International Graduate Program in Language Sciences

Tohoku University Graduate School of International Cultural Studies（GSICS）

Application for the 3-year Doctoral Program for the Academic Year of 2027 (Beginning in October 2027)

I. Aim

The aim of the International Graduate Program in Language Sciences (hereafter, IGPLS) is to promote interdisciplinary education and research concerning human language from multiple perspectives of linguistics, psychology, brain science and information science. Based on recent development in linguistics and other relevant disciplines, our program seeks to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of linguistics and language sciences, with a focus on theoretical linguistics, language acquisition, psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics. The program will be conducted in collaboration with the Research Center for Language, Brain and Cognition, which is affiliated with the Tohoku University Graduate School of International Cultural Studies (GSICS).

Degree offered: “Doctor of Philosophy (International Cultural Studies)” or “Doctor of Philosophy”

II. Admission Policy

The Tohoku University Graduate School of International Cultural Studies provides students with the ability to think and analyze in an international and interdisciplinary manner, advanced foreign language skills, and a high level of specialized knowledge and clear awareness of issues in the following three areas: (1) diverse regional cultures of Japan and other areas seen from an international perspective, (2) global issues concerning the environment, resources, and a sustainable society in which all humankind can coexist, and (3) language underlying international society. Our educational goal is to train professionals, teachers, and researchers who can play an active role on a global scale with their rich education, international perspective, and high ideal of contributing to the stewardship and development of human civilization and culture. To achieve this goal, we seek students who have clear aspirations of becoming creative researchers or professionals and are active in the international community, equipped with flexible thinking skills, broad academic knowledge, and advanced language skills.

In admitting students, we have entrance examinations in the following categories: general selection, special selection for international applicants applying from overseas, selection for those advancing to the doctoral program from our MA program (only for the three-year doctoral program), entrance examination for the Global Governance and Sustainable Development Program, and entrance examination for the International Graduate Program in Language Sciences. These are used to select applicants who have the advanced abilities and qualities needed to conduct research in line with the educational ideals/goals mentioned above.

The three-year doctoral program

In the category of general selection, applicants are evaluated based on (1) their MA theses, (2) their scores in a written test to assess whether they have the advanced knowledge in their specialized fields, and (3) an interview and a review of their application materials, which are to assess their motivation, research plan, and foreign language skills needed for research at a higher level, among other things. These are given roughly equal weight.

In the category of special selection for international applicants applying from overseas, applicants who are recommended by their home universities are evaluated based on (1) a review of their application materials

and (2) an interview. We assess whether they have advanced knowledge in their specialized areas. We also examine their ability to conduct research, motivation, and research plan. These are given roughly equal weight.

In the category of selection for those who wish to advance to the doctoral program from our MA program, we assess whether applicants have advanced knowledge in their specialized areas and high-level foreign language skills needed for research, based on (1) their MA theses and (2) a review of their application materials and an interview. These are given roughly equal weight.

In the entrance examination for the Global Governance and Sustainable Development Program, applicants are evaluated based on (1) a review of their application materials and (2) an interview. We examine whether they have the high-level English proficiency needed to study in the program (as English is the medium of instruction), the ability to think critically about today's social issues, and the ability to solve practical problems. These are given roughly equal weight.

In the entrance examination for the International Graduate Program in Language Sciences, applicants are evaluated based on (1) a review of their application materials and (2) an interview. We examine whether they have the high-level English proficiency needed to study in the program (as English is the medium of instruction), the advanced specialized knowledge necessary in the field of language sciences, the practical ability to conduct research, and the ability to perform interdisciplinary analyses. These are given roughly equal weight.

We expect students to possess broad knowledge in their areas of expertise, advanced foreign language skills, and ability to conduct creative research, before their enrollment.

III. Curriculum

All courses in IGPLS are taught in English. A minimum of 12 units of course work and completion of a Doctoral dissertation are required for the Doctoral degree.

