United Nations University
Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability

Master of Science in Sustainability

APPLICATION GUIDELINES 2027

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UNU IAS

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I. Outline of the Master of Science in Sustainability Programme

The programme aims to produce the policymakers and researchers of tomorrow, who will be at the forefront of global efforts towards a more sustainable future. It takes a transdisciplinary approach to providing the analytical and technical skills needed to advance creative solutions to issues of sustainability. Studying at UNU-IAS brings the unique benefits of:

- Collaborative research and practical experience,
- A global university within the UN system, and
- An international and interactive learning environment in central Tokyo.

The Master of Science in Sustainability Programme is a two-year programme, which provides students with the knowledge and practical skills necessary to contribute to solving challenges of sustainability. Drawing on an innovative, interdisciplinary approach, the programme integrates methods and resources from the natural and social sciences, as well as humanities.

The programme is intended for recent graduates, professionals and practitioners who seek to meaningfully contribute to the work of governments, civil society, the private sector, and/or the UN and other international organizations in the area of sustainability.

The programme builds on UNU's strong record in research and capacity development, as well as the extensive network of scholars and academic institutions participating in UNU research. The programme is practice-oriented, user-focused and of the highest academic quality. It provides students with unique opportunities to interact with leading scholars and policymakers through lectures, international conferences and workshops.

1. A Focus on Sustainability: Our Thematic Areas

The UNU-IAS postgraduate programmes are closely interconnected with institute's research activities. Students have opportunities to gain practical experience by engaging actively in the research projects in UNU-IAS thematic areas. The courses offered correspond to these thematic areas under the overarching theme of sustainability.

- Biodiversity and Society (BDS)
- Governance for Climate Change and Sustainable Development (GCSD)
- Innovation & Education (IVE)
- Water & Resource Management (WRM)

Applicants are required to choose and apply for only one of these thematic areas and propose relevant research to conduct at UNU-IAS. A description of each area is available on the thematic areas page. Student research is expected to contribute to the project which the student chooses. Students hone skills learned in the classroom by conducting research in the field alongside experts and experienced practitioners.

2. Faculty

The programme is taught by an expert teaching faculty comprising both UNU-IAS academic staff and distinguished visiting scholars and practitioners. Please see the list of faculty members here.

3. Programme Structure & Language

The programme is offered on a full-time basis only and in principle, all courses are provided on-site only.

The academic year starts in September. The standard period to complete the degree requirements is 24 months or four academic semesters, excluding time spent on study leave of absence from the university. The Master of Science in Sustainability degree is awarded upon satisfactory completion of 30 credits and a master's thesis project. Students are expected to obtain at least 22 credits for coursework and eight for the thesis.

Students can select courses from those offered by UNU-IAS, while also enjoying the opportunity to take courses at other leading universities in Japan such as the University of Tokyo, Sophia University, International Christian University and Waseda University.

The UNU-IAS Academic Calendar 2026–2027 is available here.

The language of instruction is English.

4. Diploma Programme for Specialization on the Paris Agreement (SPA)

UNU-IAS offers the SPA Diploma Programme focusing on the implementation of the Paris Agreement mechanisms, such as the enhanced transparency framework, nationally determined contributions, national adaptation planning process, global stocktake and market mechanisms. By strengthening national capacity in these areas, it aims to become an essential means of implementation of the agreement and develop future leaders who will be at the forefront of these vital efforts. The diploma will be granted upon satisfactory completion of the designated courses.

5. Double Degree with the University of Tokyo

UNU-IAS and the Department of Urban Engineering in the Graduate School of Engineering at the University of Tokyo offer a double master's degree programme. Students first spend two years at the University of Tokyo, obtaining a Master of Engineering degree. After graduating from the University of Tokyo, students enrol at UNU-IAS for one year to obtain a Master of Science in Sustainability degree. The total amount of time required for this double degree programme is three years.

If you wish to enrol in this double degree programme, you must be accepted to both master's degree programmes (UNU-IAS MSc in Sustainability and the Master of Engineering offered by the University of Tokyo). Information on the Master of Engineering degree is available from the University of Tokyo website. Please note that each university has different admission requirements and application deadlines.

