

SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

**EXPERT TRAINING PROGRAM IN GEOSCIENCE-BASED
SOLUTIONS FOR NATURAL DISASTER PREVENTION AND
IMPACT REDUCTION**

**APPLICATION GUIDEBOOK
FOR THE 2026 ACADEMIC YEAR**

**SHIMANE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**MATSUE, JAPAN
2026**

EXPERT TRAINING PROGRAM IN GEOSCIENCE-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR NATURAL DISASTER PREVENTION AND IMPACT REDUCTION

(Special Program for International Students)

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS FOR THE 2026 ACADEMIC YEAR (MASTER'S COURSE : GRADUATE SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY)

1. General aims of the program

This special program accepts students of excellence, especially from Southwest Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka) with Southeast Asian, Middle East, and African countries. The program is designed to provide advanced education in natural disaster prevention and impact reduction. The aims of the graduate program are to establish effective prevention engineering against natural disasters and hazards and their impact reduction, based on a wide knowledge of geoscience and environmental science, and to enhance/build the mutual relationship between the counter part institutions/universities and Shimane University.

2. Term of the programs

For international students, the academic year begins in October and ends in September. The terms of the Master's course programs are two years. Early graduation (after one year or one and half years for the Master's course) is available for exceptional students should they complete the requirements for their course ahead of time.

3. Degrees awarded

Master of Science or Engineering

4. Outline of the courses

The Master's programs are grouped into three courses, namely Geoscience, Geoenvironmental Science, and Geo-disaster Science. All courses are conducted in English.

Geoscience

Research on petrology, volcanology and related hazard, geochemistry, chronology, inorganic and organic geochemistry

Geoenvironmental Science

Research on natural hazards and paleoenvironmental changes based on stratigraphical, paleontological, sedimentological, and environmental science methods.

Geo-disaster Science

Research on natural disaster engineering, engineering geology and natural disasters such as landslides, geotechnical engineering and soil mechanics and their practical application, evaluation of active faults, and subsurface fluid engineering.

5. Number of students to be admitted

Two students per year.

6. Qualifications and conditions

(1) Eligibility:

International students with outstanding academic achievements of graduate school level who enter Japan as new students in Japan. “International students with outstanding academic achievements” must have earned a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.30 or above in their degree (for those who are employed) or currently enrolled courses, and be able to maintain that GPA while receiving the scholarship. Furthermore, applicants must meet any one of the language requirements stated in **(6) Language proficiency**.

(2) Nationality:

Applicants must have the nationality of a country that has diplomatic relations with Japan. Applicants who have Japanese nationality at the time of application are not eligible. However, persons with dual nationality who hold Japanese nationality and whose place of residence at the time of application is outside of Japan are eligible to apply as long as they choose the nationality of the other country and renounce their Japanese nationality by the date of their arrival in Japan (the acquisition of student status).

(Eligible countries: South(west) and Southeast Asian, Middle East, African, Central and Eastern European, and South American countries, and Mongolia and USA. CIS except for Russia and Belarus)

(3) Age:

Applicants, in principle, must have been born on or after April 2, 1991.

Exceptions are limited to cases in which MEXT deems that the applicant could not apply within the eligible age limit due to the situation or circumstances of the applicant’s country (military service obligation, loss of educational opportunities due to disturbances of war, etc.). Personal circumstances (financial situation, family circumstances, state of health, circumstances related to applicant’s university or place of employment, etc.) will not be considered for exceptions.

(4) Academic Background:

Applicants must satisfy the conditions for admission to a master’s course at a Japanese graduate school. (Applicants who will certainly satisfy them at the time of enrollment are eligible.)

- ①** Applicants who have completed 16 years of schooling in countries other than Japan (Applicants who will certainly satisfy the above condition by the time of enrollment are eligible.)
- ②** Applicants who have completed their studies at a school of equivalent to a Japanese university in countries other than Japan. (Applicants who will certainly satisfy the above condition by the time of enrollment are eligible.)
- ③** Other than above qualifications, applicants who are eligible for enrollment in a Japanese graduate school.

(5) Majors:

Applicants should apply for the field of study they majored in at university or its related field. Moreover, the fields of study must be subjects which applicants will be able to study and research at Shimane University.

(6) Language proficiency:

Applicants must satisfy any one of the following conditions to prove that they have sufficient English language ability.

- ① Applicants must pass or achieve scores in English language proficiency tests that correspond to B2 or higher level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) at the time of application.
- ② Applicants must complete school curriculums that meets the conditions for admission in the master course of Shimane University using English as the main language.
- ③ Applicants are regarded by Shimane University as having English language ability equivalent to or better than ①

(7) Health:

Applicants who are judged by Shimane University to have no physical or mental conditions hindering the applicant's study in Japan.

