-prevention measures not only for the capital Male' island but extending up to local islands, which are broadly distributed, is an important issue.</p> <p>At the Strategic Action Plan 2019-2023, among issues toward realization of a “Jazeera Dhiriulhun”, five related sub-sectors such as “Environmental Protection & Preservation”, “Clean Energy”, “Waste as a Resource”, “Water & Sanitation” and “Resilient Communities” were stated. The Maldives government, together with making a statement that it will become a carbon neutral country by 2020 (reducing the use of fossil fuels within the country, suppressing emissions of greenhouse gasses, bringing the amount of net emissions and absorption of greenhouse gasses to zero), has adopted the stance of actively approaching the issue of global warming by setting goals for covering 60 percent of all electric power which is produced in all Maldives islands with renewable energy by 2020. The relation between such efforts of the Maldives government and JDS' target priority areas is significant.</p>



Sub-program (Target Priority Area)	2. Sustainable Economic Development
Component (CP) (Development Issues)	2-1. Economic and Industrial Policy
Accepting University	<p>National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) Graduate School of Policy Studies One-year Master's Program of Public Policy</p> <p><Available degree(s)> a. Master of Public Policy b. Master of Public Administration . (*Depends on fellow's research area)</p>
Expected Research Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy formulation and institution building for promoting local industries • Financial management • Promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) • Industrial promotion in the area of fisheries & marine resources, agriculture and tourism • Labour, employment & migration issues • Economic and industrial diversification <p>etc.</p>
Direction of Study (Background of CP)	<p>The Maldivian economy is based on tourism, which accounts for about 25 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Maldives has received the assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) since 1) the foreign currency revenue from tourism declined because of the global financial crisis and weak euro, and 2) foreign currency reserves dropped drastically due to the difficulty in financing in the international capital market. Meanwhile, steering of the financial burden (enormous debt) associated with large-scale infrastructure improvement over the last several years (bridges, land reclamation, house construction, etc.) has become the critical policy issue in promoting the National Development Plan. In light of the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment adopted at Osaka G20 in June 2019, it is vital to consider maintaining/promoting fiscal soundness of the Maldives State. Moreover, the Maldivian economy is largely dependent on tourism, having a vulnerable structure subject to external factors.</p> <p>At Strategic Action Plan 2019-2023, in the areas of “Blue Economy,” two related sectors such as “SMEs”, “Economic Diversification” were stated as issues, and industrial promotion such as in the area of “Fisheries & Marine Resources”, “Agriculture”, “Tourism,” and “Labour, Employment & Migration” are also highly related issue with this JDS target priority areas. Making efforts for diversification in the areas of economic policy and industrial policy and supporting the development of industries, having high development potential and small and medium-sized enterprises, are of great significance.</p>



Sub-program (Target Priority Area)	3. Secure Peace and Stability
Component (CP) (Development Issues)	3-1. Administrative Capacity Development
Accepting University	<p>Ritsumeikan University Graduate School of International Relations Global International Relations Program</p> <p><Available degree(s)> Master of Arts in International Relations</p>
Expected Research Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy formulation and institutional building for counter-terrorism and strengthen the governance • Enhancement of culture for historical heritage, traditional arts etc. • Strengthen the local governance • Decentralization • Enhancement of justice and fair governance capacity etc.
Direction of Study (Background of CP)	<p>At the Maldives Partnership Forum held in July, 2019, the government of Maldives made a commitment statement that “governance is the backbone of all areas” and so it will work on the enhancement, etc. of justice and fair governance capacity and local governance. Regarding the relationship with neighboring countries, in light of being a small island state, strengthening the capabilities of the judiciary and security is required. A policy to strengthen local authority having also been expressed, the importance for enhancement of local administration is increasing. To support improvements in its effectiveness and capacity improvement using Japan’s knowledge/technology is significantly meaningful.</p>



IV. Special Trainings and Events

JDS Program provides the following opportunities for JDS Fellows only in addition to research at university.

Asian Government Leaders Networking Event

This special event aims to establish long-term cooperative relationships between JDS Fellows and Japanese government officials by providing opportunities of interaction and mutual learning. JDS Fellows participate in the event and expand their personal networks with Japanese government officials, who would become their counterparts in the future.



Japanese Language Training

All JDS Fellows participate in Japanese language training before their departure and after arrival in Japan. This training provides Fellows with the lessons on Japanese characters (*hiragana*, *katakana*, and *kanji*), greetings, and how to introduce themselves. In addition, they deepen their understandings of Japanese culture, lifestyle and manners, and learn the procedures necessary for staying in Japan such as government office, post office and bank.



JDS Joint Seminar

JDS Joint Seminar is held half a year before returning home, inviting all JDS fellows from each university.

During this seminar, the Fellows have opportunities to attend a series of programs, including leadership program and a special lecture given by a prominent scholar. It also helps them build a network with JDS fellows from various countries.

V. FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

Program

Q1. Is JDS a full scholarship?

YES. All the costs to study in Japan will be fully covered by JDS. For further details, please refer to "Award Benefits" in this booklet.

Q2. Do you have a Ph.D course?

NO. All components are Master's Degree Course in Maldives.

Q3. Is this an online course?

NO. The JDS fellows will study in Japan. It's a good opportunity to meet and learn with different people from around the world.

Q4. Can I apply for any university/course in Japan?

NO. The component and university are determined according to the priority development issues of each JDS recipient country. You can select the component/university from the framework.

Q5. Can I extend my stay after the completion of a program?

