



JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Program for Long Term Participants (JICA Development Studies Program)

General Information

on

Agriculture Studies Networks for Food Security

(Agri-Net)

JFY2024

長期研修

「食料安全保障のための農学ネットワーク（2024年度）」

This handout provides an overview of the “Agriculture Studies Networks for Food Security (Agri-Net)” program/course, which is one of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)’s Knowledge Co-Creation Program (Long-Term). The program will be implemented as part of the Official Development Assistance of the Government of Japan based on bilateral agreement with respective governments.

The objective of the Knowledge Co-Creation Program (Long-Term) is to offer opportunities to people from partner countries to study at higher educational institutions in Japan and to help them build their network. This is intended to assist in the human resource development plans of the governments of partner countries and Japan, and eventually to expand and strengthen bilateral ties between the partner countries and Japan.

0. Background

What is JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP)

The Japanese Cabinet released the Development Cooperation Charter in February 2015, which stated, “In its development cooperation, Japan has maintained the spirit of jointly creating things that suit partner countries while respecting ownership, intentions and intrinsic characteristics of the country concerned based on a field-oriented approach through dialogue and collaboration. It has also maintained the approach of building reciprocal relationships with partner countries in which both sides learn from each other and grow and develop together.” JICA believes that this ‘Knowledge Co-Creation Program’ will serve as a foundation of mutual learning process.

What is JICA Development Studies Program (JICA-DSP)

JICA-DSP is being carried out by JICA as part of official development assistance (ODA) by the government of Japan. JICA-DSP is offered for international scholars accepted as the participants of JICA’s Human Resource Development Project who are enrolled in a degree program at a Japanese university.

<https://www.jica.go.jp/dsp-chair/english/dsp/overview/index.html>

What is Agriculture Studies Networks for Food Security (Agri-Net)

In 2019, JICA sets 20 thematic strategies for global issues as JICA Global Agenda*. Under this agenda, JICA will comprehensively contribute to the achievement of the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) by 2030 as well as realize Japan’s Development Cooperation Charter which focus on “human security,” “quality growth,” and “addressing global challenges”.

Regarding agriculture sector, the Goal 2 of the SDGs aims to “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture”. It will require adequate agricultural policies and introductions of appropriate technologies for stable food production.

In this context, the Agri-Net Program aims to support the Goal 2 of SDGs and two strategies in JICA’s Global Agenda (No.5 Agriculture and Rural Development (Sustainable Food Systems) and No.17 Natural Environment Conservation) through JICA’s Human Resource Development Projects in the field related to System, Policy and Organizations on Agriculture and Rural Development Sector; Sustainable Agriculture Production; Food Value Chain (FVC); Livestock Development and Animal Hygiene; Fisheries Development and Resources; and Nature Conservation.

*https://www.jica.go.jp/TICAD/en/overview/publications/global_agenda_20.html

1. Overview

JICA has provided training programs as a part of technical cooperation in various fields. To strengthen networks between the target countries in respective fields, JICA established a new long-term training program to foster young / mid-career bureaucrats, academicians, and leading human resources in various fields of target countries who are capable of influencing policy making processes in their countries or contributing to socioeconomic development in the near future.

Agri-Net was established in JFY 2019 under the framework of JICA Development Studies Program (JICA-DSP) for the purpose of promoting cooperation of sustainable development in the world.

Agri-Net will offer participants with special curriculums on Japanese developmental experience (JICA-DSP) and internships, if necessary, in addition to obtaining a Master's or PhD. degree.

2. Objectives

1. To develop human resources of public and private sectors under JICA's Global Agenda in the six fields related to Agriculture and Rural Development Sector; Sustainable Agriculture Production; Food Value Chain (FVC); Livestock Development and Animal Hygiene; Fisheries Development and Resources; and Nature Conservation.
2. To Strengthen a human network between partner countries and Japan in the above-mentioned field.

3. Course Outline

The course consists of the acceptance of scholars from target countries to study at Japanese universities in 6 fields below.

1. System, Policy and Organizations on Agriculture and Rural Development Sector
2. Sustainable Agriculture Production
3. Food Value Chain (FVC)
4. Livestock Development and Animal Hygiene
5. Fisheries Development and Resources
6. Nature Conservation

4. Duration

In principle, 2 years for master's course and 3 years for Ph.D. course (depending on the program offered by universities). The participants should arrive in Japan in September 2024 to start degree courses.

