

German-Japanese Fellowship Programme 2026 Call for Applications

IJP e.V.
**German-Japanese
Programme**

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In 2026, the International Journalist's Programmes (IJP) will offer for the third time a fellowship program exclusively for Japan. This initiative reflects Japan's strategic importance in geopolitical shifts and the commitment of the German government to strengthening bilateral ties.

The programme offers up to five journalists from Japan and five from Germany the opportunity to participate in a two-month fellowship stay abroad in the respective host country.

The programme puts a strong focus on the challenges of geopolitics, economics, environment/energy/climate policy, and emerging technologies. Therefore, applicants should demonstrate strong expertise in at least one of these fields. Furthermore, projects are encouraged that explore demographic change, migration, and Germany's role as a primary stakeholder within the European Union.

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About IJP

IJP, a non-profit organization based in Germany, has fostered international media exchange for over 40 years. Our bilateral exchange programmes allow freelance and staff journalists to experience a host country's political, cultural, social, and media landscape firsthand as guest reporters. These various IJP fellowship programmes are supported by a network of foundations, private sponsors, and the German Foreign Office.

Please note that IJP is managed largely on a volunteer basis by individuals who all have a background in journalism. **We ask all applicants to familiarize themselves thoroughly with our organization before applying at:** <https://ijp.org/en/>

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The fellowship

Timeframe: 28th September until 27th November 2026

The 2026 programme starts with a mandatory **4 day-introductory meeting in Berlin** (September 28 – October 1), where Japanese and German fellows will gather to prepare for their stay. These working days will include official visits, cultural coaching, practical insights for research in Germany and a decent amount of time to work on your research ideas together with your German counterparts, and vice-versa. A highly collaborative attitude is expected and the desire to build a professional network before the group splits for their individual placements. A strong commitment to engage verbally with the group is expected.

A meeting with the German alumni of the Asia programme is also scheduled during this time frame.

Arrival in Berlin is recommended during the weekend prior for a fresh and relaxed start of the fellowship. Please note that fellows are responsible for organizing

their accommodation in Germany independently. We recommend consulting our Japanese alumni network for advice.

The German journalists will leave to Japan for their two-month stay shortly after the introductory conference. Following the orientation meeting, Japanese fellows will be placed at a German host media outlet, primarily in Berlin. This mandatory placement provides a home base for your work, offering insights into the German media landscape and providing a supportive environment from German colleagues for your research. The host media placements will be organized in collaboration with the IJP office in Berlin and the programme manager. Additionally, you will be put in contact with Japanese alumni based in Japan and Berlin who will be able to provide advice.

The programme concludes with a joint **closing conference in Tokyo** on December 1, bringing the entire cohort back together to share their findings and experiences (tbc).

Successful applicants will receive a one-time payment of 4,200 Euro. The amount is intended to cover travel expenses, local living expenses, and qualified health insurance abroad. A personal contribution or support from your home media is expected, and no additional remuneration is provided for the work provided at the host media.

Commitment and obligation after the fellowship

Within three months of completing the programme, participants must submit their published journalistic work along with an illustrated personal report of at least five pages. These contributions will be included in a final printed programme documentation. Beyond the fellowship, all participants are invited to remain active members of the global IJP alumni network.

Application

Applications are open to all journalists between 28 and 40 years of age who work as freelancers or as permanent employees for Japanese media organizations. While knowledge of German is a plus, excellent English skills (oral and written) are mandatory and will be assessed during the selection process.

Application portfolio

To apply, please submit the following documents in **ONE single PDF file** by **June 15th, 2026**:

- **Curriculum Vitae**, including a passport size picture.
- A **letter of reference** from the head of department or editor-in-chief (which also supports the application, ensures leave of absence for the duration of the fellowship, and serves as proof of your journalistic activity). A letter of intent to show the commitment to publish articles during and after the fellowship in relation to the research done in Germany/Europe is mandatory.
- **Work samples**: a list of links to relevant articles. For Japanese texts, please provide a translation of the headlines.
- A one-page **motivation letter**, explaining why you want to pursue a fellowship in Germany.
- An **application video** (max. 90 seconds, recorded by cell phone) in English, clearly outlining your motivation as well as your research project. Please include a link to this video in your application.
- A **detailed research proposal** (1-2 pages), outlining a specific research project. This is a prerequisite for a successful application; further research ideas might be just sketched briefly.

The final selection will be made without recourse to legal action by a jury based on the application documents and, if necessary, a Zoom selection interview.

Notifications of participation will be sent out latest by **beginning of July 2026**.

Application address

Please send inquiries (if necessary) and application to:

johns@ijp.org and cc: office@ijp.org

Attn: Ms Martina JOHNS/ Head Asia Department
Subject line: [your name] / Japan 2026

Good luck!