

**EDWIN O. REISCHAUER INSTITUTE OF JAPANESE STUDIES
HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

2026 Summer Internship Program in Japan

The Edwin O. Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies (RIJS), in partnership with the Program on U.S.-Japan Relations at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs and John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS), coordinates a wide array of summer internship opportunities in Japan for Harvard students of any concentration who are in good academic standing and are returning for the fall semester as full-time students. As interns, students learn about the local culture of their city and workplace while contributing to a project defined by the host organization. Since 1988, over 400 students have contributed their skills and applied their knowledge to consulting and financial firms, tech and startup companies, international and local newspaper offices, design and architectural firms, research think tanks and educational organizations, offices of parliamentary members and NGOs, and even to a traditional luxury ryokan.

Internships generally last 8 weeks, usually from early June until early August. RIJS has limited internship positions available and cannot guarantee placement. Acceptance is contingent on finding a fit between available positions and applicants. Some Japanese language ability is preferred by most organizations. Preference is given to students enrolled in Japanese language courses, or courses on Japan, and to first-time Japan internship holders.

Self-arranged Track: Due to limited internship positions available, we strongly encourage students, especially those who are interested in doing very specific projects or tasks, to arrange an internship in Japan on their own and apply to the Program for funding support only. Self-arranged internships must meet the minimum 8-week requirement. It is highly recommended that students who are looking to self-arrange their internships start the search process **as early as possible**. Self-arranging students can seek advice from various entities at Harvard, including but not limited to the Mignone Center for Career Success, Harvard faculty, and the vast Harvard alumni network.

There is no separate application for funding. Applicants who are placed into the Program will receive a grant package put together by the RIJS and the host organization to support round-trip discount airfare, housing, and modest meals for the internship duration. **The RIJS will follow [Harvard University travel guidance](#) when determining which internships are available and eligible for funding.**

Application Process:

- 1) Apply using CARAT, Harvard's online application system: <https://carat.fas.harvard.edu/>
After logging in with your Harvard credentials, select **"Reischauer Institute Summer Internship Program in Japan"** to start your application. The application requires:
 1. CARAT application
 2. One letter of recommendation
 3. RIJS internship application form (*available on [website](#)*)
 4. One-page cover letter
 5. Current one-page résumé
 6. Current unofficial transcript
 7. Confirmation letter from the host organization (*only for self-arranged internships*)
- 2) Submit your completed application on CARAT by **Saturday, January 10, 2026, 11:59 PM ET.**
- 3) Students who submit their application by the January deadline will be invited for an interview. Following the interview, successful applicants will be notified of their tentative placements and be nominated to

host organizations for further evaluation. Most host organizations will conclude their evaluations by mid-March, and on a rolling basis, successful applicants will receive an offer letter and be admitted to the Program.

Application Instructions:

- Due to the nature of our Program, we do not expect the applicants to fill out “Project Description” and “Budget” portions of the CARAT application exactly. **For the “Budget” portion, however, applicants are expected to carefully research and estimate the costs from various online search engines (e.g. Google flights, travel expense calculators, etc.) for an 8-week internship in Tokyo.** There is no penalty for entering incorrect information, but **the committee is interested in knowing applicants’ travel budgeting skills, as well as their ability to research on traveling to Japan.** For the “Project Description” portion, applicants can fill out as much as they can and enter “N/A” in the required fields they are uncertain about.
- Application must be supported by **one letter of recommendation from someone at Harvard (e.g. faculty, graduate student teaching fellows, house tutors, concentration/first-year advisors)** who can speak to applicant’s character as well as applicant’s skills, strengths, and abilities to work in a foreign country, or to tackle a significant project. Letter of recommendation must be uploaded to CARAT by the recommender or his/her proxy.
- **RIJS internship application form** is available on the RIJS [website](#) for download. Upon completion, applicants should print/save as a PDF file and upload the PDF on CARAT.
- **Cover letter** should indicate applicant’s interest in working in Japan and explain how the experience will enhance applicant’s personal, academic, and/or professional growth. Applicants should also describe in detail what types of organizations interest them, what kind of projects/tasks they would like to do, and what kind of abilities and skills they would like to acquire from the internship. **We do not have any specific formatting guidelines for cover letter and résumé, but please keep them to one page.** The Mignone Center for Career Success (MCS) offers great resources on cover letters and résumés, which can be accessed [here](#).
- Applicants who arrange their own internships **must negotiate housing and other work arrangements directly with the host organization on their own.** Applicants able to make such arrangements must obtain a **letter of confirmation letter (PDF file ONLY) from their host** stating the following: (1) Duration of the internship (must be at least 8 weeks to qualify for funding), (2) Duties and expectations of the intern, and (3) Expenses to be covered by the host. It may be written in English or Japanese. Applicants, *not the host*, then should submit the letter to Jenni Ting (wting@fas.harvard.edu). The letter can be submitted at a later time, separate from the main application; however, **the main application must be submitted by 11:59 PM ET on Saturday, January 10, 2026 and the confirmation letter must be received by 11:59 PM ET on Sunday, March 1, 2026** in order to be considered for RIJS funding.
- Also, **applicants who are self-arranging their internships are highly encouraged to submit an application to the Summer Funding Opportunities (SFO) Office for funding as well.** To apply for SFO funding, please follow the instructions on their [website](#).
- **All applicants must inform the RIJS if they have received other funding to support the internship in Japan.** Should an applicant receive funding from other sources that is greater or equal to our maximum funding amount, the applicant will no longer be considered for RIJS funding and the application will be withdrawn automatically. However, the applicant can still receive pre-departure and on-grounds support from the RIJS and partake in the summer activities organized by the RIJS.

- We understand that there will be students who find out about our Program after the deadline has passed. If you are one of those students and are still interested in applying to the Program, **you must contact Jenni Ting (wting@fas.harvard.edu) immediately to schedule a meeting and submit an application no later than 11:59 PM ET on Sunday, March 1, 2026 on CARAT. We will not accept any application beyond this deadline.** Also, *please note that students who submit their application by the January deadline will be considered first for the limited positions and funding available.*
- Any incomplete applications, or those that do not follow the instructions above, will not be considered.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Saturday, January 10, 2026, by 11:59 PM ET on CARAT.

For more information, please contact the Program Coordinator, Jenni Ting (wting@fas.harvard.edu).