(8) Arrival in Japan:

In principle, applicants must be able to arrive in Japan during the period specified by Shimane University within two weeks before and after the starting date (1st October) of the university's relevant academic term for that year.

Excluding cases in which MEXT deems as unavoidable circumstances, the applicant must withdraw from this scholarship program if the applicant cannot arrive in Japan by the end of the specified period above. If an applicant will arrive in Japan before or after the specified period due to personal circumstances, travel expenses will not be paid.

(9) Visa Requirement:

An applicant shall, in principle, newly obtain a "Student" visa at the Japanese diplomatic mission located in the applicant's country of nationality, and enter Japan with the residence status of "Student." Please also note that if a grantee arrives in Japan without newly obtaining a "Student" visa, scholarship payments will be cancelled.

(10) Non-Eligibility:

Those who meet any one of the following conditions are ineligible. If identified ineligible after being selected as a scholarship student, he/she must withdraw from the scholarship.

- ① Those who are military personnel or military civilian employees at the time of their arrival in Japan or during the period of the payment of the scholarship;
- ② Those who cannot arrive in Japan by the date specified by Shimane University;
- ③ Those who are previous grantees of Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship programs (including those who withdraw from the scholarship program after acquisition of student status). However, this does not apply to those who wish to apply for Research Students program and meet any one of the following conditions. In addition, since the Monbukagakusho Honors Scholarship for Privately-Financed International Students does not apply to the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship programs, the previous grantees can apply.

- those who have at least three years of educational or work experience following the end of the payment of the previous scholarship and the start of this scholarship;
- the past grantees of Japanese Studies Students program who have graduated or are going to graduate from universities in their home countries, Japan-Korea Joint Government Scholarship Program for the Students in Science and Engineering Departments and Young Leaders' Program;
- those who have obtained or are expected to obtain a degree as undergraduate students of the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship programs (university recommendation/special selection).

④ Those who are currently also applying to another program under the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship system. This includes the programs for which scholarship payments will begin in FY2026;

⑤ Those who are planning to receive scholarship or fellowships from an organization other than MEXT (including a government organization of the applicant's country) on top of the scholarship money provided by MEXT after the start of the scholarship payment (the acquisition of student status);

⑥ Those who are expected to graduate at the time of application and cannot satisfy the condition of academic background by the deadline given;

⑦ Holders of dual nationality at the time of application who cannot verify that they will give up Japanese nationality by the time of the arrival in Japan (the acquisition of student status);

⑧ Those who plan to, from the time of application for the MEXT scholarship program, engage in long-term research (such as fieldwork or internship) outside Japan or plan to take a long-term leave of absence from the university;

⑨ Those who have no intention to obtain a degree.

(11) Others: MEXT Scholarship will be granted those who are willing to contribute to mutual understanding between Japan and their home country by participating in activities at schools and communities during their study in Japan while contributing to the internationalization of Japan. They shall also make efforts to promote relations between the home country and Japan by maintaining close relations with the university attended after graduation, cooperating with the conducting of surveys and questionnaires, and cooperating with relevant projects and events conducted by the Japanese diplomatic mission after they return to their home countries.

7. Scholarship Benefits

- (1) The period of scholarship is from October, 2026 to September, 2028.
- (2) Scholarship payment: a monthly allowance of 144,000 yen.
- (3) Travelling expense

[1] Transportation to Japan

MEXT will stipulate the travel schedule and route, and provide an airline ticket. The airline ticket will be an economy-class ticket for the flight from the international airport closest to the grantee's residence (in principle, the country of nationality) to an international airport in Japan used on the normal route to Shimane University. The grantee shall bear at his/her own expense all costs related to domestic travel from the grantee's residence to the nearest international airport, airport taxes, airport usage fees, special

taxes necessary for travel, travel expenses within Japan (including airline transit costs), travel insurance expenses, carry-on luggage or unaccompanied baggage expenses, etc. The grantee shall also bear at his/her own expense travel and lodging costs incurred in a third country if the grantee must travel to a third country before coming to Japan for visa purposes because there are no Japanese diplomatic missions in his/her country, and the Japanese diplomatic mission is closed in his/her country, or if there are no direct flights from the grantee's country of residence to Japan. MEXT will provide an economy-class airline ticket from the grantee's country of residence to the said third country, and from the third country to an international airport in Japan used on the normal route to Shimane University. In principle, the address given in the space for "Your address before departure for Japan" on the application form shall be recognized as the "residence," and the airline ticket will be arranged for a flight from the international airport nearest to that address. Except for cases when the grantee must travel to a third country to obtain a visa, MEXT will not provide an airline ticket for cases of travel to Japan from a country other than the grantee's country of residence due to the grantee's personal circumstances.

