

YLP-MEXT Scholarship Program

Young Leaders Program

School of Government

School of Local Governance



政策研究大学院大学
NATIONAL GRADUATE INSTITUTE
FOR POLICY STUDIES

A World of Opportunities for Young Leaders

Message from the Program Director

The Young Leaders Program (YLP) at GRIPS is a special master's degree program for promising young leaders in government. It is fully supported, including full scholarships for all students, by the Japanese government.

The YLP aims at nurturing future national leaders in Asia and other regions, forming international human networks of these leaders, establishing friendly relations among participating countries and improving the quality of public policy.



The specific content of the YLP is designed to provide young leaders with opportunities to enrich and enlarge their knowledge of global, regional and Japanese politics and economies, public administration and policies from comparative, historical and contemporary perspectives. The faculty is composed of eminent academics and former government officials with a wide range of experience in both national and local governments.

I hope you will join the YLP and realize your dream of contributing to your country and to the global community in your future career.

Hirofumi Takada

Director of Young Leaders Program

Vice President, Professor

*Specialty: Local Public Administration
and Finance, Local Revitalization*



Andrea Pressello

Deputy Director of Young Leaders Program (School of Government)

Professor

Specialty: Japan's diplomatic history and foreign policy

About GRIPS

The National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) was founded in 1997 by the Japanese government as a stand-alone national graduate university focused on policy studies. Future policy leaders and researchers from all over the world gather here, forming an international research hub.

Photo : ★ Masao Nishikawa

1 About the Program

The YLP is a one-year program that culminates in a Master's Degree in Public Policy. The YLP is part of the Japanese government's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) scholarship program.

The YLP has two parallel and overlapping programs run through the School of Government and the School of Local Governance. The curriculum for both courses is taught entirely in English and covers a wide range of topics concerning public administration and policy formulation. It also offers the opportunity for intensive discussion with politicians, high-level government officials, corporate directors, journalists and other leaders. The program includes a field trip and a workshop and requires a final paper based on independent study. There are opportunities to collaborate on policy research with other institutions, including Japan's central and local governments. The colloquium, which meets fifteen or sixteen times a year, is an unrivalled opportunity to discuss fresh ideas with eminent speakers.

Goals and mission

The goal of the YLP is to cultivate national leaders of the future in Asia and around the world. Participants gain a deep understanding of Japan through their activities and work during the program and build the foundations for a network of friendly relationships and improved policy planning capacity among national leaders.

Graduates from the YLP are expected to return to their former governmental organizations and apply their knowledge and experience to become strong leaders.

Target group

The YLP is for exceptionally promising young government officials who have already shown their dedication through work experience in public administration. Students are admitted on the basis of an appraisal of their potential to become future leaders at home, to play important roles in their countries' development and to maintain strong, long-lasting working relationships with Japan and other countries around the world.



2 Curriculum

Course Offerings for 2025-2026

School of Government

Category	Course Name	Credit
I Required Courses	The World and the SDGs	1
	Introduction to Japan	2
	Colloquium	2
	Independent Study	4
	Field Trip	2
II Recommended Courses	Microeconomics I	2
	Essential Microeconomics	4
	Contemporary Japanese Economy	2
	Japanese Economy	2
	Economic Development of Japan	2
	Government and Politics in Japan	2
	International Relations	2
	International Political Economy	2
	International Security Studies	2
	Comparative Politics	2
	Structure and Process of Government	2
	Leadership and Knowledge Creation	2
	GRIPS Forum I	1
	GRIPS Forum II	1
III Elective Courses	Macroeconomics I	2
	Government and Market	2
	Data Science for Public Policy	2
	International Trade	2
	Development Economics	2
	Japanese Foreign Policy	2
	Human Resources Management	2
	Social Security System in Japan	2
	Introduction to Data Science I	2
	Introduction to Data Science II	2
	Local Government System and Finance	2
	Local Governance in the Changing World	2
X Others	Selected Topics in Policy Studies I -IV	
	Courses not listed in this table	
X Others	Courses offered by the Center for Professional Communication	

