

2017 Local Government Officials Training Program in Japan

Trainee Invitation Guidelines

The Local Government Officials Training Program (LGOTP) invites foreign provincial/state, municipal and other local government officials to come to Japan as trainees. Successful applicants are assigned to prefectures, designated cities, or other municipalities (hereinafter referred to as local governments) for a fixed period. The objectives of the program are to provide trainees with the know-how and technical skills of Japanese local governments, to contribute to the development of the trainees' local governments, to promote the internationalization of the host institutions, and to increase mutual understanding between the hosts and participants.

Each participating Japanese local government takes the lead in organizing the training program, along with the support of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), and the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR).

1 Program Overview

Since being established in 1996, the LGOTP has welcomed 1,115 trainees from 38 nations and region. After returning home, past trainees have utilized the valuable experiences gained while studying in Japan and have continued to play an active role in promoting friendly relations with their host institutions.

2 Length of Training

The training program runs for approximately 6 to 12 months, starting on Sunday, 21 May, 2017. The length of training varies depending on the host institution.

3 Training Program Overview

(I) Group Training

①Tokyo Orientation (May 22nd – 23rd) : Tokyo

An orientation to Japan, lectures on the Japanese local government system, and meeting representatives from host governments

②JIAM Training (May 25th – June 22nd) : Shiga Prefecture

Focuses on building Japanese language skills, learning about Japanese culture, and providing a deeper understanding of Japanese local government administration. Training is held at JIAM (Japan Intercultural Academy of Municipalities) in Shiga Prefecture.

③JIAM Step-up Training (June 22nd – July 6th) : Shiga Prefecture

Extra two weeks of intensive Japanese language training (based on requests from host institutions)

(II) Specialized Training

Practical training is provided to each trainee in a specific field. This is held at the host institution.

4 Program Details

Upon arrival in Japan, trainees will spend approximately one month in Group Training. Group Training focuses primarily on Japanese language studies, but also includes studies of local government administration and other topics.

Following the completion of Group Training, trainees will move to their assigned local government to receive Specialized Training which is organized by each host institution. Specialized Training is the core component of the LGOTP. The content and length of the training program will vary depending on the trainee's host institution and will be decided by the host institution with considerations given to the wishes of the trainee.

5 Eligibility Criteria

Candidates for the LGOTP must:

- (1) Be an official of a province/state, municipality or other local government body.
- (2) Be able to converse in Japanese or English. In particular, Japanese is extremely important as the trainee will be residing in Japan for an extended period of time. Those with language skills will be given precedence if the number of applicants is greater than that of training positions being offered at the host institution.
- (3) Be eager and committed to studying at a local government in Japan. Also, after returning home, trainees must actively apply the knowledge attained during training to their own local government and work towards furthering the friendship between both countries and local governments.
- (4) Be willing to cooperate with the host institution and follow the host institution's instructions. Applicants must also fully acknowledge that conditions during their Specialized Training may differ from those of other trainees. Depending on the host institution, there may be differences regarding the length and content of the training program, working conditions, living environments, etc.
- (5) Be able to obtain the recommendation of the applicant's department head and receive approval to spend 6 to 12 months training in Japan.
- (6) In principle, be between 20 and 39 years of age upon arrival in Japan.
(However, this does not apply if an agreement has been reached between the dispatching and hosting institutions, or under other special circumstances.)
- (7) Have completed secondary education (high school education) in the applicant's home country.

- (8) Be a reliable individual who is physically and mentally healthy. (Because the program runs for an extended period, it is possible that this may pose risks to pregnant women. Therefore pregnancy is regarded as a disqualifying condition for participation in this program.)
- (9) Not have any past legal problems that would prevent the applicant from entering Japan.
- (10) Have never previously participated in the program.

6 Terms and Conditions

(1) Selection and Placement of Trainees

The capacity of local governments to receive trainees is limited and the placement of applicants cannot be realized unless the conditions of both applicants and host institutions can be successfully matched. For this reason, the acceptance and placement of trainees is decided by host institutions, CLAIR, and MIC through discussions based on candidate applications.

(2) Working conditions during Specialized Training

As previously stated in the “Eligibility Criteria” section, conditions for each trainee will differ depending on the host institution.

In general, the hours of training will be the same as the normal working hours of the host institution. Saturdays, Sundays, and Japanese national holidays will generally be non-working days. However, the trainee should follow the instructions set out by the host institution in regards to holidays. In some cases, depending on circumstances surrounding the training program, it may be necessary to schedule training activities on Saturdays, Sundays, or Japanese holidays.

Appropriate housing will be arranged by the host institution.

(3) Expenses and Discontinuation of Training

Host institutions will cover training costs, including round-trip international airfare, living expenses, training fees, and transportation expenses within Japan. However, if a trainee discontinues training before the end of the training period to return to the trainee’s home country without a compelling reason, all the training costs shall, in principle, be paid by the trainee or by the organization in the trainee’s home country which recommended the trainee for the LGOTP.

Trainees will generally not be permitted to leave Japan for temporary visits during the period of training unless there is a compelling reason. In the rare case that a temporary trip abroad is approved, the costs shall be borne by the trainee (unless the trip is deemed a part of their training).

(4) Overseas Travel Expenses

The host institution will provide the trainee with a round-trip ticket between a designated international airport in the trainee’s country and an international airport in Japan. The trainee shall bear the cost of transportation to the designated

international airport in the trainee's home country. However, expenses related to the use of the designated international airport, expenses incurred at in-transit stops (such as overnight accommodation fees), and the cost of traveling in Japan between the international airport and the trainee's assigned host institution shall be borne by the host institution.

As Tokyo Orientation will be held immediately after arrival in Japan, all trainees must arrive at Narita International Airport.

7 Preparing to Come to Japan after Selection

- (1) Host institutions will send a Notification of Acceptance to successful applicants' employers who shall then pass it on to the trainees.
- (2) Trainees whose acceptance has been confirmed shall submit the following documents in preparation for entering Japan as per the instructions of the host institution:
 - ① Photographs (4 photos of 4cm height × 3cm width taken within the past 3 months)
 - ② Post-training return-to-job guarantee form (original and duplicate, 1 copy each)
 - ③ Personal identification (one copy)
 - ④ Passport (one copy)

Trainees without a passport are asked to apply for one immediately upon acceptance to the program and must submit a copy as soon as it is issued.

- (3) After a trainee has been selected, the dispatching organization shall ensure that the trainee has the time and opportunity to study Japanese, and the trainee shall take it upon him or herself to do so prior to arriving in Japan.

Even for trainees who will undergo training in English (or their mother tongue), a basic level of conversational Japanese is necessary, as English (or their mother tongue) is generally not used in daily life in Japan. Trainees should attain a basic level of the Japanese language prior to arrival in Japan.

- (4) Should a pregnancy be discovered after acceptance to the program, notify your host institution or CLAIR immediately.

Important Notice

- (1) Japanese government regulations state that dependents of trainees participating in this program may NOT qualify for a dependent visa.
- (2) Please bear in mind when applying for this program that JIAM does NOT have the facility or staff required for meal preparation and other services during Ramadan.