・Advanced Seminar in Language Sciences (independent study) (compulsory): 8 units

・Advanced Lecture in Language Sciences (compulsory): 4 units

IV. Application

1. Positions available:

Around 2

2. Application Requirements

Applicants for the 3-year Doctoral Program should meet one of the following criteria:

(1) Those who have received, or will receive a Master's degree or professional degree by September 2027.

(2) Those who have received, or will receive a Master's degree or professional degree, or an equivalent degree from a graduate school in a foreign country by September 2027.

(3) Those who have completed, or will complete a course conducted by an educational institution of a foreign country via distance learning while residing in Japan, and have received, or will receive a Master's degree or professional degree, or an equivalent degree from that course by September 2027.

(4) Those who have completed, or will complete a graduate program of a foreign educational facility in Japan, which (i) has been approved by the educational system of that country to operate the graduate program and (ii) is designated separately by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (henceforth 'the Minister'), and have received, or will receive a Master's degree, a professional degree, or an equivalent degree by September 2027.

(5) Those who have completed, or will complete a program at the United Nations University, and have

received, or will receive a Master's degree, or an equivalent degree by September 2027.

(6) Those who have been designated by the Minister. (Notification No. 118 of 1989 from the Ministry of Education.)

i) Those who have engaged in research activities for 2 years or longer in universities or research institutes, etc., after graduating from a university, and who are judged, according to the applicants' research activities, to have reached a standard of achievement equivalent to or above the status of a Master's degree or professional degree.

ii) Those who have engaged in research activities for 2 years or longer in universities or research institutes, etc., after completing 16 years of school education in a foreign country, or after completing 16 years of school education by finishing a course conducted by a foreign university via distance learning while residing in Japan, and who are judged by the GSICS, according to the applicants' research activities, to have reached a standard of achievement equivalent to or above the status of a Master's degree or professional degree.

(7) Those whose academic abilities are judged by the GSICS, based on GSICS's individual qualification examination, to be equal to or greater than those of a person with a Master's degree or professional degree, and who are 24 years of age or older at the end of September 2027.

Note 1: Applicants who will receive a Master's degree from a graduate school of Tohoku University (including GSICS) shall fall under qualification (1) above, and are exempt from the fees for application and admission.

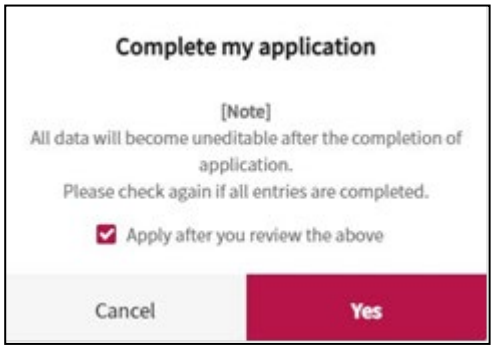
Note 2: Applicants that fall under qualification (6) or (7) must undergo a pre-qualification examination and are required to submit the designated documents for this purpose to the GSICS Office of Academic Affairs by February 19, 2027 in order to fulfill the requirement for October 2027 admissions.

Please contact the GSICS Office of Academic Affairs for inquiries regarding application qualifications. See page 8 for contact information.

3. Application Procedures

(1) Outline of the Online Application

Applications are accepted only through the online application system, The Admissions Office (hereinafter referred to as TAO). Please upload all of your application documents listed in (2) onto TAO during the application period specified in (3). Your application will only be accepted if you complete the application procedures through TAO during the application period. Please make sure that your application is complete by checking that all the necessary documents are uploaded and all the necessary information is filled in. A pop-up window will ask you to confirm again. Check the box and click the "Yes" button. By clicking the "Yes" button you can complete the process.



If we have any questions about your application, we will contact you via TAO. Please follow the instructions provided in the message. When we send you a message through TAO, a notification email will be sent from the following address. Please make sure that you can receive emails from this address.

