

# 2027 UNHCR-Refugee Higher Education Program (RHEP)

## Waseda University (Waseda)

### Requirements for Refugees Applying for RHEP at the Graduate School of International Culture and Communication Studies and the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies

(For candidates with sufficient language skills for **pursuing a degree in English**)

#### 1. UNHCR Refugee Higher Education Program: RHEP

UNHCR Refugee Higher Education Program (RHEP) is a program implemented by partner universities and coordinated by UNHCR Representation in Japan and the RHEP Alliance (hereinafter referred to as “the RHEP Secretariat”).

#### 2. Outline and Eligibility

The program will select up to **two candidates** for recommendation.

##### 1) Faculty and Department:

-Graduate School of International Culture and Communication Studies (M.A. in International Culture and Communication Studies) \*English

-Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies (M.A. in International Relations or Ph.D. in International Studies)  
\*English

##### 2) Number of refugee candidates to be recommended: maximum of two (total for all graduate schools at Waseda)

##### 3) Eligibility criteria: the candidate must

- a) be a refugee or a person in need of international protection with a residency permit granted by the Japanese authorities (excluding Japanese nationals);
- b) have no other means of support for university studies;
- c) understand that the objective of the program is for the selected candidate to commit to their studies diligently;
- d) have sufficient academic capacity to pursue studies at either Master or Doctoral course;
- e) have **English language skills** sufficient for pursuing a graduate degree from any of Waseda’s schools that offer a curriculum in English; and
- f) meet other criteria for applicants as stipulated by Waseda University.

\*Please see the application guidelines of Waseda University for details.

##### 4) Scholarship:

Waseda will waive tuition as well as other admission-related fees, including the application fee and enrollment fee.

Students may also apply for scholarships offered by external organizations or foundations to support their living expenses; however, selection is not guaranteed. In some cases, scholarship recipients may be required to participate in interviews conducted in simple Japanese or attend related events.

Please note that for doctoral students, it may be difficult to receive scholarship support during the third year of enrollment.

##### 5) Schedule:

Process for selection of candidates to be recommended for admission by the UNHCR and RHEP Alliance:

- Application period for RHEP                      From 3 July (Fri) to 3 August (Mon) 2026

- Written test From this year's selection, RHEP will assess candidates' English written proficiency via English test scores.
- Interview 22 Aug (Sat) and 29 Aug (Sat) 2026
- Selection of candidates for recommendation to Waseda Early September 2026

For the process for selection of candidates for admission by Waseda, please see the application guideline by Waseda University

\*1 The program selects candidates for recommendation to Waseda, but all final admission decisions are to be made solely by Waseda.

\*2 The application period for the Graduate School of International Culture and Communication Studies (GSICCS) is from July 29 to August 24, 2026. **Those who wish to apply to GSICCS should complete their applications to GSICCS within the application period without waiting for the announcement of the RHEP selection results.** When applying, you will need to pay the application fee by the method specified by GSICCS, but if you are recommended as a candidate as a result of the RHEP selection process, the screening fee will be refunded in full at a later date regardless of whether you pass or fail the GSICCS entrance exam. However, if you are not recommended as a candidate, the application fee will not be refunded.

\*3 The application period for the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies (GSAPS) is from August 18 to September 1, 2026. **Those who wish to apply to GSAPS should complete their applications to GSAPS within the application period without waiting for the announcement of the RHEP selection results.** When applying, you will need to pay the screening fee by the method specified by GSAPS, but if you are recommended as a candidate as a result of the RHEP selection process, the screening fee will be refunded in full at a later date regardless of whether you pass or fail the GSAPS entrance exam. However, if you are not recommended as a candidate, the screening fee will not be refunded.

### 3. How to Apply

#### 1) Required Documents

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| <b>A. RHEP Application Form</b>                                               | The link to the application will be available on the webpage of Refugee Higher Education Program ( <a href="https://rhepalliance.org/en_application">https://rhepalliance.org/en_application</a> ) from <b>3 July (Fri) 2026</b> . <b>Forms may change each year</b> , so those who have previously applied to RHEP will need to send a new application with updated information using the forms specifically designated for the year of application. |
| <b>B. Passport Photo</b>                                                      | Please affix a passport photo to the first page of the RHEP Application Form.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>C. Certificate of (expected) graduation/degree and academic transcript</b> | Certificate of (expected) graduation/degree and official transcript from the formal educational institution of your last enrollment.<br><br>If you are unable to submit an official transcript, please submit a statement of facts describing your educational background.                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>D. Proof of English language proficiency (Mandatory)</b>                   | Official proof of language proficiency (e.g. the results of TOEFL, IELTS or TOEIC scores for English).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