6. For Graduates with a Master's Degree from Sophia University: Fast-track for a Second Master's at UNU-IAS

UNU-IAS and Sophia University have implemented a Fast-Track for a Second Master's at UNU-IAS initiative. This track is available to applicants who hold a master's degree from Sophia University and want to pursue a UNU-IAS MSc in Sustainability within three years of graduation. Using this track, the applicant can obtain a master's degree from UNU-IAS in one year at the earliest. The applicant will be required to meet the regular UNU-IAS graduation requirements (30 credits worth of course work and a completed thesis). Applicants who would like to participate in this scheme must apply to the MSc in Sustainability Programme in accordance

with the application guidelines and pass the selection process. Please note that this track is not applicable if three years have passed since graduation from the master's programme at Sophia University.

7. Joint Diploma Programmes

Students in the UNU-IAS master's degree programme are also encouraged to pursue one of the two joint diplomas in sustainability science, which are offered in partnership with the University of Tokyo Graduate School of Frontier Sciences (UT-GSFS) and Sophia University. These diploma programmes require students to obtain 34 credits, eight of which must be from courses specified by UNU-IAS and the partner university under the respective joint diploma programme. A joint diploma can only be awarded to students who successfully complete the two-year UNU-IAS master's degree programme.

8. Learning Environment

UNU-IAS is a global university located in Tokyo, with all classes conducted in English. Sharing a building with many UN agencies, it offers a unique learning environment for its diverse and international student body. The master's degree programme includes courses featuring international guest lecturers from leading agencies and institutions, providing students with opportunities to learn from their unique expertise and experience. The class sizes are sufficiently small, and students benefit from interactive and personalized teaching.

9. Facilities

The UNU Library offers full access to approximately 25,000 books and a range of electronic resources including e-books, e-journals and databases and UN related materials. All students are provided with a comprehensive library orientation session at the beginning of their courses. Students also have access to the libraries of Aoyama Gakuin University, Bunkyo University, International Christian University, Ochanomizu University, Sophia University and the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies.

10. Academic Calendar

The academic calendar shows important dates and university holidays for the academic year.

II. Admission Policy and Requirements

1. Admissions Policy

The UNU-IAS Master of Science in Sustainability Programme seeks students with the following qualities:

1. Students who possess a firm academic interest in the pressing global issues on the UN agenda, in particular those of sustainability, and a strong desire to contribute to the solving of problems concerning the global environment and society through a transdisciplinary approach;
2. Students who have adequate research skills and clear questions related to global issues as well as a strong desire to engage in research in UNU-IAS thematic areas, with the potential and motivation to succeed in our programme;
3. Students who have the intention to proactively apply academic research findings to policymaking and aim to pursue careers in international public service, including the United Nations, multinational corporations, private and non-governmental organizations, as well as research and academic institutions.

2. Admissions Requirements

Applicants for the Master of Science in Sustainability are required to meet the following requirements by the application deadline in order to be considered. Those who wish to participate in the double degree programme of UNU-IAS and the University of Tokyo (Department of Urban Engineering in the Graduate School of Engineering) must be shortlisted by the University of Tokyo before applying to UNU-IAS.

1. A completed bachelor's degree (or equivalent) from a recognized university or institution of higher education in a field related to sustainability in accordance with the UNU-IAS thematic areas (those who expect to receive a bachelor's degree or its equivalent by 31 August 2027 before the entrance period of September 2027 may also apply);
2. A GPA of 2.8 or above on a 4.0 scale (equivalent to 70 % on a 100 % scale) for the bachelor's degree earned; and
3. English language proficiency*
    - TOEFL – Internet-Based Testing (iBT) OR;
        - 5 on the new 1-6 scale launched in January 2026
        - 100 on the previous 0-120 scale
    - 7.0 on IELTS – Academic format

    ** Please note that TOEFL and IELTS test scores are valid for two years. Applicants are expected to submit a valid score by the application deadline (18 January 2027). Invalid test scores will not be accepted.*

Applicants meeting the criteria below may submit a substitute document for the English language proficiency score.