School of Local Governance

Category	Course Name	Credit
I Required Courses	The World and the SDGs	1
	Local Government System and Finance	2
	Local Governance in the Changing World	2
	Introduction to Japan	2
	Colloquium	2
II Recommended Courses	Independent Study	4
	Workshop	2
	Microeconomics I	2
	Essential Microeconomics	4
	Economic Development of Japan	2
	Government and Politics in Japan	2
	International Relations	2
	Structure and Process of Government	2
	Leadership and Knowledge Creation	2
	GRIPS Forum I	1
	GRIPS Forum II	1
III Elective Courses	Macroeconomics I	2
	Government and Market	2
	Data Science for Public Policy	2
	International Trade	2
	Development Economics	2
	East Asian Economies	2
	Japanese Foreign Policy	2
	International Security Studies	2
	Human Resources Management	2
	Social Security System in Japan	2
	Small and Medium Enterprise and Technology	2
	Introduction to Data Science I	2
X Others	Introduction to Data Science II	2
	Selected Topics in Policy Studies I -IV	
X Others	Courses not listed in this table	
	Courses offered by the Center for Professional Communication	

Courses offered in the program are subject to change.
For the latest, please see
https://www.grips.ac.jp/en/education/inter_programs/leader/



Coursework

The YLP offers a wide range of courses concerning public administration, economics, political science and policy formulation. In addition to the required courses, students can select subjects in accordance with their interests and needs. All courses are taught in English.

Colloquium

One of the unique features of the YLP is the Colloquium, where YLP students are offered an exclusive and unrivalled opportunity to discuss and share ideas with a diverse range of eminent speakers, including many distinguished government leaders and business executives. The Colloquium meets fifteen or sixteen times a year, from the fall to spring term.

Independent Study

Students work one-on-one with an instructor on their master's thesis (or "policy paper") on a particular topic related to public administration and policy formulation. There are also regular interactive seminars focused on discussions and presentations. All students will give a presentation on their research in June or July.

Students are supported in their research and writing by the Center for Professional Communication (CPC). The CPC organizes academic skills and writing workshops throughout the academic year and offers individual support through consultations and tutorials during final policy paper writing.

Field Trip (School of Government)

Educational field trip is organized and provide a great opportunity to learn about local governments and communities, and socioeconomic developments in Japan. The field trips complement what is being taught in the classrooms and take you to places that you may not be able to explore and learn about on your own. You will visit central and local government offices, cultural and historical heritage sites, and industrial facilities.

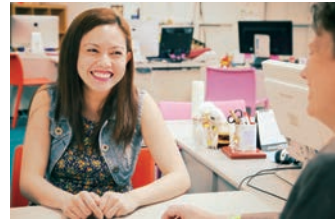
Workshop (School of Local Governance)

During the workshop, you will visit local governments to meet with officials who will share their first-hand experience and practice in policy planning and implementation. You will also have a chance to visit various facilities such as a day care center for elderly people and a local economic and tourism development facility. You may thus be able to catch a glimpse of how the Japanese local government system actually works in everyday life in Japan.



3 Student Support and Resources

One unique aspect of GRIPS is our extensive support system for assisting students in their daily living. We consider this aspect of your lives to be every bit as important as your academic life, especially for foreign scholars unfamiliar with Japan. As international students have comprised, on average, about 60% of the GRIPS student body over the last 20 years, we have developed comprehensive services to assist students in their day-to-day living.



The Student Office organizes orientation programs for incoming students and assists arriving international students in getting organized and settled in Japan. It also organizes a number of social events and activities, including field trips and Japanese cultural experiences. The Student Office also functions as a hub to promote interaction and understanding between Japanese and foreign nationals.

Faculty

GRIPS boasts a faculty of around 200 members, which includes world-class academics and distinguished practitioners with many years of experience in public- or private-sector policy analysis and management. Our faculty's expertise spans a wide array of policy issues and areas of research, which allow us to offer a broad range of courses in policy-related fields.

