

2011 Local Government Officials Training Program in Japan

Trainee Invitation Guidelines

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

This program is carried out mainly by Japan's local governments with support from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), and the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR).

1 Contents of Invitation

Since being established in 1996, the LGOTP has had the participation of 907 trainees from 34 nations. The majority of participants have come from Asia, but trainees have also come from Europe, North and South America, Australia and Russia. After returning home, past trainees have utilized the valuable experiences gained through the training and have also played a role, directly or indirectly, in promoting friendly relations with their host institutions.

We are now seeking eager trainee candidates who are interested in actively participating in the 2011 program.

2 Length of Training

The training program is generally 6 to 12 months, starting on 22 May 2011. The length of training differs depending on the host institution.

3 Components of the Training Program:

- (1) The Group Training focuses on Japanese language studies as well as local administration and other topics. It is held at training facilities in Tokyo and Shiga Prefecture.
- (2) The Specialized Training is working-level training in specific fields. It is held in Japan's prefectures, designated cities, and municipalities.
- (3) Special Training Courses in Specific Fields are offered for specific fields. Details are announced as they are decided. Participation is optional.

4 Contents and Outline of Training

Upon arrival in Japan, the trainees will spend approximately one month in Group Training. The Group Training focuses primarily on Japanese language studies, but also includes studies of local government administration and other topics. Following the completion of the Group Training, the trainees move to their assigned local government to receive specialized training through a program organized by the host institution. The 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 consideration given to the wishes of the trainee.

5 Eligibility Criteria for Trainees

Candidates for the LGOTP should:

- (1) Be an official of a foreign province, 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 training positions being offered at host institutions.
- (3) Be eager and committed to study in a local government of Japan. Also, after returning home, actively use the knowledge attained during the training at the participant's 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. Also, fully acknowledge that conditions during the Specialized Training may differ from those of other trainees. Depending on the host institution, there may be difference involving the length and content of the training program, working conditions, the local living environment, and others.
- (5) Be able to obtain the approval and recommendation of their department head to receive training in Japan for a period of 6 to 12 months.
- (6) In principle, be between 20 and 39 years of age at the time when entering 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 their home country.
- (8) Be reliable individuals who are physically and mentally sound (as the training over a long period may pose risk to pregnant women, pregnancy is regarded as a disqualifying condition for participation in this course).
- (9) Have never previously participated in the program.

- (10) Do not have any past legal problems that would prevent them from entering Japan.

6 Training Conditions

(1) Decision on the selection and placement of trainees

The capacity of local governments to receive trainees is limited and the placement of applicants with host institutions cannot be realized unless the conditions of applicants and host institutions can be successfully matched. For this reason, the acceptance and placement of trainees is decided by host institutions, CLAIR, and the MIC through discussion based primarily on candidate applications. Once a candidate has been successfully matched with a host institution, the applicant's selection as a "cooperation and exchange trainee" can be approved.

(2) Treatment during the Specialized Training

As previously mentioned in the "Eligibility Criteria for Trainees" 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 discontinuing of training

Host institutions will cover costs related to the training including round-trip airfare, living expenses, training expenses, and transportation expenses within Japan. However, if a trainee, without compelling reason, discontinues the training before the end of the training period to return to the trainee's home country, 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 return to their home country for temporary visits during the period of training unless there is an accepted compelling reason and a reentry permit is granted. In the rare case that a temporary return trip by a trainee to his/her home country is approved, the costs shall be borne by the trainee.

(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, the cost of departing the trainee's home country at 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 department in the host institution shall be borne by the host institution. The trainee must follow the route of the international flight that is designated by the host institution.

7 Application Process

- (1) In the case where direct applications are made, the applicant shall submit the *Application for Trainee* (Attachment 1), the *Written Pledge* (Attachment 2), and the *Medical Checkup Sheet* (Attachment 3) by no later than Friday 21 January 2011, to the overseas office of CLAIR (in the case of Brazil, Confederação Nacional de Municípios) which has responsibility for handling matters concerning the trainee's country. (For details of the contact details, please refer to the CLAIR Overseas Offices List.)
 - (2) However, in cases where applicants are applying for the program because of a mutual agreement which is based on special relations (i.e. sister city relations) that already exist between their place of employment and a Japanese local authority; applications shall be submitted to the related Japanese local government by no later than 21 January 2011.
- * Any personal data contained in the application form shall only be used for matters relating to this program

8 Important Preparations for Training Following Selection as Trainee

- (1) Host institutions will send the *Notification of Acceptance* via the related official organization to the selected 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; 4cm long × 3cm wide, 2 photos; 4.5cm long × 3.5cm wide taken within the past 6 months)
 - ② Post-training return-to-job guarantee form (original and duplicate, 1 each)
 - ③ Personal identification (one copy)
- * Persons without a passport are asked to apply for one immediately upon acceptance to the program and then asked to submit a copy of the passport 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/herself to do so prior to arriving in Japan. In particular, a daily conversational level should be reached prior to coming to Japan.

Even for trainees who will undergo training in English, a basic level of conversational Japanese is necessary as English is used very little in daily life in Japan. Trainees must study diligently before arriving to Japan.

(4) In cases when a pregnancy is discovered after acceptance to the program, the host institution or CLAIR should be promptly notified.

Note: Japanese government regulation states that dependents of trainees participating in this program may NOT qualify for dependent status eligibility in Japan

CLAIR Overseas List

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※The recruitment and application process for trainees from Brazil is handled with the kind cooperation of the Confederacao Nacional de Municipios since fiscal 2008.

○Confederacao Nacional de Municipios (CNM)

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