- Applicants who have studied for at least two consecutive years in a degree-granting university programme taught entirely in English may submit a substitute document for the English language proficiency score. If this is your case, you must provide a certificate from your university stating that English is/was your unique language of instruction.

III. Application Procedures

All deadlines are indicated in Japan Standard Time (JST).

1. How to Apply

All applicants:

1. Review the checklist below and prepare the application materials.
2. Submit the completed application form by the deadline* (18 January 2027, 10:00 JST).
   *You will receive an automatic email confirming that the Admissions Office has received your application.
3. Send scanned supporting documents via email to UNU-IAS (ias.admissions@unu.edu) by the deadline (Monday, 18 January 2027, 10:00 JST). Please check Section III: Supporting Documents for details.

Note:

- During the application process, please ensure that our emails are not filtered into spam or junk folders. UNU-IAS will not be held responsible for unread email communication.
- Any documents that are not written in English must be accompanied by an official or certified translation in English. The translation may be provided by a school, public notary or professional translation services.
- Please ensure all documents are prepared and arranged to be delivered to the Admissions Office before the deadline.

<List of Supporting Documents>

❖ **Documents to be sent by the applicants via email**

1) Official transcripts (scanned copy)
   *Please attach an explanatory document to clarify the GPA on the transcript if the university applies a GPA system other than 4.0 or 100% scale.
2) Proof of awarded degree(s) (scanned copy)
3) Proof of expected graduation with the expected graduation date and student registration certificate, if applicable (scanned copy)
   Note: Applicants who have applied on the basis of an expected graduation status and are offered admission must subsequently submit an official graduation certificate. If the graduation date indicated on the certificate falls after the date specified above, the offer of admission shall be withdrawn and

the applicant's admission to the University shall be cancelled.

4) Proof of English language proficiency (scanned copy)
5) Personal identification document (scanned copy)
6) Additional documents for scholarship applications: Curriculum Vitae for all who wish to apply for scholarship and any other documents requested by the funding donor, or a letter from a sponsor, if applicable (scanned copy)

❖ **Two letters of recommendation to be sent directly by the referees via email**
Referees must send reference letters directly to the Admissions Office.

Important Notes:

- Any documents that are not written in English must be accompanied by an official or certified translation in English. The translation may be provided by a school, public notary or professional translation services.
- Please ensure all documents are prepared and sent to the Admissions Office before the deadline.
- Incomplete or late documents will **not** be considered.

Applicants who have been shortlisted for an interview will:

1. Receive an email confirming their selection as a potential interviewee and providing the expected time frame.
2. Receive an official invitation email with the interview time slot and Zoom link once the submitted documents have been validated and cleared (expected late February to early March 2027).

2. Application Checklist

The Application Form must be completed in English. It is composed of 12 sections of questions and essays. There are back/next buttons at the bottom of each section in the Form, which enable you to go back to previous sections to edit the answers before you click the submit button at the end of the form.

Before you start filling out the application form, please gather all necessary materials listed below and make sure to have all of them ready to fill in the form.

Section 1. Applicant Details

- Personal details (name, gender, birth date, email, living address, telephone number, etc.)
- Personal identification document number (passport number, national identification number, etc.)

  Note: Nationality and country of residence should be filled in using names from the UN list available here.

  * *Those who wish to apply for the Double Degree programme of UNU-IAS and the University of Tokyo (Department of Urban Engineering in the Graduate School of Engineering) will be required to fill in the date of acceptance to the master's degree programme at the University of Tokyo.*

Section 2. Educational Background

- Qualifications (primary, secondary and higher education, years of education, years of attendance)
- Undergraduate and postgraduate education (institution, department, major, start and end dates, abstract of thesis, if applicable, degree awarded, grades on a 4.0 or 100% scale, other grades)
- Lists of publications and practical accomplishments (if applicable)

Section 3. Essays

- Choose one of the UNU-IAS thematic areas of study and research that you wish to conduct as a master's degree student at UNU-IAS.

  Note: Please carefully review and choose a thematic area that is most suitable for your application and research interests. Irrelevancy may be regarded as an incomplete application.

- Reasons why you have chosen to apply for the MSc Programme in Sustainability (word limit 500 or approx. 3,500 characters).