Notification email address: no-reply@admissions-office.net

After receiving the notification email, please log in to TAO promptly and check the message.

TAO: https://admissions-office.net/en/portal

(2) Application Documents

a) Photograph: The photo must have been taken within 3 months prior to the date on which you submit your application. It must not be digitally processed, retouched, or filtered in any way. It must be unaltered and must provide a clear, accurate likeness of the applicant. If you wear glasses during the interview, please upload a photo of yourself with those glasses.

b) Certificate of Graduation (or Expected Graduation)

c) Academic Transcript: A transcript issued from the graduate school where your Master's degree was conferred. The transcript must bear the graduate school's formal seal on it.

d) Research Plan: Describe your research plan in English using A4 size sheets of paper in 2,000 words or less.

e) Sample Research Paper written in English

f) Master's Thesis (if it is written in a language other than English, a summary in English with a length of approximately 10 pages using A4 size sheets of paper should be attached to the thesis) or **Statement of Master's Thesis Plan** (the statement should be written within 10 pages (around 300 words per page) using A4 size sheets of paper).

g) Photocopy of Formal Certificate of TOEFL® or TOEIC® test score or IELTS™ Band Score

h) Letter of Reference: The letter should be written by one of your academic advisors who can accurately evaluate your research ability. Applicants must use TAO to send a request for a letter of reference to their referee. An email will be sent to your referee from the email address no-reply@admissions-office.net, requesting a letter of reference. Applicants are recommended to ask their referee in advance to submit a letter of reference according to the instruction given in the email from TAO.

i) Statement of Financial Security

j) Certificate of Residence or a copy of both sides of Residence Card: For applicants who are foreign residents of Japan at the time of application and who have lived in Japan for more than 90 days. The certificate is to be issued by the head of the local municipality, must contain your resident status and must have been issued within 3 months prior to the date on which you submit your application.

k) Application Fee 30,000 yen:

1) Applicants residing in Japan are to pay the application fee via ATM or online bank transfer. The account information is as follows:

Bank: MUFG bank (Bank code: 0005)
Branch: Wakatake branch (Branch code: 809)
Account type: Savings account (普通)
Account number: 2259370
Account holder's name: 国立大学法人東北大学　(Kana: ﾀﾞｲ)ﾄｳﾎｸﾀﾞｲｶﾞｸ)

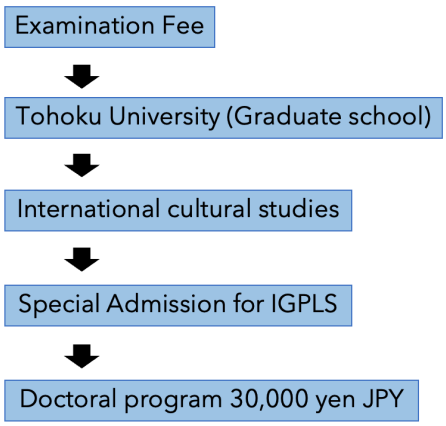
*Please make sure to enter "KD" and your name in the payer's column.
e.g., KD ******* ******* (Your name in *katakana*)
Family name First name
*Please cover the bank transfer fee yourself.

*Foreign remittances cannot be made to this bank account.
*If you have paid the application fee but decide not to apply for any reason, please contact the GSICS Office of Academic Affairs by April 12, 2027.
*Please submit a copy of the receipt, ATM receipt or a screenshot of online banking that shows your bank account, the amount you paid, the date of transfer and the payer name.

2) Applicants residing abroad are to pay the application fee online via credit card, using the online payment system "e-shiharai.net."

