

## 2025-2026 Japanese-Language Program for Foreign Service Officers and Public Officials Guidelines

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The Japan Foundation, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, shall accept applications for the “2025-2026 Japanese-Language Program for Foreign Service Officers and Public Officials.” Young foreign service officers and other public officials who are engaged in or expected to be engaged in duties that require a command of the Japanese language will be invited to Japan to participate in an 8-month intensive training course in Japanese language as well as activities to understand Japanese culture and society. In principle, the program is designed for total beginners or those who are still at an introductory level in the Japanese language.

### 1. Program Period:

From September 24, 2025 to May 22, 2026 (tentative, approx. 8 months)

### 2. Location:

The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai (Tajiri-cho, Osaka, Japan)

### 3. Maximum Number of Participants:

Foreign Service Officers and other National Public Officials 40 persons (tentative)

### 4. Outline of the Program:

#### (1) Japanese-Language Training

This intensive course aims to enable participants to develop practical skills in the Japanese language that will be useful for their services, through an efficient curriculum especially designed for their occupational needs.

The curriculum is designed for total beginners or those who are still at an introductory level in the Japanese language.

The participants are expected to achieve the A2 (Elementary) level\* of the JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education by completing the course.

\*A2 level

- Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment).
- Can Communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.
- Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.

—JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education 2010

## **(2) Understanding Japanese Society and Culture**

Activities such as lectures, discussion and seminars in English, visits, field trips, and cultural experiences will be organized in order to offer the participants opportunities to learn and become familiar with various aspects of Japanese culture and society.

In order to participate in these activities, participants are required to have a functional command of English.

## **(3) Networking (Meeting People)**

This program provides opportunities to meet people such as Japanese diplomats, public officials, business people and university students. The network built throughout the program will become a valuable asset for the participants.

The common language in these activities will be in English, if the participants are unable to fully communicate in Japanese.

## **5. Eligibility**

The Foreign Ministry (or its equivalent) and other public organizations of the countries and areas that are invited to apply to the “2025-2026 Japanese-Language Program for Foreign Service Officers and Public Officials” are eligible to nominate any of their staff members who fulfill all the following conditions. The Application Form must be filled out only with the approval of the Department with HR authority of the Foreign Ministry / public organization to which the nominee belongs. Individuals are not eligible to apply.

The nominee must:

- (1) be an officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or its equivalent and a governmental or a public organization who is expected to be involved in policy planning in the future (the program are designed to train officials primarily in the political, economic, and cultural fields);

Technical specialists and those who are expected to use their Japanese language skills for the following specific and limited services are not eligible for the program:

- technical staff only for translating, interpreting
- receptionist, information clerk
- receiving and guiding Japanese speakers
- assistant or secretarial work for Japanese speakers
- lecturer including language instructor

- (2) be expected to be assigned to a post in Japan or a Japan-related section; (However, those who will already be working in Japan as of the starting day of the program are not eligible. As for those who are scheduled to be posted to Japan at the time of application or newly assigned to the post in Japan after application, they will be accepted only if they start to work in Japan after the completion of the program);

- (3) hold a university degree or its equivalent;
- (4) have at least one-year working experience in his/her organization as of the starting day of the program;
- (5) be under the age of 35 at the time of application in principle;
- (6) be able to participate in the program for its entire duration;
- (7) not be scheduled to come to Japan for study or training under other similar programs;
- (8) have a functional command of English. (In Japanese-language classes, instructors use English occasionally, and special lectures on Japanese society and culture will be given in English. Also, participants will have discussions with a variety of guests in English);
- (9) not have experience of studying Japanese in principle. Should be below the introductory level if he/she is a Japanese language learner.
- (10) not have participated in this program in the past;
- (11) be in sound physical and mental health.
- (12) be provided with expenses, other than those provided by this Program (indicated in Section 8 below), necessary to complete the Program (ex. living expenses), by the Ministries/organizations to which he/she belongs.

Nominees who have had a long-term stay in Japan may be given a lower priority during the recruitment screening process.

## **6. Selection Criteria, Priorities**

The Japan Foundation will give higher priority to the candidates who are expected to be assigned to a post in Japan, or who have an urgent need to learn the Japanese language for their Japan-related tasks.

Those who lack strong motivation will find it difficult to complete this eight-month course. Therefore, it is important for the applying organization to strongly motivate the candidate to study the Japanese language, as well as to inform them of their future assignment in which they could put their experience to practical use.

## **7. Visas Provided for Participants**

Regardless of the type of the passport (Ordinary / Official / Diplomatic), participants will be provided with an ordinary visa (as a trainee) to Japan.

## **8. Expenses and Services Provided for Participants**

The Japan Foundation offers the following expenses and facilities to the participants during the program period. No tuition is required.

- Accommodation (a single room at the Institute)
- Field trip expenses, study materials

- Overseas travel insurance for accident, illness and injury for the duration of the program (Note: Chronic diseases and dental treatments, etc. are not covered.), and National Health Insurance.

Detailed conditions, including the exact amounts of the allowances, will be announced to successful candidates with the notice of admission. Their participation will be finally confirmed with their acceptance of the terms and conditions set by the Japan Foundation.

The Japan Foundation provides participants who are nationals of the countries and areas shown in the following list with round-trip air tickets (economy class) and meal allowance (partly in the form of a prepaid card that can be used only in the cafeteria of the Institute).

Asia	Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam
Oceania	Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
Central and South America	Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint. Christopher and Nevis, Saint. Lucia, Saint. Vincent and Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela
Europe (and former USSR)	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyz, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan
Middle East and North Africa	Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, Yemen
Africa	Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

## 9. Accompanying family

Spouse or families are not allowed to accompany him/her.

## 10. Obligations of Participants

All the participants in the program hosted by the Japanese-Language Institute, Kansai will be under the obligations stipulated below:

- (1) To obey the laws of Japan during the stay in Japan.
- (2) Not to make use of one's stay in Japan on the program for any other purposes or activities.
- (3) To understand that the participants are invited as members of a group, and to attend every activity of the program, under the direction of the Institute.
- (4) Not to take part in any activities that are not allowed under their visa status, nor engage in any job or work.
- (5) Not to come to Japan earlier than the arrival date of the flight schedule arranged by the Institute.
- (6) Not to visit other countries for any private purpose when the participants come to Japan and return to their own countries.
- (7) To report the Institute immediately when the participants are infected by infectious disease(s) prescribed in the Prevention of Infectious Diseases and Medical Care for Infectious Patients Act (Act No. 114 of 1998).
- (8) To follow instructions when the Institute, the Japanese government or other public entities make a request including travel restrictions to maintain the public health.
- (9) To keep a record of daily health and actions during the period specified by the Institute and submit it at the request of the Institute or other public entities.
- (10) To cooperate with the Institute and fill out the questionnaire when the Institute conducts a follow-up survey.

### **Cancellation of Participation**

The Institute reserves the right to cancel and discontinue enrollment of a participant before/during the course of the program, if the Director of the Institute determines that the participant either:

- (1) has given a false description in the application or other documents;
- (2) is not able to join the program from the date of commencement of the program;
- (3) has seriously violated the obligations stipulated above;
- (4) is not fully devoted to the activities required in the courses designed to realize the aims of the program;
- (5) suffers from some problem concerning physical or mental health that has made it impossible or unsuitable to continue participation in the program.

## 11. Remarks

Please be aware that the program may be cancelled depending on natural disasters, epidemics or other similar situations, even after the selection. In addition, activities that aim

to understand Japanese culture and society as well as to build networking with people may be restricted for the same reason, even if the program are duly implemented.