  Please relate the reasons to your background and explain your career goals.

- Research proposal (word limit 1000 or approx. 7,000 characters)

  Please explain as concretely as possible the research plan that you would like to undertake in the master's degree programme, including research questions, objectives, proposed methodology and data resources. Please also indicate how you intend to incorporate gender perspectives.

- Abstract of research proposal (word limit 250 or approx. 1,750 characters)
- Personal achievements (word limit 500 or approx. 3,500 characters)

  Please describe your personal achievements including extracurricular activities, volunteer work, leadership experience and awards you have received, as well as why you think they are important.

Note: Essay text will be automatically cut off once the character limit is reached.

Section 4. Professional Background

- Number of years of full-time work experience
- Contact information of your three most recent employers (name and type of organization, email, postal address) *
- Start and end dates, position title and supervisor's name
- Main responsibilities

* *If you have had more than three employers, you may include them in Section 10.*

Section 5. English Language Proficiency

- Type of proof of English language proficiency with valid score within two years

(see pages 4-5 for requirements), e.g., TOEFL iBT or IELTS
- Test results, date and examination number of TOEFL iBT or IELTS
- Knowledge of languages other than English

Section 6. References (Two Letters of Recommendations)

- Contact details of two referees (type of reference — academic or professional; name, position, organization, email, postal address, telephone number)

Important Notes:

- Please register two referees, at least one of whom must provide academic reference. The academic referee is expected to assess the applicant's academic competency in pursuing a master's degree programme. The email address should be a professional one provided by the affiliated organization. Referees should not be family members or friends.
- Before you apply, please make sure to contact your referees and ask for their approval to provide references when UNU-IAS requests them.
- After the submittal of the application, any information about the referee(s) cannot be changed and/or registered information of referees will **not** be shared with the applicant.
- You should share the instructions in Section III: Supporting Documents with each referee so that the letters are submitted in the correct format. Each referee should send their reference letter directly to the Admissions Office via email. Applicants are **not** allowed to send reference letters to the Admissions Office.
- Your referees will **not** have access to your application form.
- UNU-IAS reserves the right to contact your referees.

Section 7. Financial Declaration

- Personal declaration
  - How will you be financing your studies at UNU-IAS? (personal resources, family resources, scholarships, employer, sponsorship, loan, others)
  - Personal resources/income in USD
  - Support from individual donor(s), including family or guardian, in USD
  - Support from sponsors — governments, sponsoring agencies and companies (awarded, haven't applied, applying, or none)
  - Date to be notified of result and amount of sponsorship (applicable if you are applying)
  - Other financial sources and amount
  - Total financial resources in USD

- Declaration of family members (applicable if you wish to apply for scholarships)

- Number of people in your family and/or household members other than yourself
- Name, relation to you, occupation and annual income
- Total family income in USD (yearly)

Section 8. Funding / Scholarship Application

- Do you wish to apply for a scholarship and are you eligible for it?
- Type of scholarships that you wish to apply for (if applicable, choose from a list of scholarships that can be applied for through UNU-IAS or provide names of scholarships you are applying for through other organizations)*
- Justification essay for applying for a scholarship under UNU-IAS (if applicable; word limit 500 or approx. 3,500 characters)

  Note: Essay text will be automatically cut off once the character limit is reached.

  ** If you are applying for any other scholarships provided by other organizations on your own, there is no need to submit the justification essay.*

- ADB-JSP Scholarship (applicable if you wish to apply)
  - Number of years of full-time professional working experience (acquired after completing a university degree) at the time of application
  - Acknowledgement of the https://www.adb.org/work-with-us/careers/japan-scholarship-program for ADB-JSP scholarship application (to be submitted when successfully selected for enrolment as a final candidate)

- Mizuho International Foundation Scholarship (applicable if you wish to apply)
  - Acknowledgement of the selection process when successfully selected for enrolment as a final candidate; screening by the documents* and an interview with donor by the video conference system such as Zoom.

    *To be requested to submit when successfully selected for enrolment as a final candidate

No separate application is required for scholarships at this time. Each scholarship has its own eligibility requirements and applicants may be requested to provide additional documents when successfully selected for enrolment as a final candidate.

