

Kumamoto University Doctoral Student Support Program
Program for Fostering Innovators to Lead a Better Co-being Society
Application Guidelines for AY2025 (Autumn)

At Kumamoto University, we are providing support for doctoral students to create an environment where they can focus on research and to assist in shaping career paths after completion. This support is possible with funding from the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) and their Support for Pioneering Research Initiated by the Next Generation (SPRING) program.

Starting from April 2024 (AY2024), our aim is to further improve the motivation to enter doctoral study and the fostering of doctoral candidates with advanced research capabilities. To achieve this, we will implement the “Program for Fostering Innovators to Lead a Better Co-being Society” (the Better Co-being Program).

Kumamoto University has also been selected for the "Next Generation AI Human Resources Development Program" (the "BOOST Program") implemented by JST and we have implemented the “Global Doctoral Human Resource Development Program for Leading the Field of AI” (hereinafter referred to as the “Guide4AI Program”) with the aim of fostering outstanding doctoral talents in interdisciplinary areas, with AI as the core subject. Applicants interested in both programs can apply for both (duplicate applications are possible). Please refer to the separate [Guide4AI Program recruitment outline](#) for further details.

For AY2025’s Guide4AI Program, selection will be made from among those who have applied for this program. Additionally, if applying to both programs and meeting the requirements for both, priority will be given to acceptance into the Guide4AI Program.

1. Number of Students Accepted for Admission

5 students (Limited to those who entered the first year of a 3- or 4-year doctoral course on October 1, 2025)

2. Eligibility for Application

Doctoral course students enrolled in the graduate schools listed below may apply (however, those taking an absence from university as of October 1st, 2025, are not eligible):

- Graduate School of Science and Technology
- Graduate School of Medical Sciences
- Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Applicants must also fulfil the conditions below:

- (1) Students who entered the first year of a 3- or 4-year doctoral course on October 1, 2025

- (2) Students who are NOT supported by the following may apply:
- JSPS Special Research Fellowship
 - MEXT Scholarship
 - Foreign students who are supported by scholarship programs in their home country
- (3) Students who are deemed to NOT be receiving a stable income which is sufficient to meet living expenses, such as an income from a company or university position may apply (a stable income is classed as approximately 2.4 million yen/year)
- (4) Students who have never received a disciplinary action stipulated in Kumamoto University's Regulations
- (5) Students who can take full part in the program throughout the support period

3. Support Amount

Living expenses: 200,000 JPY/month

Research grant: 200,000 JPY/year ((Those accepted in Autumn AY2025 will receive half this amount, 100,000 JPY)

- * The living expenses and research grant amount are subject to change depending on government policies and budget conditions
- * Living expenses and research grant will be supported only for the official duration of respective courses in the university.
- * The first payment of living expenses for those accepted by the program will be made in December as a lump sum for the period from October to December. It will be paid monthly thereafter.
- * In line with university rules, the research grant can be used on necessary goods for research, travel expenses, etc. The research grant will be managed and distributed by the affiliated laboratory.
- * Furthermore, if your living expenses payment begins or ends during the middle of a month, the amount paid in that month will be determined by the university pro rata.
- * The amount equivalent to living expenses is treated as miscellaneous income under tax law and is subject to income tax and residential tax.
 - For the health insurance and dependent allowances, please contact the person in charge at the workplace of head of the family (e.g. parents).
 - Please contact your local tax office for the regulation of income tax for dependents.
- * If you are an international student who has not yet arrived in Japan, the start of support (payment of living expenses and allocation of research expenses) will be after your arrival in Japan.

4. Program Terms

Students who are selected for the program must comply with the following terms. In the case that a student does not comply with any of these terms, payment of living expenses and the

research grant may be suspended.

- (1) Students should focus on their research activities.
- (2) Students should attend the courses on research ethics and compliance provided by the university.
- (3) Students should get confirmation of enrollment every month.
- (4) Students should submit a research plan and a research report every year to the Program Supervisor.
- (5) Throughout the support period, participants are required to complete the following educational programs as defined by this program:
 - (a) Participate in one or more overseas training sessions during the period of support, or obtain credits for one of the following courses listed in the appendix (pg. 6) titled " Doctoral Cooperative Education through Research Internships", "HIGO Internship II "
 - (b) Attend all colloquium and reporting sessions
 - (c) Take credits for this program (see appendix, pg. 6) in accordance with the course completion procedures
- (6) Register with the Cooperative Education through Research Internships Consortium system and JGRAD

5. Application Procedures

(1) Application Method

- Please register on and download the application forms from the website below
Website link : https://higoprogram.jp/en/bettercobeing_english/
- Please fill out all required information and submit all forms as a single combined PDF file via the File Submission Box.
When uploading the PDF file, please name the file using your affiliation sign and full name.
(e.g., D : Full Name). *Make sure to enter the affiliation sign as a capital letter.

Affiliation sign	Affiliation	
D	自然科学教育部	Graduate School of Science and Technology
R	医学教育部	Graduate School of Medical Sciences
Y	薬学教育部	Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences

(2) Submission Documents

- Program Application Form (entered directly through Form)
*We will also confirm whether you wish to apply for the Guide4AI program.
- Written statement for reason of application (upload as PDF)
*If you wish to apply for the Guide4AI Program, additional documents are required
- Research Plan (upload as a PDF)

- Confirmation form (checklist) for application documents
- Scores of external English examinations such as TOEIC, etc.
- * Only scores from external English proficiency tests taken within the two years prior to the application start date will be accepted
 - If you have them, attach them to the back of the Confirmation form (checklist) for application documents. If you do not have them, you do not need to attach anything

(3) Application Period

September 22nd (Monday) – October 3rd (Friday), 2025

6. Selection Procedure and Notification of Results

- (1) Selection will be based on an applicant's submitted application and by interview.