Course Duration:

For master's degree: September 2024 –September 2026 (2years)

For doctor's degree: September 2024 – September 2027 (3years)

Note 1 (Longer Duration):

- Some university set more than 3 years for doctor's course, please check admission information universities that you intend to apply.
- If so, be sure to obtain permission of your belonging organization to leave in that period.

Note 2 (Research Student):

- As a result of the matching, if the university judges the applicant that they need more time to prepare for entrance examination, university may request an applicant to enter the university as a research student for a period of six (6) months at longest. This period is additional and not counted as a part of regular course of Master's or Doctor's program. Research students are requested to stay in Japan and study intensively to utilize their time to prepare for the entrance examination.
- Before application, the applicants should consider the possibility of additional period as research students and should be approved by their employers.
- Necessary living cost during the period as research students will be paid by JICA following JICA's regulation.
- In case research students fail in the entrance exam, they **MUST** return to their home countries without delay (Agri-Net scholarship will be terminated at that moment).

5. Number of Participants

50 participants in total from the target countries.
(Maximum 15 participants allowed for Ph.D. courses)

*Currently, the needs survey for FY2024-2026 is being conducted. It is necessary that the country is selected as a target country through this needs survey.

*Please note that for the Agri-Net Program, which aims to develop human resources in the public and private sectors based on JICA's Global Agenda, JICA may recommend applicants who are strongly related to six fields above mentioned and JICA's participants of the Knowledge Co-Creation Program and other technical cooperation projects.

6. Language to be used in this Program

English

7. Eligibility

Applicants must satisfy the following requirements:

(1) Current Duties:

young or mid-career government officials, prospective academics, or personnel from

private institutions who are expected to contribute policy formulation or its implementation for tackling sustainable developmental issues in respective fields.

*Applicants from private sector should be from the field related to System, Policy and Organizations on Agriculture and Rural Development Sector; Sustainable Agriculture Production; Food Value Chain (FVC); Livestock Development and Animal Hygiene; Fisheries Development and Resources; Nature Conservation.

(2) Nationality:

citizen of the target countries for Agri-Net program FY2024

(3) Working experiences/ status:

- to have working experiences more than five (5) years in total,
- to have more than six (6) months working experience at their current employers,
- to obtain permission for application from their current employers,
- to secure reinstatement from their current belonging organizations.

(4) Age:

- for master's programs, thirty-five (35) years of age or under in principle (As of April 1st, 2024). However, should there be certain circumstances deemed to be considered, applicants over the age of 35 may become accepted. Please contact our JICA office for more information.
- for Ph.D. programs, forty (40) years of age or under in principle (As of April 1st, 2024). However, should there be certain circumstances deemed to be considered, applicants over the age of 40 may become accepted. Please contact our JICA office for more information.

(5) Educational Background:

- for master's programs, a bachelor's degree, or master's degree holder
- for Ph.D. programs, a master's degree holder

(6) Language:

adequate English skills both in written and oral communication to complete master's and/or Ph.D. courses with skills equivalent or exceeding the following.

TOEFL iBT: 90, IELTS: 6.5, CEFR B2

* Applicants to Agri-Net program are required to demonstrate official results of the English language proficiency test (such as TOEFL, IELTS, TOEIC and Duolingo) at the moment of the application.

(7) Physical Presence:

must physically come to Japan to carry out research activities to complete this program.

(8) Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:

Women are encouraged to apply to the program. JICA makes a commitment to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, providing equal opportunity to all applicants regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity.

(9) Others:

must not be receiving nor plan to receive other scholarship during the program.

8. Admissions

The following selection steps will conduct for admission

- (1) Applicants must be selected as JICA's official candidate through JICA's internal selection procedure.
- (2) Candidates must pass the general entrance examination of the university they have applied to, including examinations to enter the applicants' desired master's degree or

Ph.D. degree course¹.

(3) JICA will finalize successful candidates from those who passed the university's exam.

9. Application Guidelines

Applicants must apply through the procedures as described below, which are necessary requirements by both applicant's Government and the Government of Japan for the Official Development Assistance.

(1) Applicants are required to submit ALL the "Application Documents²" listed below to JICA Overseas Offices in charge of the applicants' countries. **ALL application documents are required at the moment of the application.**

1) Letter or Note Verbale from your government.