The scholarships available at UNU-IAS are very competitive and limited. Only highly qualified candidates from developing countries who demonstrate financial need will be considered for financial support. If a scholarship is not available, applicants must secure their own funding to enrol.

Section 9. Health Declaration

- Your medical conditions, illnesses and special needs (if applicable)
- Have you received medical treatment for a serious illness or condition in the past 12 months?
- Your health condition and whether you are fit to enrol in the two-year degree programme in Japan

Section 10. Additional Information

- Any other additional information for your application

Section 11. Other Details (for administrative purposes only)

- How did you learn about the UNU-IAS degree programme?
- If you have applied for a degree programme at UNU before, please specify the programme and year of your previous application.
- If you are not a Japanese national, please list your previous stays in Japan.
- If you have any relatives or acquaintances who are currently working at UNU, please provide their names.
- Have you ever been arrested, indicted or summoned into court as a defendant in criminal proceedings, or convicted, fined or imprisoned for the violation of any law (excluding minor traffic violations)?

Section 12: Submit Application

- Please submit the completed application form and arrange to have all the supporting documents delivered to the Admissions Office by the deadline (Monday, 18 January 2027, 10:00 JST). Incomplete or late documents will **not** be considered.

3. Supporting Documents

All Applicants (Deadline: Monday, 18 January 2027, 10:00 JST)

- Any documents that are not written in English must be accompanied by an official or certified translation in English. The translation may be provided by a school, public notary or professional translation services.
- Please ensure that all documents are prepared and sent to be delivered to the Admissions Office before the deadline.
- Incomplete or late documents will **not** be considered.

❖ **Supporting document to be submitted by the applicant via email**

Please attach all the documents in a single email and ensure that each file is named as shown below. Files not following this format will be disregarded.

Email address: ias.admissions@unu.edu File name: MSc_SURNAME_first name_abb. of thematic area*_abb. of document** e.g., SMITH_John_BDS_DegreeCertificate

* Abbreviation of the Thematic Area

- Biodiversity and Society (BDS)
- Governance for Climate Change and Sustainable Development (GCSD)
- Innovation and Education (IVE)
- Water Resource and Management (WRM)

** Please refer to the name in parenthesis next to the document name in the list below.

1) Transcript(s)

Transcripts must list all courses/modules completed and grades received for all undergraduate and postgraduate studies and include the institutional seal or signature. Applicants who have transferred between institutions must submit transcripts from each institution attended.
*Please attach an explanatory document to clarify the GPA on the transcript if the university applies a GPA system other than 4.0 or 100% scale.

2) Proof of Awarded Degree (Degree Certificate)

The degree certificate must certify the awarded degree and the conferred date (bachelor's and/or higher degree).

3) Proof of Expected Graduation and Student Registration Certificate (if applicable)

Applicants who expect to complete a bachelor's degree or higher by 31 August 2027 must provide an official letter or certificate issued by their institution confirming their enrolment (registration) in the degree programme and the expected graduation date. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that the stated graduation date is accurate and is no later than 31 August 2027.

Note: Applicants who have applied on the basis of an expected graduation status and are offered admission must subsequently submit an official graduation certificate. If the graduation date indicated on the certificate falls after the date specified above, the offer of admission shall be withdrawn and the applicant's admission to the University shall be cancelled.

4) Proof of English Language Proficiency (English)*

IELTS and TOEFL iBT: Official score report

* *Please see the requirements stated on pages 4-5.*

Digital copy of the official test scores must be submitted to certify the English language proficiency. Only valid scores will be accepted; both TOEFL and IELTS scores are valid for two years. Expired scores will not be considered.

Applicants meeting criteria below may submit a substitute document for the English language proficiency score.

- Applicants who have studied for at least two consecutive years in a degree-granting university programme taught entirely in English may submit a substitute document for the English language proficiency score. If this is your case, you must provide a certificate from your university stating that English is/was your unique language of instruction.

5) Personal Identification (ID)

The document must be issued by a national government (e.g., passport, birth certificate, Japanese residence card, if applicable) and must verify your legal name, date of birth, nationality and residential status. If you are applying for a scholarship, this document must also confirm that your nationality meets the scholarship's eligibility requirements.