For more on our faculty members, please see <http://www.grips.ac.jp/en/about/directory/>



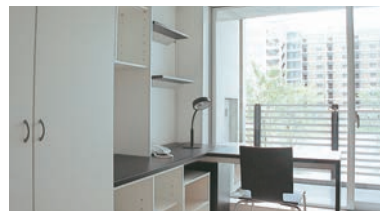
Accommodation

Accommodation is provided in the Tokyo International Exchange Center (TIEC), operated by the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO).

Tokyo International Exchange Center Residence Halls

In the bayside area, built in 2001 by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)

Room Types: Single, Couple, Family

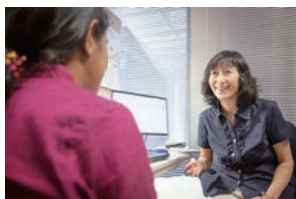


Resources

Center for Professional Communication

The mission of the Center for Professional Communication is to support GRIPS' students, faculty, and staff in developing effective professional communication skills and competencies needed to communicate productively in an environment of multiple stakeholders. To that end, the CPC offers a range of instruction and support in fundamental areas of professional communication in English and Japanese including policy paper writing, professional speaking, grant proposal writing, and digital communications.

The CPC also provides opportunities for cultural and academic exchanges through a self-access learning center, organizes seminars and special events related to all aspects of professional communication, and prepares customized materials for students and staff on academic and professional writing and language learning.



The Center supports Japanese language learning of students who lack Japanese language proficiency for daily life and study. The

CPC's courses and workshops are designed to help students achieve greater competence in Japanese language comprehension and speaking. The Center also facilitates cultural and traditional experiences by organizing special events and cultural tours.

Center for Data Science

The progress of digital innovation has been making it possible to utilize diverse big data via the internet, and there arise immense expectations to the government for implementing effective policy based on precise predictions by the use of big data to provide better solutions to social problems. Needless to say, data science is crucial in this context. To deal with this circumstance, GRIPS launched the Center for Data Science in April 2022 for the purpose of promoting deeper data science education and research. Taking advantage of holding both specialized policymakers with extensive practical experience who are well-versed in actual policymaking processes and researchers in the field of policy science in academia, GRIPS will carry out activities to develop the Center for Data Science as a pioneering and unique data science research hub in the field of policy science, aiming at fostering policymakers suited for the 21st century.

Library

- Extensive collection of publications in the field of policy studies, collected from around the world
- Collection contains over 200,000 volumes, including reference books, statistical collections, working papers, and government documents
- Large collections of periodicals that include more than 17,000 journals, many of which are available online
- Well-trained staff are equipped to respond to research-related requests



Facilities

Student Rooms and IT Support Center

- Each student is provided with a study space, accessible 24 hours a day
- A computer help desk is open to all students during regular working hours



Health Services Center

- In-house health clinic
- Nurse on duty daily, doctor available several days a week
- Provides medical advice, basic medical examinations
- Will refer to an appropriate hospital or specialist when necessary

Fitness Center

- Running machines and other training equipment
- Showers
- Free use by students, faculty, and staff

4 Admissions

Eligibility

The YLP is open to young public administrators and government officials who are expected to play active roles in the future as national leaders in their home countries. A minimum of three years of full-time work experience (five is preferable) in the field in the applicant's home country is a prerequisite for admission to the program.

The School of Government focuses on national policy-making and accepts students from 28 countries: China, Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Viet Nam, Laos, Cambodia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Australia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Republic of Türkiye.

The School of Local Governance focuses on enhancement of local governance and government to respond to various regional issues in such areas as education, health, social welfare, and local development. It accepts students from 19 countries:

China, Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam, Laos, Cambodia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan, Republic of Türkiye, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania.

Admission to the YLP requires a bachelor's degree or its equivalent from a recognized, accredited university of the highest standard as well as certifiable health. The applicant should be, in principle, under 40 years of age as of 1 October, 2026; should be proficient in English with a TOEFL iBT score of 79, IELTS Academic score of 6.0 or equivalent and must be able to obtain a Student visa prior to arrival in Japan.

