

## 2016 MEXT Undergraduate Scholarship

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago)

#### 1.) What is the MEXT Undergraduate Scholarship?

The Ministry of Education, Culture Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT; Monbukagakusho) Undergraduate Scholarship is a Japanese government scholarship that allows non-Japanese citizens to spend up to 5 years pursuing their undergraduate education at a university in Japan. Scholarship recipients are expected to graduate with a bachelor's degree from their university in Japan.

#### 2.) What are the benefits?

MEXT will provide roundtrip airfare to Japan, full tuition and any university entrance fees, along with a monthly stipend of ¥117,000. An additional ¥2,000 - ¥3,000 monthly stipend may be provided to those students studying in designated regions. (As of 2015 Japanese fiscal year; the amount of stipend is subject to change). Please see Guideline #4 for more information.

#### 3.) Who is eligible to apply?

To apply through the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago, applicants must (a) Be a United States citizen (b) Been born between April 2, 1994 – April 1, 1999 (c) Have completed 12-year regular education course by March 2016 (d) Be a resident of a state in the Chicago Consulate's 10-state Midwest jurisdiction [Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin]. Please see Guideline #2 for more information.

#### 4.) I am not U.S. citizen/ resident of a state in the Chicago Consulate's 10-state jurisdiction? Can I still apply?

You can still apply for the MEXT Scholarship, but you will need to do so through the Japanese diplomatic mission responsible for your country/area. To find your nearest Embassy/Consulate-General/Consular Office, please see this link: [http://www.mofa.go.jp/about/emb\\_cons/mofaserv.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/about/emb_cons/mofaserv.html)

#### 5.) What is the application timeline?

Applications will be posted on our MEXT Scholarship website in April; applications are due May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Those selected to have an interview and exams will sit for them at the Japanese Consulate in Chicago in early July; Consulate recommendations will be announced within a week of the interviews. Secondary screening will then be conducted by MEXT in November. Final decisions will come in December 2015. Scholarship recipients will then depart for Japan between April 1- 7, 2016 (specific departure dates are determined by the university you will attend). Upon arrival in Japan, Scholarship recipients will undergo a 1-year preparatory education course before beginning their undergraduate studies at a Japanese university, unless they choose direct placement.

#### 6.) How do I fill out the Academic Background (Section #8) section?

List your entire academic career from kindergarten and/or first grade through your current or most recent academic year. Please include extended breaks (such as summer breaks) in the academic year. See the example chart at the end of this document.

#### 7.) What is the Preparatory Education?

Each grantee will be enrolled at a preparatory school (either Tokyo University of Foreign Studies or Osaka University) designated by MEXT for a one-year intensive course in the Japanese language and other subjects necessary for preparation for proceeding to the university. If determined incapable of completing the prescribed course at the preparatory school, a grantee will not be allowed to proceed to university. Please see Guideline #6 for more information.

#### **8.) What is the Direct Placement?**

Direct Placement is the system whereby the requirement for preparatory education is waived and direct admission to a university is permitted, if you have sufficient knowledge of Japanese language and there is no necessity for preparatory education, or if you wish to enter a university course that has no Japanese language requirement.

#### **9.) Can I choose what university I can attend?**

Applicants who apply via Direct Placement will need to submit the Placement Preference Form, in which they name up to 3 Japanese universities and academic department (aka faculty) you wish to join. However, final selection decision will be made by MEXT.

Applicants who do not apply via Direct Placement do not need to choose which university and academic department (aka faculty) they wish to join at the time of application. However, the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago recommends that you research your options. Upon completion of the preparatory education (see Question #6), a Scholarship grantee will take the entrance examination of the university designated by MEXT in consultation with the university and the preparatory school. Please see Guideline #7.1 for more information.

#### **10.) What is the difference between an Embassy/Consulate Recommendation and a University Recommendation?**

University Recommendations for the MEXT Scholarship are when a university in Japan recommends a student for the scholarship. This is a separate application and acceptance track from the Embassy/Consulate recommendations. You will need to directly contact a university in Japan to inquire about university recommendations.

