



JDS Application Guidelines



The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship in Timor-Leste 2026



I. Application Guidelines

1. About JDS Scholarship

The Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) was launched by the Government of Timor-Leste with the assistance of the Government of Japan in 2018.



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 Timor-Leste government officers to study at two-year 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 Timor-Leste 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 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)

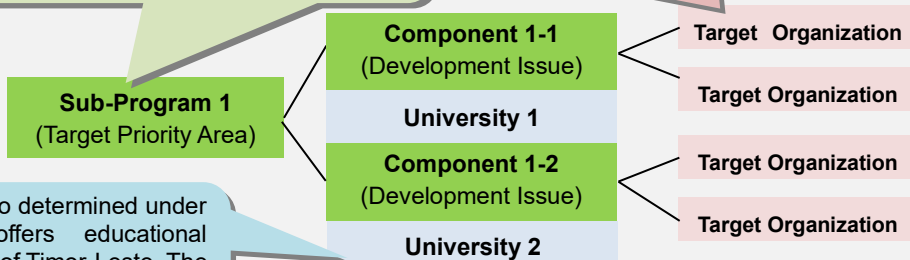
The Fellows' country will improve institutional capability of the target organizations which leads to foster country's development.



2. System of JDS Timor-Leste

The new JDS Project consists of the sectors called “**Sub-Program**” and “**Component**”, which correspond to and deal with the selected target priority areas and the relevant development issues, which were confirmed as indispensable to the economic and social development of the country.

The Fellows of the JDS Project are selected from the “**Target Organizations**” whose mission is closely related to the target priority areas (Sub-Program) and the relevant development issues (Component).



Accepting universities are also determined under each Component, which offers educational programs relevant to the needs of Timor-Leste. The degree to be pursued is **master's degree (2 years course)**, and the medium of instruction is **English**.

For further details

Framework of JDS Timor-Leste
Information on each Component

3. Applicant Eligibility

Nationality	Citizens of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste
Age	Between 22 and 45 years old as of April 1st, 2027
Academic Background	Bachelor's degree holder Other requirements of academic background Some accepting universities have other requirements or desirable academic background.
Occupation	<Civil Servants> ➤ Currently working as a full-time Permanent employee at any Ministry, excluding UNTL and IPB, mentioned in LAW No. 5/2009 APPROVES THE STATUTE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE (First amendment to Law 8/2004) ➤ Having at least 2 years of work experience as a full-time Permanent employee ➤ Currently working in Central Government Ministries and Agencies in Dili Note1: As is mentioned in Civil Service Commission Manual, Permanent Civil Servants are eligible to apply for scholarships after completing 2 years of work experience. Note2: Part-time jobs and volunteer activities are not counted as work experience. <Positions> ➤ Administrative Officers (GCR): eligible to apply at any level /position ➤ Technical Officers: eligible to apply if the position is Chief of Department/Section or above ➤ Ineligible: Frontline and Operational Personnels such as School Teacher, Medical Doctor, Nurse, Lecturer, Inspector, Engineer, Researcher, Election Officer, etc.
English Proficiency	Have a good command of both written and spoken English. TOEFL ITP 500 / IELTS 5.5 or higher is <u>preferable (not required)</u>
Performance Evaluation	• Applicants are required to submit a copy of the performance evaluation in 2024 and 2025. • Those who obtained the evaluation "Very Good" or "Good" for consecutive 2 years in 2024 and 2025 are eligible to apply.
Health Condition	Mentally and physically in good health. Note: All applicants need to take, and pass required medical check-ups arranged by JDS Project Office prior to Comprehensive Interview. Those who cannot undergo the medical examinations and fulfill all the medical requirements will be disqualified from JDS scholarship.
Ineligibility	A person who corresponds to the followings is not eligible to apply. • 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. • Military personnel and military civilian employees registered on the active list, and also personnel on temporary leave from the active list.
Others	• Successful Candidates are required to submit a pledge on the conditions deemed necessary as scholarship participants under the JDS Project. • JDS Fellows are obliged to return to Timor-Leste upon completing the degree program and work for at least four (4) years in their organization in order to make a contribution to the development of Timor-Leste. • Female Applicants are encouraged to apply.

4. JDS Operating Committee (OC)

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

JDS Operating Committee (OC) Timor-Leste



Government of Timor-Leste

National Institute of Public Administration (INAP)
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Culture (MESCC)
Civil Service Commission (CSC)
Human Capital Development Fund (FDCH)
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation (MNEC)



JICE (Japan International Cooperation Center)

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.