Applicants are not eligible if they are unable to travel to Japan by the last date of the period specified by GRIPS. People who are active members of military forces or civilians employed by the military during any part of the scholarship period or who are enrolled in a Japanese university under Student status or plan to enroll at a Japanese university as a privately financed international student between the time of application for the YLP scholarship and the time the scholarship period is due to commence are also ineligible. Loss of status as public administrator or government official before completion of the program will also render participants ineligible.





Scholarships

An allowance of 242,000 yen per month (in FY 2025; amount is subject to change) will be provided to grantees during the term of the scholarship. Grantees who are absent from the university for long periods will no longer be provided with the scholarship. Application fee, admission fee and tuition will be paid by the Japanese government. An economy-class air ticket from your home country to Japan upon enrollment at GRIPS and an economy-class air ticket from Japan to your home country upon completion of your studies at GRIPS will be provided.

Application procedures

Applicants should obtain an application form from the Japanese embassies or recommending authorities in the eligible countries (please check the GRIPS website for details about the recommending authorities in your country). Applicants must submit the following documentation in hard copy: application, recommendation letter from the recommending authority, 2 letters of recommendation by your immediate superior at work or supervising professor of the university you attended, official transcripts of academic record and graduation/degree certificates, official evidence of English ability, passport copy, essays and certificate of health.

For details, please see

http://www.grips.ac.jp/en/education/inter_programs/leader/



5 Alumni

One of the greatest resources and joys of studying at GRIPS is the diversity of the student community. The connections you make at GRIPS are a valuable part of your degree. The GRIPS Alumni Network will ensure they are lifetime bonds by keeping you in touch with fellow alumni and the school.

As a GRIPS graduate, you join an impressive network of over 6,100 alumni, including 580 graduates from YLP, who are actively shaping future policies in over 120 countries and regions around the world. Connectivity and communication sit at the heart of the alumni community. We offer a variety of ways to remain engaged with GRIPS and strengthen your ties with fellow alumni around the globe. These include alumni reunions, seminars, a searchable alumni directory and online networking opportunities utilizing social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn.

Number of YLP Alumni

Australia	Bangladesh	Brunei	Bulgaria	Cambodia	China	Czech Republic
24	17	4	8	33	38	15
Hungary	India	Indonesia	Japan	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyz Republic	Laos
13	22	35	9	17	12	29
Malaysia	Mongolia	Myanmar	Pakistan	Philippines	Poland	Republic of Korea
30	7	25	25	39	28	16
Romania	Singapore	Slovakia	Sri Lanka	Thailand	Republic of Türkiye	Turkmenistan
12	4	6	12	46	3	4
Uzbekistan	Viet Nam					
37	10					
						Total 580

as of April 2025



Young Leaders Program (School of Government)



Ana D. Georgieva (Bulgaria, 2022)

Digital Transformation Policy and Project Officer, Eurocities.

Participating in the YLP was an unforgettable experience! I had the privilege to deepen my academic and professional knowledge and gain new perspectives through diverse courses taught by renowned academicians, while learning from and alongside young leaders from all around the world. I made valuable friendships and was deeply enriched by the people, history, culture and hospitality of Japan. Beyond the precious knowledge, skills and memories, I came away inspired to further cultivate in my professional and personal life the sense of harmony and balance inherent to Japanese culture – where even seemingly contradictory concepts and ideas can coexist beautifully.



Mohamad Shahrizan bin Omar (Malaysia, 2023)

Assistant Director, Prime Minister Department

The Young Leaders Program at GRIPS has broadened my horizons with a comprehensive understanding of international relations and development, economics, government structures, and more. The programme's structured curriculum is well-suited for mid-career officers like myself, equipping us with essential knowledge and analytical tools. The Professors are highly knowledgeable and experts in their respective fields. I also made strong connections with colleagues from many countries, which expanded my network and gave me new perspectives through our different diverse experiences. For me, YLP has been shaping my academic and professional capabilities, molding me into a more thoughtful, globally-minded, and purpose-driven future leader.