[2] Transportation from Japan:

Based on the application by the grantee, MEXT will provide an airline ticket to grantees who shall graduate or complete Shimane University and return to the home country by the end of the final month of the period of scholarship (See 7(1)) designated by MEXT. MEXT shall provide an economy-class airline ticket from the international airport in Japan used for the normal route to and from the accepting university to the international airport (in principle, in the country of nationality) nearest to the returning grantee's residence. The grantee shall bear at his/her own expense all costs related to travel from the grantee's residence in Japan to the nearest international airport, airport taxes, airport usage fees, special taxes necessary for travel, travel expenses within the country of nationality (including airline transit costs), travel insurance expenses, carry-on luggage or unaccompanied baggage expenses, etc. If a grantee returns to the home country before the end of period of scholarship due to personal circumstances, or reasons stated in "8. SUSPENSION OF PAYMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP," MEXT will not pay for the returning travel expenses. If a grantee continues to stay in Japan after the scholarship period has ended (ex. proceeding to further education or being employed in Japan), travel expenses for a temporary return will also not be paid.

(4) Education Fees

Fees for the entrance examination, matriculation, and tuition at universities will be paid by Shimane University.

8. Suspension of payment of scholarship

Payment of the scholarship will be cancelled for the reasons given below. Should any of the following reasons apply, the grantee may be ordered to return a part of, or all of, the scholarship paid up to that time. Payment of the scholarship may also be stopped during the period up to the decision on the disposition of the matter.

- ① A grantee is determined to have made a false statement on his/her application;
- ② A grantee violates any article of his/her pledge to the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science

and Technology;

- ③ A grantee violates any Japanese laws and is sentenced and imprisoned for an indefinite period or for a period exceeding 1 year;
- ④ A grantee is suspended from Shimane University or receives other punishment, or is removed from enrollment; as a disciplinary action in accordance with regulations of Shimane University;
- ⑤ It has been determined that it will be impossible for a grantee to complete the course within the standard period of study because of poor academic grades or suspension or absence from the university;
- ⑥ A grantee came to Japan without newly acquiring the “Student” residence status, or changed his/her residence status to one other than “Student.”
- ⑦ A grantee who has received another scholarship (a scholarship or fellowship from Japanese Government, a Japanese Government-related organization and others) is not approved for acceptance in conjunction with the MEXT Scholarship.;
- ⑧ A grantee proceeds to a more advanced level of education without receiving approval for an extension of the period of the scholarship;
- ⑨ A grantee withdraws from Shimane University or transfers to another university;
- ⑩ A grantee’s annual GPA is below 2.30.

9. Application

(1) Period of application

Friday, January 30 through Thursday, February 5, 2026. The office to which applications are made is open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. If submitted by mail, the completed application must arrive no later than 5:00 p.m. Thursday, February 5, 2026.

Applicants are strongly advised to contact a prospective supervisor from those listed in the application guide, and discuss their study program in Japan and the application and selection procedures before preparing an application.

The application must be sent by registered express mail. The words “Application for Admission to the Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology (Master's Course)” must be written in red ink on the front of the envelope.

Notes:

(2) Documents to be submitted

(A) Application in the prescribed form (Form 1: 別紙様式1・2), 2026 Application Form for Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship (Double-sided printing).

(B) One copy of the applicant's Bachelor's degree certificate or a certificate indicating that the applicant will be receiving a Bachelor's by the end of September, 2026 issued by the applicant's university.

(C) Transcripts of academic records with English translations issued by the university that the applicant attended.

(D) Field of Study and Research Plan in the prescribed form (Form 2: 別紙様式6).

(E) A summary of the graduate thesis or a summary of the research program.

- (i) Applicants who have completed an undergraduate course:
 - (a) A summary of the graduate thesis in English (about 2,000 words). Use A4 size paper and attach a cover sheet (Form 3).
- (ii) Applicants who anticipate receiving a bachelor's degree:
 - (a) A summary of your research conducted so far in English (about 2,000 words). Use A4 size paper and attach a cover sheet (Form 3).

(F) A copy of certificate of citizenship such as passport or certificate of family register.

(G) A recommendation letter addressed to the President of Shimane University from the dean or head of the applicant's institution or employing body.

(H) A recommendation letter from the applicant's supervisor.

(I) Copy of a record of English proficiency test such as TOEFL, TOEIC, and IELTS.

(L) Photocopies of publications described in the Form 2, Application Form for Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship.

(M) Two photographs (4.5 cm x 3.5 cm). They should be pasted in the designated places on the application forms (Forms 1 and 2). Photographs should be taken from the front, from the chest up, bare-headed, and taken within 6 months of application with the applicant's name and nationality on the reverse side.