(Points to consider in your application)

Reasons for application (clarity of motivation and ambition, vision for career path, motivation for research, abilities for cross-disciplinary training and research, and learning in different fields, training of cross-disciplinary research ability, and ambition and motivation for challenging career paths, etc.)

Research plan (scientific contribution, objectives and feasibility of research, clarity of application form, social impact, potential for integration with other fields, etc.)

English language score from an external examination

(Points to consider during your interview)

Motivation, reasons for one's application, research plan, career vision, etc.

- (2) The language used for the written examination and interview shall be Japanese or English.
- (3) Interviews will be conducted via Zoom, and they are planned to be held between October 20th (Mon) to October 22nd (Wed). We shall inform you about the exact date and time of the interview via the email address you provide in your application.
- (4) The results of the selection process shall be announced at the beginning of November.

7. Handling of Personal Information

- (1) Personal information contained in the application documents will be used for selection of program students and other purposes related to the program.
- (2) Personal information such as test results used for the selection of program students will be used for the compilation and analysis of selection results and for the investigation and analysis of selection method.
- (3) In order to carry out (1) and (2), some aspects may be outsourced to an external company. In such a case, after making an appropriate contract for careful handling of personal information, all or part of the acquired personal information will be provided to the company.

8. Orientation for the Program

Orientation video will be posted on the Better Co-being program website.

(https://higoprogram.jp/en/bettercobeing_english/#link2)

9. Caution

- The names of selected students will be posted on the university homepage.
- After submission, as a general rule you will not be allowed to make any changes to your application.
- Applications will not be returned.
- Applicants who include false information in their application will be rejected and may be rejected even after the selection process has finished.
- A follow-up survey of selected students will be conducted. Students will be asked to participate in these surveys for up to 10 years after completion of the program.
- After selection by the program, students must submit a certificate of completion of research ethics education (eAPRIN or eL CoRE) conducted by the university. You will receive information from your affiliated department, so please make sure to take the course as soon as possible.

10. Contact Information

Headquarters for Admissions and Education, Graduate Program Education Promotion Division

daigakuin-kyoiku@jimu.kumamoto-u.ac.jp

※Please send any inquiries by email

Appendix

Program Courses and Credits

区分 Subject Group	授業科目 Program Courses	単位数 Credits	履修方法 Course Attendance Method
異分野横断・挑戦的研究力養成パッケージ科目群 Cross-Discipline / Challenging Researcher Development Package Courses	研究の最前線と知の統合 ※1 Forefront of Research and Integration of Knowledge ※1	1	他教育部（大学院教養科目を含む）の授業科目を含め2科目以上 At least 2 courses in this subject group and one at least one subject should be from other graduate school (including graduate school liberal arts courses)
	Current Science and Technology in Japan II(日本の先端科学II) ※2	2	
	現代社会理解 A ※2 Understanding Contemporary Society A ※2	1	
	現代社会理解 B ※2 Understanding Contemporary Society B ※2	1	
	技術革新のための基礎科学 ※2 Basic Science for Technological Innovation ※2	1	
	科学の歴史 ※2 History of Sciences ※2	1	
	S-HIGO 最先端研究セミナーB ※3 S-HIGO Cutting Edge Seminar B ※3	2	
	深度異文化理解プログラムI ※4 In-Depth Cross-Cultural Understanding Program I※4	2	
	深度異文化理解プログラムII ※4 In-Depth Cross-Cultural Understanding Program I※4	2	
キャリア開発・コンピテンシー養成パッケージ科目群 Career Development / Competency Development Package Courses	博士ジョブ型研究インターンシップ ※1 Doctoral Cooperative Education through Research Internships ※1	2	2科目目以 P.3 の 4. (5) a.の規程により単位を修得した科目を除く) 2 or more subjects (excluding courses for which credits are earned in accordance with the regulations in 4. (5) a. on pg. 3)
	HIGO リーダーシップトレーニング講座 ※1 HIGO Leadership Training Course ※1	1	
	HIGO インターンシップ II ※1 HIGO Internship II ※1	1	
	HIGO 企業・行政セミナー II ※1 HIGO Business and Governmental Seminar II ※1	1	
	科学英語演習 I ※2 Practical Scientific English I ※2	1	
	科学英語演習 II ※2 Practical Scientific English II ※2	1	
	マネジメント概論 ※2 Introduction to Management ※2	1	

備考

- (1) ※1 を付した授業科目は、大学院教養教育プログラムの授業科目である。Courses marked with※1 are part of the Graduate School Liberal Arts Courses.
- (2) ※2 を付した授業科目は、自然科学教育部の授業科目である。Courses marked with ※2 are part of the Graduate School of Science and Technology.
- (3) ※3 を付した授業科目は、医学教育部及び薬学教育部の授業科目(S-HIGO プロフェッショナルプログラムの授業科目)である。Courses marked with ※3 are part of the S-HIGO Professional Fellowship Program belonging to Graduate School of Medical Sciences and Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

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- (4) ※4 を付した授業科目は、社会文化科学教育部の授業科目である。Courses marked with ※4 are part of the Graduate School of Social and Cultural Sciences
- (5) ※5 を付した授業科目は、医学教育部の授業科目(HIGO コースの授業科目)である。Courses marked with ※5 are part of the HIGO Program Course belonging to Graduate School of Medical Sciences.
- (6) 本プログラムで修得した単位を、博士後期課程・博士課程の修了要件単位と認定するかどうかは、在籍する教育部の定めるところによる。Whether credits obtained through this program will be recognized as credits towards graduation will be determined by respective graduate schools where students are enrolled.