Government of Japan

Embassy of Japan in Timor-Leste (EOJ)
JICA Timor-Leste Office (JICA)

5. Selection Process

Schedule	Steps	Description
Sep 21 – Nov 20, 2026	Application	Deadline: 5:00pm on November 20th (Fri), 2026
	▼	
Dec 2026- Jan 2027	Academic aptitude test	English and Math tests. The test results will be used as references by the universities in later selection stages. English and Math test preparation seminar will be provided before.
	▼	
January, 2027	1st Selection	Document Screening: Application Documents and research plan will be examined by the Japanese universities.
	▼	
February 2027	Health Checkup	Health Checkup will be arranged at a hospital in Dili. Note: Those who cannot undergo the medical examinations and fulfill all the medical requirements will be disqualified from JDS scholarship.
	▼	
March 2027	2nd Selection	Technical Interview: Faculty members of the Japanese Universities will visit to Dili to conduct their interview exams.
	▼	
March 2027	3rd Selection	Comprehensive Interview: The Operating Committee members will conduct the interview exams.
	▼	
March, 2027	Approval by the OC	Successful candidates will be approved and notified.
April - June, 2027	Application Procedure	JICE will support application for each university.
April - July, 2027	Pre-Departure Training / Orientation	English, Mathematics and Japanese Training and Orientation will be provided by JICA and JICE.
August, 2027	Departure for Japan	JICE will arrange air-ticket, visa, and also support after the arrival in Japan.

<Important Notes>

- ✓ All the selection costs will be covered by JDS project.
- ✓ Limited transportation and accommodation allowances 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.
- ✓ A result of each selection will be announced to all candidates by email.
- ✓ Failure to participate each selection, interview and test will cause to automatic disqualification from selection process.
- ✓ Candidates who cannot take all the health checkup items at the JDS selection, will be disqualified for Comprehensive interview.
- ✓ Each successful candidate will be requested to sign and submit 'JDS Pledge' to comply with the conditions and rules as scholarship fellows under the JDS Project.

6. Selection Criteria

Selection process	Criteria	Intent and Purpose
1st Selection Document Screening	- 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	- 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	- Capacity for completing the study in Japan - Capacity to utilize outcomes of the study over the long term - Possibility of contributing to the development of the country and strengthening bilateral relations with 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.

7. 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
- Travel and seminar attendance allowance
- Overseas travel insurance
- Supports from the agent
 - Finding accommodation
 - Initial settlement of your life in Japan
 - Emergency situation etc.



8. 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 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 within Timor-Leste at least for 4 (four) years in Target organization** in compliance with the Act of Pledge required by National Institute of Public Administration (INAP).

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

II. How to Succeed in Application

1. Application Documents (Hardcopies to submit to JICE)

1) Application Documents (Hardcopies)

- Designated forms can be downloaded from JDS website:

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

2) Precautions

- All documents written in other language than English need official English translation. (Self-translation is not acceptable.)
- Use only A4 size paper for all copy sets. Copy in Black & white is acceptable.
- Do not staple the documents. Put a paperclip on them instead.
- Submit "Reason Letter" in case where wrong information (e.g., wrong spelling of name, birthday, etc.) is contained in the ID and official documents due to administrative errors.

3) List of Application Documents to Submit Hardcopies *Please DO NOT staple!

No.	Application Documents	Required number to be submitted			Remarks
		Original	Attested Original	Photocopy of the (attested) original	
1	Short Essays <Prescribed Form>	1			
2	Research Plan <Prescribed Form>	1			With your signature in a lower right-hand corner of each page.
3	University Diploma / Certificate		1		Please get the attested document from Ministry of Education. If the documents are not written in English, official English translation by INL must be attached.
4	University Transcript		1		
5	Reference Letter "Annex" <Prescribed Form>	1			The letter should be issued by Director of your workplace. (This letter must be written in English, and submitted in a sealed envelope)
6	Employment Certificate <Prescribed Form>	1			This certificate must be authorized by Director General (D.G) of your belonging department.
7	Personal Identification document			1	Valid Passport or Kartaun Eleitoral (Electoral Card)
8	Termo de Posse or Contract			1	This document will be used to confirm if the person is a Permanent civil servant / staff or permanent staff of IP/EP
9	Livre Declaração or criminal record	1			"Declaração livre da instauração do processo disciplinar e pena aplicada pela comissão da função pública" or "Criminal record". *The letter must be issued after September 2026 .
10	Performance Evaluation			1	Please submit 1 copy of each letter issued in 2024 & 2025 .
11	Color Photo (4cm x 3cm)	3			Write your name on the back of each photo.

4) Submission of Application Documents

■ Important Notice

- Application lacking necessary documents will not be accepted.
- Application after the deadline will not be accepted.
- Application will be disqualified in case false statements or plagiarism is found.
- Application Documents will not be returned for any reasons.