#### **11.) I live abroad. Can I apply for the MEXT Scholarship?**

You can apply for the MEXT Scholarship from abroad. However, if selected for an interview, you MUST return to the United States for the interview and exams at the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago on the designated day. Interviews must be done in person. We cannot do telephone/online interviews. Absolutely no exceptions will be made.

#### **12.) What exams must be taken for the Undergraduate Scholarship?**

Applicants intending to major in the Social Sciences or Humanities must take (1) Japanese Language exam (2) English Language exam (3) Mathematics exam. Applicants intending to major in Natural Sciences must take (1) Japanese Language exam (2) English Language exam (3) Mathematics exam (4) Chemistry exam and (5) Either Biology or Physics exam. Please see Guideline #5 for more information.

#### **13.) Do I need to know Japanese to get the scholarship?**

MEXT does not require the proficiency in the Japanese language at the time of applying. However, applicants must be willing to learn the language and deepen their understanding of Japan. In general, applicants must be willing to receive their college education in Japanese.

**14.) Can I have my application materials returned to me?**

Unfortunately, no. Once application materials have been submitted to us at the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago, they cannot be returned under any circumstances. We encourage you to make copies of all your application materials.

**15.) How many copies of the application materials do I need to submit?**

Please see Guideline #8 for more information about the required materials and how many originals vs. copies we require of each document. Please note that we need 2 original Application Forms with 2 original photographs of you attached, and with 2 original signatures. You may fill in one Application Form and make 1 photocopy of it, but the photocopy MUST have an original photograph attached and must have an original signature on it.

**16.) Do my Letter of Recommendation writers need to use the Letter of Recommendation form provided?**

No. The form is merely a sample. Letter writers can simply submit a signed letter (on letterhead) instead of the form.

For more information, please see the Guidelines posted on our website. If you have further questions, please contact MEXT Scholarship Coordinator Mr. Austin Gilkeson at [austin.gilkeson@cq.mofa.go.jp](mailto:austin.gilkeson@cq.mofa.go.jp) or 312-280-0434.

**Sample Chart for Academic Background:**

For the “Duration of Attendances” column, please include extended leave such as summer vacation (i.e.: duration of attendances for High School should be “4 years,” not “3 Years and 9 Months.” Only list months of attendance if you transferred schools).

|   | Name and Address of School<br>(学校名及び所在地)   | Year and Month of Entrance and Completion<br>(入学及び卒業年月)   | Duration of Attendances<br>(修学年数)  | Diploma or Degree awarded, Major subject, Skipper years/levels<br>(学位・資格、専攻科目、飛び級の状況) |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| Primary Education<br>(初等教育)<br>Elementary School<br>(小学校)   | <b>Githens Elementary School</b><br>Name (学校名)<br><b>New York City, NY</b><br>Location (所在地)   | From <b>9/1996</b><br>(入学)<br>To <b>8/2001</b><br>(卒業)  | <b>5 years</b><br>(年)<br>and<br>months<br>(月)  | Grades 1-5  |
| Secondary Education<br>(中等教育)<br>Middle School<br>(中学)  | <b>Southwest Middle School</b><br>Name (学校名)<br><b>New York, NY</b><br>Location (所在地)<br><b>Apex Middle School</b><br>Name (学校名)<br><b>Chicago, IL</b><br>Location (所在地) | From <b>9/2001</b><br>(入学)<br>To <b>12/2002</b><br>(卒業)<br>From <b>1/2003</b><br>(入学)<br>To <b>8/2004</b><br>(卒業) | <b>1 year</b><br>(年)<br>and<br><b>4 months</b><br>(月)<br><b>1 year</b><br>(年)<br>and<br><b>8 months</b><br>(月) | Grades 6-8  |
| High School<br>(高校)   | <b>Pearsontown High School</b><br>Name (学校名)<br><b>Chicago, IL</b><br>Location (所在地)   | From <b>9/2004</b><br>(入学)<br>To <b>6/2008</b><br>(卒業)  | <b>4 years</b><br>(年)<br>and<br>months<br>(月)  | Grades 9-12; High School Diploma  |
| Total years of schooling mentioned above<br>(以上を通算した全学校教育修学年数)<br>As of April 1, 2016 (2016年4月1日現在) |  |   | <u>12</u> Years and ___ months<br>(年) (月)  |   |