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| <b>E. One Letter of Recommendation</b>          | The letter should be about 1 to 2 pages (A4 size). Please have the reference enclose the letter in an envelope with his/her signature on the seal of the envelope. On the surface of the envelope, please have the reference write the name of the applicant and "Recommendation Letter for the RHEP Application" and hand it to the refugee applicant. The reference must not be a relative of the applicant.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>F. Proof of Legal Status</b>                 | <p>(Note: Please DO NOT send originals. Send only copies. )</p> <p>Applicants must submit BOTH documents a) and b), as well as ONE of the documents listed below from c) to e).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Documents certifying your residency status; and</li> <li>b) Residency card or resident registration form (<i>juminhyo</i>) which indicates the whole family unit;</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) Certificate of Refugee Status; or</li> <li>d) The Certificate of Settlement Record by the Refugee Assistance Headquarters (for Indo-Chinese refugees); or</li> <li>e) Proof of Refugee Status</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Other documents certifying refugee-like status (for asylum seekers who were granted special permission to stay on the bases of humanitarian considerations, a letter from your lawyer, NGO or other third party who supported you or your family member with the refugee-like status (e.g. your parent) during the time of the refugee application, outlining the application history and describing the reasoning for the result of your/your family's refugee application).</li> <li>b) For those (explicitly or implicitly) provided international protection and never had applied for asylum in Japan: official certificate from a government agency; identity documents; or documents certifying the need of international protection issued by NGO, lawyer or other third party who supported you and your family members at the time of arrival to Japan or at the time of processing residency in Japan, describing the reasoning for your/your family's need for international protection. Additional certificate/document may be requested in cases where the submitted documents do not fulfil the requirements.</li> <li>c) Certificate of Complementary Protection</li> </ul> |
| <b>G. Proof of Family's Financial Situation</b> | <p><b>Applicants must submit documents</b> indicating the income of all members of the family who contribute to the household finances, including his/her father, mother, and him/herself (e.g. tax-income certificate, statement of earnings, etc.). This should be based on earnings from the year before the application.</p> <p>Applicants should indicate the amount of financial support they receive from persons under a duty to support such as relatives (allowance etc.), and if relevant, the amount of scholarship, fellowship, private support, livelihood protection and/or social security payments being received.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

- Please send the required documents to the following address by simplified registration (*kani-kakitome*). On the front of the envelope, please write in red "RHEP Application Enclosed".
- Application packages should be postmarked on or before 3 August (Mon). Application packages that are postmarked later than the 3 August (Mon) will, in principle, not be accepted. Interested candidates are advised to send the package well in advance to avoid late applications.
- Note that application packages will not be returned.
- Please refrain from sending numerous applications.

2) **Application Deadline: 3 August (Mon) 2026 (postmarked)**

3) Please submit applications by simplified registration (*kani-kakitome*) to:

c/o RHEP Alliance

Secretariat of UNHCR Refugee Higher Education Program

Bancho-Heim #431, 1-2 Nibancho, Chiyoda-ku,

Tokyo 102-0084

**4. Selection of candidates to be recommended to Waseda**

The process for the selection of candidates to be recommended will include screening of application materials, examination, and interview.

1) Application Screening:

Applications will be accepted between:

**3 July (Fri) and 3 August (Mon) 2026** (postmarked)

Please note that applications that arrive after the due date will in principle not be accepted.

**A notification letter, indicating whether or not they have been short listed, will be sent by RHEP Secretariat by the middle of August via mail.**

2) Examination:

RHEP assesses candidates' English written proficiency with English test scores.

3) Interview:

Date: **22 August (Sat) and 29 August (Sat) 2026**

Location: Online (For details, see the admission ticket for examination that will be distributed to applicants who have passed the document screening.)

The interview date stated above is yet to be confirmed. For the exact date, please refer to the convocation letter and the admission ticket for examination.

**The final results are scheduled to be sent to successful applicants in early September via mail.**

- Inquiries regarding the result of the application will not be accepted under any circumstances.
- The final decision concerning the candidate who is to be recommended to Waseda will be made by the selection committee, consisting of UNHCR and RHEP Alliance staff, individuals with educational backgrounds/NGO staff and affiliates from language schools. (TBC)
- Based on the discretion of the selection committee, regardless of the number of applicants, not all places may be filled.

**5. Recommendation to Waseda and selection by Waseda**

Information regarding the selection process by Waseda will be provided to the selected candidate of RHEP at a later date. The final decision as to which candidate is successful is solely at Waseda's discretion.

Accepted students will be asked to fulfill their commitment and responsibilities set by the UNHCR as RHEP scholarship students. The students will be required to:

- ① submit progress reports to RHEP Secretariat twice a year;

- ② regularly participate in follow-up meetings and interviews after graduating from the university; and
- ③ undertake at least one RHEP project (e.g. participate in a seminar as a speaker) during the time of their studies.

\*Details of the abovementioned-reports/assignments will be provided by RHEP Secretariat after students are accepted by the university.

## **6. Notice and Disclaimer**

For the purposes of equity, UNHCR / RHEP Alliance and the selection committee will not respond to inquiries about the application screening process, the content of the examination, and matters relating directly to the result. Furthermore, as the RHEP selection is undertaken by UNHCR and RHEP Alliance, please do not contact Waseda University regarding the program and selection process. Please make sure to contact professors at the university of your choice in advance, to confirm that you will be able to study the research theme of your choice.

For candidates who have applied for a university located far from your residence, you may need to move at your own cost from your current place of residence at the time of application. In addition, depending on the academic year and desired school or faculty, the location of your campus may change. Please consult carefully with your family (especially if you are a minor) and/or employer when choosing a university and academic program before applying to this program.

UNHCR and RHEP Alliance will protect personal information in conformity with the relevant confidentiality policies. UNHCR and RHEP Alliance will only refer to the applicants' personal information when it is necessary for carrying out operations, including reviewing the program and its outcomes, and gathering statistical data for conducting publicity activities. Applicants' personal information will only be shared with partner universities as and when it is necessary, in order for candidates' recommendation to the relevant university.

\*From 2025, the program is coordinated by UNHCR Representation in Japan and RHEP Alliance.