NO. Every JDS Fellow MUST return to their country by the designated date after graduation in compliance with the pledges required by the JDS Operating Committee. JDS Fellows have an obligation to return to the belonging organization and contribute to the socio-economic development of the country with acquired knowledge and skills.

Eligibility

Q6. I am working for a private company but I have work experience at a government office. Am I eligible?

NO. The requirements are "Currently employed in the Target Organizations as a full-time employee"

Q7. I don't have two years of work experience at the current workplace. Can I count my previous work experience?

YES. You can summate all the experience periods among different Target Organizations. But please kindly note that it should be the experiences in the target organizations.

Q8. I have already received a scholarship from another country. Am I eligible to apply for JDS?

No. The following persons are NOT eligible to apply for JDS.

- Persons who are currently receiving or is scheduled to receive other scholarship

Application

Q9. Where can I get the prescribed forms for my application?

Please access JDS web-site: <http://jds-scholarship.org/>

The prescribed forms, Application Guidelines (AG) and university information can be downloaded from this website.

Q10. Can I apply for two components (universities)?

NO. You cannot apply for more than one component. Please select one component which is relevant to your work responsibility.

Q11. Should I submit all the application documents by the deadline?

YES. But in case you cannot submit some of the documents due to unavoidable reasons, please inform JICE in advance and submit the letter of reason with your signature.

Q12. I cannot get a permission letter from my workplace. Can I apply without the letter?

NO. In JDS, it is important to return to the workplace after study completion. Therefore, the permission from the workplace is required.

Selection

Q13. Do I need to take the English test?

YES. Basically, all applicants must take the English examination (IELTS). However, applicants who have valid IELTS score will be exempted from the English test. If you don't have a valid score, JICE will arrange the English exam.

Q14. I want to apply for Ritsumeikan University. Is the Math test required?

NO. The math test is required for the applicants applying for the University of Tsukuba and GRIPS.

Q15. Do I need to come to Male' for the interview?

YES. But it is subject to change according to the infection status of COVID-19. For the applicants from the local island, JICE will provide a transportation subsidy.

Q16. How can I know the selection result?

After each selection, JICE JDS Project Office will notify the result to candidates who passed by Email.



JICE JDS Project Office

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VI. Voice of JDS 1st batch Fellows

Ms. Sumaa Mohammed
University of Tsukuba, Graduate School of Science and Technology
Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology

Getting the opportunity to study in Japan is really a dream come true for me. Japan is technologically advanced and culturally enriched. It has enhanced my self-confidence, and Japanese discipline and boosted my knowledge about Japanese culture. Initially, I was really anxious about living in a foreign country alone, however, it really helped in my growth as a person. Studying in one of the most prestigious universities in Japan so far has been wonderful. I have gained so much knowledge about my field from experts and even from my fellow classmates. Campus life here at the University of Tsukuba provides a safe space for learning, expanding knowledge, and even making international friends. I have been well guided in my research works by my supervisor. Moreover, in my lab, I get my own desk and computer system enabling the perfect environment for working on my research.

Being selected as a JDS scholar means being well guided from the start of student life till graduation. JICE made it so easy to adjust in Japan even during the covid-19 situation. You will be provided the necessary Japanese language skills and other guidance to live in Japan by JICE. Furthermore, you will be having quarterly meetings with the JICE coordinator so you can discuss your research progress and issues encountered in daily life. Hence, if you get selected, be rest assured because you are in good hands. This opportunity is certainly a life-changing opportunity personally and professionally.



Mr. Ahmed Azyan Hameed
National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS), Graduate School of Policy Studies
Ministry of Finance



Student life in Japan has been exciting and challenging at the same time. Covid-19 prevented us from having face-to-face classes at the start of my academic year. Despite this, the professors made their best efforts to make sure that learning was not limited even though classes were mostly online. The courses offered at my university were brilliant and relevant to my field of work and I will be able to apply the lessons taught in every one of them when I go back to work after studies. Japan is a very convenient country, and anyone could survive without knowing the language, and if you are interested, many courses are provided by the university as well as JICE to foster Japanese language proficiency among students.

The JDS Scholarship has been a great learning opportunity for me at one of the most elite Public Policy schools in the world. It has helped me strengthen my knowledge in my field and taught me invaluable lessons on research and thinking like an academic. There are endless resources to help you understand and learn the material better. The professors and teaching assistants go beyond their way to help you out in academics. If they are unavailable, you will surely meet a lot of people from around the world to help you and they will soon become your peers and lifelong friends. This is truly a great opportunity for anyone to expand their knowledge and immerse themselves in an intense learning experience.

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One of the main reasons why I chose to apply for the JDS scholarship for my master's degree is because I wanted to expand my perspectives beyond the western-centric traditions of higher education. I feel like studying in Japan certainly provides the best of both worlds in that aspect; all of my classes are in English, and all of my Professors are experts in their respective fields – with qualifications and experiences from prestigious institutions all over the world – but they have also been able to provide a more nuanced understanding of concepts and theories which resonates with me personally.

As I am employed in the Maldives Foreign Service, I feel like my research, as well as all my classes are proving to be tremendously useful in terms of my future career; by enriching my knowledge and understanding within my chosen field, and by allowing me to form meaningful connections. I have also been able to naturally tap into the existing network among the JDS fellows and build relationships with professionals from all over the globe.

Moreover, this has been a thoroughly enjoyable opportunity to explore Japan and deepen my understanding of the Japanese culture and language. Kyoto is a beautiful city with a rich history, and travel around Japan itself is quite easy and accessible. The support provided by the JDS scholarship program is incredibly meticulous and consistent – both in terms of pursuing my degree, and with regards to my life in Japan. It has been a wonderful experience.



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