

GUIDELINES for Application

Scandinavia-Japan Sasakawa Foundation Japanese Studies PhD Research Grants 2026

FAQs

1. Who can apply?

- a) *Eligibility:* You must be enrolled as a PhD student at an academic institution or university in one of the five Nordic countries. You do not need to be a citizen of a Nordic country, but you should have a permanent affiliation with the country.
- b) *What costs are covered:* Only costs for conducting research activities in Japan for your PhD dissertation can be covered (e.g. travel to and from Japan, and within Japan, accommodation, access to research databases or materials, procured services necessary for performing the research), up to EUR 10,000.
- c) *What research areas are eligible:* the Japanese Studies PhD Research Grants are open to PhD students at Nordic universities working on topics in the broad field of contemporary Japanese studies, defined as fields within the humanities and the social sciences such as anthropology, art, architecture, economics, education, history, law, linguistics, literature, political science, sociology, and the interdisciplinary study and research of various aspects of Japan, its society, history, and culture, with a view to deepening and enhancing an understanding of the country. In exceptional cases the grant can be provided for PhD research activities in Japan in areas such as science, technology, health and medicine, or other subjects outside of humanities and the social sciences, if there are compelling reasons why you must go to Japan for your PhD dissertation research.
- d) *Grant Period:* The grant period is from January to December 2026. Your research travel and stay in Japan should be completed in 2026.
- e) *When to apply:* the application platform is open between September 2 – November 1, 2025. Deadline is November 1, 2025 at 23.59 hours Swedish local time.
- f) *Decision:* Decision letters on the outcome of the application will be sent to all applicants roughly 6-8 weeks after the deadline.

THE PROCESS

2. How do I apply?

The application can only be submitted to the Foundation electronically, via our homepage at www.sjsf.se under the tab Japanese Studies. You will find some basic information and a button to click "To Japanese Studies Grant applications". After clicking you will be transferred to the Application system which is available under the address: <https://www.apply.se/sjsf>

3. How do I start? Registration and activation of an account.

You begin by registering your email address and a password. Please note the exact spelling of the used email and password and keep it safe for future use, then press register. You will then receive an activation email; activate your account to proceed with your application. Once you enter the Apply.se/sjsf system you must select the correct application form for the Japanese Studies Program—[current year+1] + Japanese Studies PhD Research Grants.

4. Which language should I use?

Please submit all information in English.

5. Can I send cv, project information etc. as Attachments?

You will be asked to upload attachments in pdf or jpeg format, see section 12.

6. How do I finish and send my application?

When you have finished your application, we recommend that you download it as a .pdf (click on “diskette” icon on top of your application form). You can continue to work on your application until you have pressed the button “Send”. After that you cannot change or add anything to your application.

QUESTIONS ON THE APPLICATION FORM

7. I did not take the JLPT test, but am pretty good at Japanese, how should I rank myself?

Please see the JLPT homepage for a guideline on the JLPT levels:

<http://www.jlpt.jp/e/about/levelsummary.html>

8. Why do I need to keep my email address?

Make sure that your email address is active until the grant decision email has reached you. If not, you will not get any notification about the grant decision as all notifications are sent by e-mail through the system.

9. How should I write the project title?

The project title should be brief and include a few key words which explain what the project is about.

10. Any recommendations concerning the project description?

Start by presenting a summary of the project so that the selection committee members will quickly understand what you want to do. Then proceed to describe the project in this field or in an attachment. Try to keep the project description short.

11. What should be included in the budget?

The budget should be summarized in the given fields, in Euro. Do not send big, detailed budgets. If the budget exceeds the amount you applied for, please specify in the application which costs you are applying for via our Foundation.

Only costs for conducting PhD research activities in Japan can be covered (e.g. travel, including any extra costs for vaccinations, certificates, visas; access to research databases or

materials; procured services necessary for performing the research). No salary costs can be covered.

12. What kind of Attachments may I send?

The application platform can only accept .pdf or .jpg formats.

Please submit the following documents (the figures in brackets are maximum number of pages and maximum size of the attachments):

- CV with list of publications (max 3 pages, max 2 MB)
- Research Proposal (5 pages, 10 MB)
- Transcript of Academic Records for your previous university studies (10 pages, 2 MB)
- A current certificate of enrollment and grade transcript for your PhD studies (4 pages, 2 MB)
- A Recommendation Letter (2 pages, 2 MB)
- Invitation letter/email from your hosting university in Japan (2 pages, 2 MB).

It is up to you to decide what kind of documents which will support your application and make it competitive; however, a strong Recommendation letter from your thesis/dissertation supervisor would make sense.

13. May I use the Additional Information box for providing links?

This is a space where you can provide links to film or music uploaded elsewhere on the Internet. At present it is not possible to upload such files together with the application. If you have your own website, you may insert a link to it here if you wish.

14. How do I know if the application has been successfully submitted?

Once your application has been successfully submitted and registered by the Apply system, you will see, under the tab My Application, that the symbol for the application has been closed (it cannot be opened anymore). This is your confirmation. You will not get any confirmation email that your application has been received.

15. I changed my name/email address after I submitted my application

If your contact information has changed after you have submitted your application (e.g. a new email address or new surname owing to change in marital status), please send an email to japanesestudies@sjsf.se with the changes.

PROBLEM SOLVING

16. I did not receive an account activation email

Please check your spam folder.

17. I cannot write anything in my application form, nor submit my form

If your screen has frozen, your session has probably timed out. Refresh the webpage, and if needed log out of the system, wait a few minutes, and log in again. The system automatically saves all input data immediately, so you will not lose any data by logging out.

18. I cannot log in again

Check carefully that you have spelled your username and password correctly.

19. I cannot find my application

Confirm that you are logged into the correct application system:
www.apply.se/sjsf/applications

20. I attached the wrong document to my application

Send an email to japaneseestudies@sjsf.se requesting that your application be unlocked so that you can upload the correct document. Remember to resubmit your application by pressing the “Send” button, otherwise your application will remain open and will not be visible in the system.

Please note that after the application deadline, no changes or additions to your application will be accepted.