6) Additional documents for scholarship applications: Curriculum Vitae for all who wish to apply for scholarship and any other documents requested by the funding donor, or a letter from the sponsor (if applicable)

- All applicants who wish to apply for scholarships are required to submit a CV.
- Please check the other documents required for each scholarship on our website. If you would like to apply for ADB-JSP, please carefully check the eligibility and required documents.

❖ **Letter of Recommendation (LoR)**

Two letters of recommendation must be sent directly by each referee to the email address provided below. Applicants are not permitted to send letters of recommendation themselves. Each letter should include the required information as indicated below and follow the designated format.
Please send the instructions below to each referee and request that the letter be submitted by the deadline (Monday, 18 January 2027, 10:00 JST). Incomplete or late letters will not be considered.

Email address: ias.admissions@unu.edu

Deadline: Monday, 18 January 2027, 10:00 JST

Title of the email:

2027 MSc Admission_LoR_Applicant Name*_Name of Referee

*SURNAME_First Name

Letter of Recommendation (LoR)

- How to submit:
  - Kindly make sure that the letter is: written in English, uses the official letterhead of your institution and is sent from an email address provided by your institution.
  *If the letter is not issued with the official letterhead, please state the information of your institution, position, email, postal address and telephone number in the letter.

- What to include in your letter:
  - Date, recommender's name, institution, position and email address
  - The applicant's name and applied programme (Master of Science)
  - How long you have known the applicant and in what capacity
  - How you assess the applicant's academic competencies in pursuing a master's degree in sustainability, or if professional, professional achievements and the relevance of the programme to the applicant's career path
  - Signature

4. Application Deadline

- Monday, 18 January 2027, 10:00 JST

Inquiries regarding unsuccessful submissions due to personal circumstances, including technical difficulties, will **not** be accepted after the deadline. Please ensure that you begin your application well in advance.

5. Key Dates *

- 18 January 2027**:** Application deadline
- Late February to Early March 2027: Interview invitation email (shortlisted applicants only)
- Early to Mid-March 2027: Interviews (shortlisted applicants only)
- Late March to Early April 2027 onwards: Application results announcement to **successful applicants only**

* *Dates are subject to change*.

6. Receipt of Application

Applicants will receive an automatic email from the Admissions Office within 24 hours confirming receipt of their online application form. The Admissions Office may at any time request verification of the information and documents provided in the application form and/or during interviews.

7. Selection and Announcement of Results

After the deadline, **only shortlisted applicants** will be contacted by email regarding the next steps. Please do **not** contact the Admissions Office to inquire about the status of your application or the result unless you have been individually contacted.

- Successful applicants who are offered a place in the MSc degree programme will be notified by email address provided on the online application form. The letter of acceptance will list the necessary documents for the admission procedure. To secure your place for the enrolment, successful applicants will be required to submit the necessary documents stated under Section IV-2. Admission Conditions and Procedures on page 14, and pay at least 50% of the tuition fees for the first academic year (6,000 USD, non-refundable) by the due date as stated on the invoice issued after the results announcement. Please see further information in Section IV: Enrolment Procedures below.
- Unsuccessful applicants at will **not** be individually notified via email or telephone by the Admissions Office at any stage. If you do not receive any emails from the Admissions Office regarding your application by the end of May 2027, your application has been unsuccessful in principle. The Admissions Office does not provide individual feedback on unsuccessful applications.
- Emails will be the primary method of contact. Therefore, it is essential for all applicants to list a valid email address in the online application form and regularly check their email. Please ensure that emails from UNU-IAS (ias.admissions@unu.edu) are not filtered into the spam or junk folder. UNU-IAS will not be held responsible for unread emails.

IV. Enrolment Procedures (successful applicants only)

1. Date of Enrolment

Wednesday, 1 September 2027 (JST)

The date of enrolment cannot be delayed, regardless of any special circumstances.

2. Admission Conditions and Procedures

Successful applicants must submit all required documents to the Admissions Office by the matriculation deadline. Failure to submit the documents listed below will result in the offer being incomplete, and the applicant will not be permitted to enrol at UNU-IAS. Any offer of enrolment or scholarship nomination (if applicable) will become invalid.