* If it is difficult to obtain it, JICA requests to fill and sign for the confirmation by the responsible organization in charge of ODA in "Official Application Form"

2) Application Form for Agri-Net Program FY 2024

3) Graduation certificate

* Officially certified copies of the original

* Written in English or accompanied with official translation

4) Academic transcript

* Must contain all the grades earned at the university attended by the applicant

* Officially certified copies of the original transcript

* Written in English or accompanied with official translation in English

5) Photocopy of certificate of English Proficiency Test

i. **ALL** applicants to Agri-Net are required to demonstrate English language proficiency by submitting official results of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or Duolingo. However, some universities do not acknowledge / accept all these tests, applicants are requested to confirm with the university they apply to.

ii. Adequate English skills both in written and oral communication to complete master's and/or Ph.D. courses with skills equivalent or exceeding the following.

TOEFL iBT: 90, IELTS: 6.5, CEFR B2

iii. Exemption from English proficiency test

The English proficiency test requirement is waived for applicants who meet one of the following criteria:

✓ have completed or are completing their Bachelor's or Master's program that are taught entirely in English in one of the following countries*

✓ have been working for full-time in a professional or academic environment

¹ Any inquiry about the results of JICA's screening procedure and University's general entrance examination will not be accepted.

² Submitted documents will not be returned. And JICA will NOT cover the cost of postage.

where English is used at least three years in one of the following countries*

*Countries: Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, USA, UK

6) A copy of Valid ID or Passport with photo (to confirm nationality, name, sex, and date of birth).

* Certified English translation must be attached if ID is not written in English, French, Portuguese, or Spanish.

7) Two (2) ID photos (4cm × 3cm) pasted on application form (Original and copy)

➤ If the applicant passes all the selection process and receives an acceptance notice from JICA, a health certificate will be required. Applicants without a health certificate may be denied admission.

10. Schedule and selection process

(1) Schedule

Universities <u>With Pre-matching Application Process</u>	
October, 2023	Nomination of applicants in respective organizations in target countries
	Selection of applicants by responsible organization in target countries
	“Application Documents” must be submitted to JICA overseas office in charge of the country of applicants.
November, 2023	Screening process by JICA
December 2023- January, 2024	Selection process by universities
By the end of January, 2024	Notification of the results of selection process to each applicant through JICA overseas office
February - June (approximately), 2024	Application to take University’s general entrance examination by the applicant
	University’s selection procedure *General entrance examination schedule is followed by each university
June - July, 2024	Arrival of results of general entrance examination from the university
	Finalization of JICA KCCP (Long-term) participants
June - August, 2024	Preparation for study in Japan if applicant is determined as a KCCP (Long-term) participant
August-October, 2024	Orientation by JICA overseas office before departure
	Arrival in Japan
	Orientation by JICA Domestic Offices
	Beginning of Fall Semester in Japan

*Schedule for the application and examination depends on each university (some university courses start from April).

*Schedule and program contents might be adjusted appropriately due to unforeseen circumstances.

(2) Selection process

There are mainly following three selection processes: (A) Selection by JICA in each country and Headquarters, (B) Matching with Japanese universities, (C) Selection by Japanese universities (entrance examination) and (D) Final Selection by JICA HQs.

*There are no fees to be charged directly by JICA at the selection process.

*The reasons for disqualification on each selection procedure will NOT BE DISCLOSED.

(A) 1st Selection: Selection by JICA in each country and HQ

[Necessary Actions for Applicants for this selection]

Each applicant needs to submit JICA’s Application Documents by the deadline set by JICA Overseas Office in the applicants’ country.

Period	November 2023 Please confirm the local deadline with the JICA Overseas Office. (All required materials must arrive at JICA HQ in Japan by <u>Monday, November 6, 2023 at 10:00 am, Japan Standard Time</u>)
Contents	Screening of submitted Application Documents by JICA Interview of applicants by JICA Overseas Office in applicants’ country
Objectives	To review qualifications and requirements of each applicant. To confirm applicants’ understanding of the program’s objectives To review working experiences/educational background in the context of the “Eligible Participants” (shown in the section 7 “Eligibility”). To confirm applicants’ capability of contributing to the achievement of the course objectives and to addressing his/her country’s development challenges after the program.
Result	Applicants who pass this selection can proceed to the 2 nd Selection.