■ Deadline for Application Submission

Deadline for Application 5:00 pm on 20th November (Fri), 2026

JICE JDS Project Office recommends submitting the Application Documents a week earlier than the deadline for application. Because JICE can advise on the arrangement of the documents, and the applicants also have time to revise or correct it. The office will be crowded with applicants from 3 days before the deadline.

Applicants



JICE JDS Project Office

JICE JDS Project Office in Timor-Leste

No. 409 in CBD2 of Timor Plaza, Dili, Timor-Leste

TEL: 7740-3881 / Email: jds.timor-leste2@jice.org

Office Hour: 8:30 - 12:00 / 13:30 - 17:00, Monday to Friday



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

1. Framework of JDS Timor-Leste

Sub-Program (JDS Priority Areas)	Component (Development Issues)	Slot	Accepting University	Degree / Program	University Information
1.Improving Governance and Institution Building	1-1 International Relations and International Development/ Enhancement of Public Administration	2	<u>Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University</u> Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies	Master of Science in International Cooperation Policy Master's Program in International Cooperation Policy (ICP)	
		1	<u>International University of Japan</u> Graduate School of International Relations	Master of Arts in International Relations or Political Science International Relations Program (IRP)	
2.Promotion of Industrial Policy	2-1 Economic Policy on Industry and Investment Promotion	1	<u>International University of Japan</u> Graduate School of International Relations	Master of Arts in Economics or International Development International Development Program (IDP)	
3. Building a Strong Base for Economic Growth	3-1 Improvement of Infrastructure and Petroleum Resource Development Policy	1	<u>Hiroshima University</u> Graduate School of Advanced Science and Engineering	Master of Engineering Transportation and Environmental Systems Program	
		1	<u>Yamaguchi University</u> Graduate School of Sciences and Technology for Innovation	Master of Engineering Civil and Environmental Engineering International Course	

IV. Special Trainings and Events

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

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 after their 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 Pre-return Program

JDS Pre-return Program is held half a year before returning home, inviting all JDS Fellows from each university.

During this program, 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.

Advice to Future Applicant from JDS Fellows



To potential JDS applicants from Timor-Leste, prepare with dedication and purpose. Choose a problem in your sector aligned with national development goals to make your proposal stronger. Highlight your commitment to public service and how the skills gained in Japan will benefit your ministry or institution. Be honest about your professional background, show leadership potential, and explain how JDS will support your academic and personal growth. Adjusting to Japan's culture may be challenging but see it as an opportunity for self-discipline and intercultural development. The program offers valuable knowledge, networks, and lifelong friendships. Finally, be bold in your

dreams; through persistence and preparation, you can succeed and make a positive impact on our nation.

(Ms. Maria Pricilia Fonseca, 6th Batch Fellow)

Every applicant has different experiences when applying for the JDS scholarship, and so do I. I applied three times, but I am not shy at all, and always learned from my mistakes to prepare better for the next application and succeed. From my experience, I have several pieces of advice to share, so you can do even better than I did. Firstly, try to clearly understand what is needed for the JDS scholarship, as all requirements are clearly stated in the application guideline. Secondly, review some materials before applying, such as mathematics and English. Nowadays, there are many social media platforms that we can access to prepare ourselves in advance. Third, try to identify the development challenge in your workplace as your research topic. It's also important to link it with Timor-Leste's National Strategic Plan 2011–2030, so your study can have a positive impact on your workplace and country. Fourth, choose universities that match your educational background and offer relevant courses in your field of interest. Lastly, prepare yourself physically and mentally to face academic challenges. What others have done, I also achieved. And I believe you can do even better than we did.



(Mr. Maximiano Maria da Silva Soares, 6th Batch Fellow)



To future applicants: don't let your background or job stop you from applying. The JDS program accepts professionals from many ministries and sectors who are willing to learn and serve their country. What matters most is your motivation, your clear goals, and your desire to contribute to the development of Timor-Leste. Be ready to face academic challenges and manage your time well. A study abroad experience in Japan may differ from one's customary educational environment; nevertheless, it can provide significant knowledge and experience. In addition to academic pursuits, participants will have the opportunity to adapt to a new cultural environment, establish international

friendships, and experience personal growth. It is imperative to engage in active communication with professors, classmates, and other students. The knowledge and network acquired during this program will undoubtedly contribute to the success of the participants' future careers and national service endeavors. This initiative presents a distinctive opportunity for both personal and professional development, as well as a chance to contribute to the future advancement of Timor-Leste.

(Mr. Epifanio Ferio da Conceicao, 6th Batch Fellow)



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JDS website

<https://jds-scholarship.org/country/timorleste/>

JDS Facebook