1. Submit a completed Acceptance of Offer form or a Request for Deferral of Admission* by the deadline indicated in the offer letter, which is usually a week after the offer letter issuance.
   UNU-IAS allows deferral of admission to the next enrolment in September 2028 by submitting a Request Form for the Deferral of Admission. To enrol in 2028, you must contact us by the date specified on the form. Requests received after this date will be considered invalid. Please note that scholarships **cannot be deferred; if you defer your admission, any scholarship will be reallocated to an applicant on the waiting list.*

2. Submit the following documents **by the designated deadline:**
   - (Original) Transcript(s) to be submitted by the issuing organization(s) via email (preferable) or by post.
   - (Original) Certificate(s) of awarded degree(s) by the issuing organization (s) via email (preferable) or by post.
     Note: Applicants who have applied on the basis of an expected graduation status and are offered admission must subsequently submit an official graduation certificate. If the graduation date indicated on the certificate falls after the date specified above, the offer of admission shall be withdrawn and the applicant's admission to the University shall be cancelled.
   - (Original) Valid TOEFL iBT or IELTS test scores as the Proof of English Proficiency sent digitally (preferable) or by post

     TOEFL: Please order an official score report using the institution code D317 or search for "United Nations University". Please visit the TOEFL website for more information.

     IELTS: Please request that an official report be sent directly to United Nations University Institute of the Advanced Study for Sustainability. Please visit the IELTS website for more information.

   - For nominated scholars for ADB-JSP: additional documents as requested
   - Medical report (format will be provided by the Admissions Office) via email.
   - Signed Student Contract and Student Conduct Document via email.
   - Signed document of the Term of Reference for the Scholarship (if applicable) via email.

3. Fees

(1) Tuition Fee

Application processing fee: **None**

Tuition Fee: **USD 12,000 per year ***

To secure your place for the enrolment, successful applicants will be required to pay at least 50% of the tuition fee for the first academic year **(USD 6,000, non-refundable) by the due date on the invoice** issued after the result announcement and prior to enrolment. Students who choose to pay annually must make a full one-year tuition payment before the commencement of the academic year. Successful applicants are required to submit all documents and pay the tuition fee by the deadline.**

* *The fee is subject to change*.
** *UNU holidays are listed in the UNU-IAS Academic Calendar.*

(2) Other Costs

The estimated total expenses for living and studying in Tokyo for two (2) years are approximately USD 56,000, including tuition fees. Applicants must ensure adequate financial resources to meet the full costs of educational and living expenses.

In addition to the tuition fee and living costs mentioned above, applicants should budget for travel expenses to Japan and the initial living costs for settling into a new environment. Scholarship recipients should also ensure they have sufficient funds to cover travel and living expenses for first 1–2 months. Scholarship conditions are available here.

V. Important Notes

1. Important Notes for Application Procedures

- All Application Forms must be typed and filled out in English. No handwritten or incomplete application documents will be considered.
- All materials and documents submitted as part of an application become the property of UNU-IAS and cannot be returned.
- If any falsification is discovered in any of the documents presented for application, admission will be revoked.
- The use of generative AI tools for organizing your idea may be useful, however, any writing to be submitted for the application form and any supporting documents must be written by the applicants themselves. Plagiarism and AI checks may be applied in the admission process.
- Unsuccessful applicants from previous years who reapply for admission must submit a completely new set of application documents, including letters of recommendation. Materials from previous applications cannot be used as supporting documents.

- All applicants must choose one thematic and submit the application form only once.
- Those who wish to withdraw from the application process must immediately contact the Admissions Office immediately via the Inquiry Form.

2. Inquiries

Before contacting the Admissions Office, please read through the Frequently Asked Questions to see if your question has been answered. For any unanswered questions, please use the Inquiry Form.

Please note that due to the high volume of inquiries and limited resources, it may take 1–2 weeks for us to reply. Applicants are strongly encouraged to start the process early and submit questions well in advance, as replies cannot be guaranteed by the application deadline (Monday, 18 January 2027, 10:00 JST).