URL: https://e-shiharai.net/ecard/

When you make a payment in the system, please proceed as follows:



* You are to pay the transfer/handling fees in addition to the application fee.
* The application fee is nonrefundable once the application has been accepted. However, if the application is not accepted, or the application fee is accidentally paid twice, it will be refunded to the payer's credit account via the credit card company three months after the application deadline. Please contact the GSICS Office of Academic Affairs by April 12, 2027. At that time, transfer/handling fees will be charged in addition to the application fee. Refunds cannot be made if the payer's credit card is not valid or a prepaid credit card is used.
* Please submit an image of the "Results" screen on the e-shiharai.net page.

3) Applicants sponsored by the Japanese government are exempted from paying the application fee.

Note 1: Application documents cannot be changed once they have been accepted.
Note 2: Current GSICS Master's Program students who wish to apply for this program are not required to submit application documents e), g), h) and k).
Note 3: We do not accept an IELTS™ Band Score (academic) older than two years at the time of application. We accept a TOEFL® or TOEIC® test score older than two years at the time of application. Applicants are strongly recommended to submit their most recent scores. We only accept TOEFL iBT® scores from a single test date, not MyBest™ scores. We accept TOEFL iBT® Home Edition, but we do not accept IELTS Indicator. We do not accept TOEIC® Listening & Reading IP Test. For the TOEIC® Listening & Reading Public Test conducted in Japan, we only accept the official digital certificate.

(3) Application Period

All application documents must be uploaded onto TAO between March 23, 2027 (9:00 a.m. JST), and April 12, 2027 (4:59 p.m. JST). If any of them is found to contain fraudulent information, the application will be automatically rejected. In the case that applicants make a false statement in their application documents, they may have their admission revoked even after admission.

Note 1: It is strongly recommended that applicants, prior to application, contact and consult their prospective supervisors about their research plans. Regarding the entrance examination, the

prospective supervisor will provide only basic information that has already been published, such as the examination schedule and application guidelines. Whether or not an applicant participates in the pre-consultation, as well as the content of the consultation, will not affect the admission decision.

Note 2: Applicants must submit the original copies of their transcripts and certificate of graduation, etc. upon admission. Failure can result in the withdrawal of their admission.

4. Screening Method

Applicants are screened on the basis of a comprehensive evaluation of their application documents (including their academic transcript and research plan), English proficiency (TOEFL® or TOEIC® test score or IELTS™ Band Score) and an interview conducted on-location or online by Tohoku University faculty members. Applicants will be notified of the details of the interview including the time and date after we have accepted their application documents. We will evaluate applicants on a four-point scale.

Note 1: Applicants who commit misconduct during the entrance examination will be disqualified.
Note 2: Materials such as slides cannot be used during the interview.

5. Announcement of Acceptance and Enrollment

(1) **The results of the screening will be posted on the GSICS website at 5:00 pm JST on June 9, 2027.**

https://www.intcul.tohoku.ac.jp/en/admission

(2) Documents needed for enrollment will be sent to successful applicants. All enrollment procedures are to be completed by mid-September, 2027.

(3) Successful applicants are requested to pay the following fees at the time of registration:

a) Admission Fee: 282,000 yen

Note 1: Successful applicants who are currently enrolled in a Master's Program at Tohoku University are not required to pay the admission fee.
Note 2: Upon application, successful applicants who have difficulty paying the admission fee for financial reasons and who have outstanding academic ability, or who have other unavoidable circumstances, may be granted a deferment of the admission fee.

b) Tuition Fee: 267,900 yen (half of the annual tuition fee 535,800 yen)

Note 1: In the case that the tuition fee is revised during your period of study, you will be charged the revised tuition fee from the date of revision.
Note 2: Upon application, students who have difficulty paying tuition for financial reasons and who have outstanding academic ability, or who have other unavoidable circumstances, may be granted a deferment of the tuition payment or permission to pay tuition in monthly installments.
Note 3: Tohoku University launched the Tohoku University Advanced Graduate School LEAP Program in April 2026 to foster outstanding researchers who will lead the next generation of innovation and be active on the global stage, as well as to supply highly skilled professionals to diverse sectors. In principle, the program provides support to all doctoral students*.