Notes:

- ① These documents should either be typed or printed neatly in English in the prescribed forms (Forms 1 – 5) and A4 size paper. Application forms can be downloaded from the website.
https://www.shimane-u.ac.jp/nyushi/information/application/international_student.html?node_id=18870
- ② No application will be accepted unless all the documents specified above are fully and correctly completed.
- ③ A coordinator of the examination (oral interview) in your university or university you graduated must be listed in Form 1 with his/her prior consent.
- ④ Applicants must be available for an oral interview with the oral examination committee members via a Zoom meeting or other means to take an oral examination.
- ⑤ None of the documents submitted will be returned to the applicants.
- ⑥ Applicants who require government permission to study abroad (e.g. Indonesia) should contact their appropriate government organization before submitting the application forms.
- ⑦ Once an applicant applies for admission for a Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship, the applicant must not withdraw from it.

All applications are to be mailed to the office specified below.

Admission Division, Shimane University

1060 Nishikawatsu-cho, Matsue, Shimane 690-8504 JAPAN

Any inquiries are dealt with by Dr. Sakai, T. (E-mail address: sake@riko.shimane-u.ac.jp)

To avoid the possibility of our mistaking your e-mail as SPAM-mail, and so that we can reply to you promptly, please write the text "Special Program for International Students, Shimane University" in the subject line of your

message.

All applicants are strongly advised to send the scanned copy of the application documents to the provisional supervisor as soon as they mail them to Shimane University.

10. Selection procedure

- (a) Selection will be made based on document evaluation and an oral interview.
- (b) Field of research, study program in Japan and academic record (including English ability) of the applicants will be evaluated based on the documents submitted. The proposed Field of Study and the detailed Study Program given in the application form will be important factors in the decision.
- (c) An oral interview has a duration of about 40 minutes, and will be held on Thursday, February 12 and Friday, February 13, 2026. The Zoom URL for the oral interview will be sent to each applicant from the examination manager.
- (d) During a Zoom interview for the oral examination, a panel of at least three committee members will dedicate roughly 40 minutes to review both the graduate thesis and the research proposal. This time will be split, allowing approximately 20 minutes for the thesis presentation and 20 minutes for questions and answers. Please ensure that applicants prepare a PowerPoint file for their presentation.
- (e) Candidates for the MEXT scholarship will be selected from successful applicants of the document screening based on the comprehensive evaluation of the document screening, oral interview and other elements.
- (f) MEXT will select the recipients from candidates recommended by Shimane University.
- (g) Notification will be sent in June to applicants who were selected for admission to the Special Program by MEXT.

Annex 1. Grade Point Average (GPA) Conversion Method

Applicants must have a minimum of 2.30 GPA, which is calculated by the following calculation method.

Grading Scale	Academic record				
4 point grade scale	-	Excellent	Good	Average	Fall
	-	A	B	C	F
	-	100-80	79-70	69-60	59 or less
5 point grade scale	S	A	B	C	F
	A	B	C	D	F
	100-90	89-80	79-70	69-60	59 or less
GPA Points	3	3	2	1	0

GPA = ([No. of GPA 3 Credits] × 3) + ([No. of GPA 2 Credits] × 2) + ([No. of GPA 1 Credits] × 1) + ([No. of GPA 0 Credits] × 0) / Total Number of Registered Credits

(Note 1) For courses in which credits are not earned, the number of credits will be calculated on the basis of the number of courses completed.

(Note 2) If applicants have transferred university, the credits earned in the latest university are used to calculate the GPA. However, the credits earned in the latest university does not cover for the past 2 years, the credit earned in the previous university will also be used for calculation.

(Note 3) The courses of which grades do not fit in the terms of the evaluation scale above (such as "Certified", or "Approved" "Pass/Fail,") will be excluded.

(Note 4) GPA scores will be rounded down to the second decimal place.

If you cannot calculate your academic score, please consult Dr. Sakai T. (E-mail address: sake@riko.shimane-u.ac.jp)

Annex 2. Language requirement

Applicants must have sufficient knowledge and skills in English by meeting one of the following conditions:

English	<p>(1) Achieved an English language proficiency test score equivalent to the B2 CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) level or above at the time of admission.</p> <p>(Test scores equivalent to the B2 CEFR level: IELTS 5.5-, TOEFL iBT 72-, TOEIC (Listening 400-, Reading 385-. Another test's score is acceptable if you can submit the evidence which shows the score is more than B2 CEFR.)</p> <p>(2) Completing courses of study where the medium of instruction is English meets entry requirements to graduate schools in Japan.</p> <p>(3) The university recognizes an applicant's English proficiency as equal or superior to the above (1) qualification.</p>
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