Magdalena Janas (Australia, 2023)

Adviser, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Australia

My time in the Young Leaders Program (YLP) at GRIPS was a great privilege and a unique experience that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. I learnt so much by connecting with other civil servants from across the world, and was challenged by passionate and knowledgeable professors across a broad range of interesting subjects. I also valued becoming more familiar with Japanese history, politics and culture both through the program and by virtue of living in Japan for a year. I found YLP incredibly valuable both personally and professionally, and would recommend it to any civil servant looking to expand their horizons.

Young Leaders Program (School of Local Governance)



Ananda Putri Sujatmiko (Indonesia, 2021)

Policy Analyst, Deputy Minister for Institutional Affairs and Governance,
Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform

Studying at GRIPS was a truly transformative experience! The university provided top-notch academic facilities and a curriculum that balanced theory with practical application—perfect for my role as a bureaucrat. I was taught by distinguished professors who remain supportive even after graduation. GRIPS also connected me with a global network of professionals, enriching my perspective on policy-making. The academic staff were incredibly helpful, both academically and personally. Located in vibrant Roppongi, GRIPS introduced me to the dynamic lifestyle and vibrant culture of Tokyo. I'm grateful and a true privilege to be a YLP alumna under the prestigious MEXT scholarship.



Raina Abdul Rashid (KAS) (India, 2023)

Officer on Special Duty, Project YUVA /Under Secretary, Labour & Employment Department,
Government of Jammu & Kashmir, India.

The Young Leaders Program (YLP) at GRIPS was a transformative experience that significantly shaped my professional journey. The academic rigor and insights from distinguished professors deepened my understanding of public policy and governance. Interacting with a cohort of emerging leaders broadened my perspective on administrative issues. Exposure to Japan's socio-economic framework and culture was equally enriching. The networks built continue to influence my work. The knowledge gained through YLP now supports my role as Officer on Special Duty in Project YUVA, an initiative to create 1.37 lakh enterprises and 4.25 lakh jobs for inclusive development.

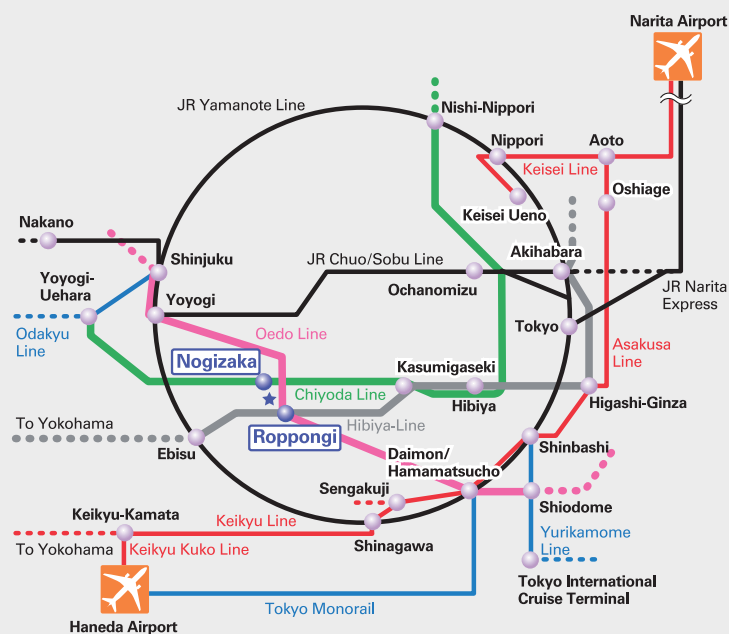
Address and Contact Information

Getting to GRIPS

The GRIPS building is located in the center of Tokyo, conveniently accessible by public transport. Both Nogizaka Station on the Chiyoda Line and Roppongi Station on the Oedo and Hibiya Lines are within 10 minutes walking distance.



Roppongi Hills



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