*For an overview of the program and application eligibility, please refer to the website below. Tohoku University Advanced Graduate School LEAP Program Website:
https://pgd.tohoku.ac.jp/english/rpc/LEAP.html

c) Insurance and other expenses: There is a fee for the Comprehensive Insurance for Student Lives Coupled with "Gakkensai" for International Students ("Inbound Futai Gakuso"). (*The premium depends on the type of insurance chosen.) Further details will be provided in the admission documents. All fees are current as of October 1, 2026 and indicate the total for three years.

6. Long-Term Course Program

We have adopted a Long-Term Course Program for students who have difficulty completing the course in the normal 3 years due to concurrent employment, housework, caregiving and so on. Though the Doctoral Program normally lasts 3 years, it can be extended to 6 years. Those who wish to extend their period of study from 3 years to 6 years may apply to enroll as Long-Term Course Students. Note that the maximum period of residency for the Doctoral Program is 6 years. Those who wish to enroll in the Long-Term Course Program must follow the instructions in the notification of acceptance, which will be delivered by mail after the announcement of acceptance and submit the prescribed documents when conducting the other entrance procedures.

Coursework for students who are deemed eligible for the Long-Term Course Program is set in accordance with the curriculum and time schedule for regular students.

The annual tuition fee for long-term course students is calculated as follows: the total amount of tuition fees for the standard term of study (3 years) is divided across the full length of the extended term of study (6 years). For details, please contact the GSICS Office of Academic Affairs.

7. Handling of Personal Information

(1) Personal information held by Tohoku University is handled in strict compliance with the "Act on the Protection of Personal Information (Act No. 57 of 2003)", the "Personal Information Protection Regulations of Tohoku University" and any other relevant regulations.

(2) Personal information such as examination results used for the selection of applicants will be used for the following purposes: (a) selection of applicants, (b) admission procedures, (c) pre-enrollment support, (d) follow-up surveys, (e) post-enrollment support (scholarships, tuition exemption, health care, etc.), (f) academic guidance, (g) tuition collection, (h) surveys and research (for improving the entrance exam and analyzing application trends). For applicants who are admitted to the university, personal information from before and after the entrance examination may be analyzed together.

(3) Work related to entrance examinations and educational affairs may be performed by contractors entrusted by the University. In the event that all or part of the personal information of applicants is provided to the contractor, necessary measures will be taken to ensure that the information is handled appropriately in accordance with the "Personal Information Protection Regulations of Tohoku University" and any other relevant regulations.

8. Educational Data Usage

Data, including personal information, that Tohoku University collects through its education/learning activities and stores on its information systems (hereafter, Educational Data) is analyzed with the latest analytical and A.I. technology and is considered vital to our implementation of evidence-based education.

Educational Data will be used effectively and appropriately in compliance with our "Statement on Educational Data Usage," "Policy on Educational Data Usage," and "Tohoku University's 8 Principles of Educational Data Acquisition."

After being admitted to the university, students' personal information, such as their entrance exam scores etc., is merged with the university's Educational Data.

URL：https://www.tohoku.ac.jp/japanese/studentinfo/education/08/education0801/

9. Other Information

(1) Please note that incomplete applications will not be accepted. Once your application documents are received, no corrections are permitted. The application fee is non-refundable.

(2) Disclosure of the examination results is available at the request of applicants during the fiscal year in which the examination was taken (April to March).

(3) Appropriate support shall be provided for applicants with visual, auditory, physical, internal and/or developmental disabilities. Please check our website for more information and contact the GSICS Office of Academic Affairs at your earliest convenience.

URL：https://www.intcul.tohoku.ac.jp/en/contents/admission_info#special_accommodations

10. Contact Information

If you have any questions, please contact us at:

Office of Academic Affairs

Graduate School of International Cultural Studies, Tohoku University

E-mail: int-kkdk@grp.tohoku.ac.jp