(B) 2nd Selection: Matching with Japanese universities

Period	December 2023- January 2024 (approximately)
Contents	Document screening, interview (if necessary) by Japanese universities (mainly “Research Plan” of the JICA’s Application Documents, the Undergraduate degree graduation certificate, and Academic transcript)
Objectives	To match applicants with university courses/supervisors
Selection	JICA will send JICA’s Application Documents to the applicants’ desired universities. Universities will examine the documents to review if the applicant’s field of study and research plan are matched with the courses/supervisors. During this process, universities may contact the applicants for their judgement. Universities may conduct remote interview during process.
Result	Only those applicants who are accepted by the Japanese universities can proceed to the

	<p>3rd Selection. JICA will inform each applicant of the name of university where the applicant can apply for 3rd selection.</p> <p>[Note 1]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Each applicant can apply to only one (1) university indicated by JICA for the entrance examination.</u> - The applicants who pass the 2nd selection need to obtain and prepare additional application documents specified by university and submit them directly to that university. <p>[Note 2]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JICA will also inform each applicant of contact address of his/her academic supervisor (professor). - The applicants are then required to contact with the supervisor to receive their instructions. - The applicants are required to maintain good communication via mail/Zoom with their supervisors to gather information on the course or their study subjects. - Some supervisors may request to improve applicants' research sheet during this process before entrance examination.
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(C) 3rd Selection: Selection (Entrance Examination) by Japanese universities

[Necessary Actions for Applicants for this selection]

Each applicant needs to check necessary application documents set by the university where he/she applies to. He/she then needs to submit university's application documents directly to the university by the deadline set by the university. It is ALL the applicant's responsibility to duly submit required documents to the university by its deadline. JICA will NOT intervene in this process. Some universities require sending hard copies of documents to Japan.

Those who are required to enter as research student also need to check necessary application procedure as research student set by each university. JICA will NOT cover the cost of postage.

During this selection process, each applicant may be interviewed (ex. by using Zoom) depending on university's selection process.

Fee for entrance examinations is paid directly to each university by JICA.

Period	February – June 2024 (approximately)
Contents	Screening of submitted university's application documents and interviews by Japanese universities
Objectives	To select the final candidates for universities
Venue	If necessary, using Zoom or other means for interviews
Selection	Universities will screen the applicants through submitted university's application documents and interviews etc.

Result	The applicants who pass this selection will be selected proceed to JICA HQ's final screening.
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(D) 4th Selection: Finalization by JICA HQs

Considering budget, maximum number of participants and allocated countries, JICA makes a final decision for these processes.

Some of the applicants who even pass the 3rd Selection may NOT be selected as successful candidates of the program.

Note:

- **Withdrawal of the Application:** If applicants encounter the situation that needs to withdraw the application by force majeure during the selection process, the applicants need to inform JICA office about the situation as soon as possible.
- **Research Student:** When applicants will be accepted as only research students, the applicants need to attend additional six months course to prepare for the entrance examination of the university. If failed the entrance exam, they must return to their home country without delay (Agri-Net scholarship will be terminated at that moment).
- **Health certification:** JICA will make final decision of your acceptance after submitting your health certification. Applicants without a health certificate may be denied admission.

11. Expenses to be Borne by JICA

Under the JICA Long-term Trainee Allowance standards, JICA will cover expenses and allowance to participants accepted to the program/course. See the table below for further details. Note that the payments (e.g., for tuition, research support expenses, school support expenses) will not be paid to the accepted participants themselves, but directly to the university or other relevant institutions.

Expense category	Payment amount	Payment frequency
Tuition (examination fees, entrance fees, course fees)	Actual costs	According to the request from universities
Living Allowance*	JPY 117,000–148,000 per month*	Every month via university
Airfare	Actual costs	Upon arrival in Japan and upon returning home
Outfit Allowance**	JPY103,750 – 106,000	Once (upon arrival in Japan)
Moving Allowance***	Up to JPY164,000-224,000	Once (during the training period) **
Research Support Expenses****	Actual costs (up to	

	JPY360,000 per year)	
Medical care for participants who become ill after arriving in Japan	In accordance with the provisions of the medical insurance	

*Varies according to living area in Japan, type of accommodation, etc.

**Once, after opening bank account in Japan. As it takes several weeks to have the bank account opened, it is strongly recommended to bring cash for personal expenses during the period.

***Depending on the accommodation facility. Consultation with the university is required.

****Research Support Expenses are allowed to be provided via the university and be disbursed with the consultation and approval of the applicant's supervisor.

12. Expenses Not to be borne by JICA

JICA will not bear costs other than the allowances described above. JICA is not responsible for the following expenses especially:

- (1) Passport fees (for re-issuance and extensions, etc.)
- (2) Visa fees of a transit country and transportation expenses to obtain Visa
- (3) Transportation expenses to obtain Japanese Visa
- (4) Domestic travel expenses at the applicant's home country
- (5) Departure tax
- (6) Airport tax/airport facility charges outside of Japan, including third countries
- (7) Customs duty
- (8) Excess baggage charges
- (9) Compensation for lost and/or damaged baggage
- (10) "No show charge" to the transit airport hotel (non-refundable)
- (11) Lost - ticket fee
- (12) Accommodation fee for day-use hotel in return flight
- (13) Transportation expenses other than official programs
- (14) Telephone bill or mini-bar tab at accommodation
- (15) Medical costs related to pre-existing illness, pregnancy, and dental treatment
- (16) Medical cost related to the same illness over 180 days
- (17) "National Health Insurance" fee
- (18) Cost of postage

Note: If participant/accepted applicant does not follow the regulation of JICA, the participant may have to bear such other cost of necessary expenses.

13. Conditions for participation

Applicants for Agri-Net are required:

- (1) to understand that participants must physically come to Japan to participate in this program at the date designated by JICA (therefore successful applicants should apply for permission from their home country and for a passport as soon as possible),
- (2) not to be receiving nor plan to receive another scholarship during the program including other JICA KCCP (long-term) at the same time.
- (3) to understand that, if you will be accepted as a “research student”, attendance to additional six months course will be required to prepare for the entrance examination of the university. And permission to leave for additional six (6) months from the current employer may be necessary, if required by the university. (this period will be additional to two years of master course or three years of doctor course). And if you fail in the entrance exam, you must return to their home country without delay (Agri-Net program ends at that moment).
- (4) to enroll and complete JICA-DSP online courses when you receive JICA's instructions to do so.
- (5) the Government of Japan will examine applicants who belong to the military or other military-related organizations and/or who are enlisted in the military, taking into consideration of their duties, positions in the organization and other relevant information in a comprehensive manner to be consistent with the Development Cooperation Charter of Japan,
- (6) not to change course subjects or extend the course period,
- (7) to understand that the maximum duration of “Overseas research” and “Temporary Leave (leaving Japan for private purpose)” is 60 days, in principle,
- (8) to carry out such instructions and abide by such conditions as may be stipulated by both the nominating Government and the Japanese Government in respect of the course,
- (9) to observe the rules and regulations of the program implementing partners to provide the program or establishments (“Plagiarism“ especially is taken severely by enrolling university, regardless of whether it is direct plagiarism or self-plagiarism and participants may be subject to disciplinary action such as suspension),
- (10) to observe the rules and regulations at the place of the participants' accommodation,
- (11) to understand that inviting participant's family members is not recommended before 6 months since their arrival in Japan,
- (12) not to engage in political activities, or any form of employment for profit,
- (13) not to drive a car or motorbike, regardless of an international driving license possessed,
- (14) not to participate in the doctoral program of JICA's program immediately after completing the master's program of JICA's program,
- (15) to discontinue the program, should the participant violate Japanese laws or JICA's regulations, or commit illegal or immoral conduct, or become critically ill or seriously

injured or poor academic performance and be considered unable to continue the course.

- (16) The participants shall be responsible for paying any cost for treatment of the said health conditions except for the medical care expenses described in the table of “11. Expenses To be borne by JICA,”
- (17) not to change the air ticket (and flight class and flight schedule arranged by JICA) and lodging by the participants on their own,
- (18) to return to their home country on the designated flight by JICA, when they finish the program/course or when it is deemed impossible to finish the program within the program period (i.e., bad behavior, academic failure, violating the laws and ordinances), or when the participant is not successful on the regular course examination,
- (19) to refund allowances or other benefits paid by JICA in the case of a change in schedule,
- (20) to return the total amount or a part of the expenditure for KCCP depending on the severity of such violation, should the participants violate the laws and ordinances.

- (21) to be in good health and to be with good (sensible) sense to participate in the program,
- (22) to submit a Health Certificate in JICA format at the participant’s expense. The certificate must be the results of health check-up after the participant receive an acceptance notice from JICA,
- (23) to accept to submit a second Health Certificate in JICA format if the participant will not be able to arrive within 6 months from the date of his/her first medical examination. The cost of the Health Certificate will be borne by participants,
- (24) to accept to take tuberculosis related inspections organized by JICA after arriving in Japan and to submit the results to JICA and university.

END

Appendixes

1. **University List**
2. **Application Form (Excel)**
3. **Additional Application form for the Agri-Net program (Word)**



CORRESPONDENCE

For enquiries and further information, please contact your nearest JICA office.