

S O K E N D A I

The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI

2026

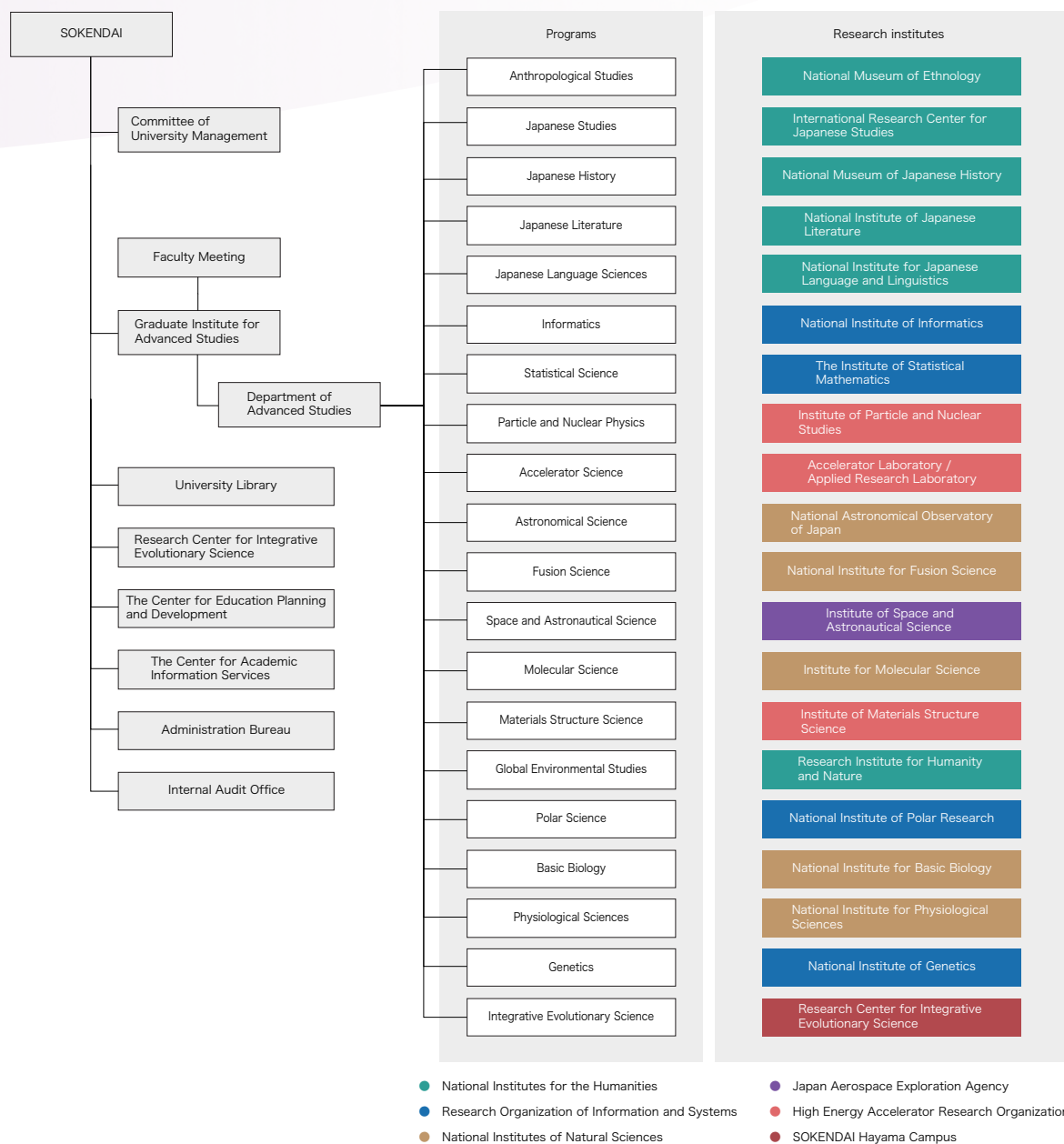
Japanese Studies Program,

Graduate Institute for
Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI

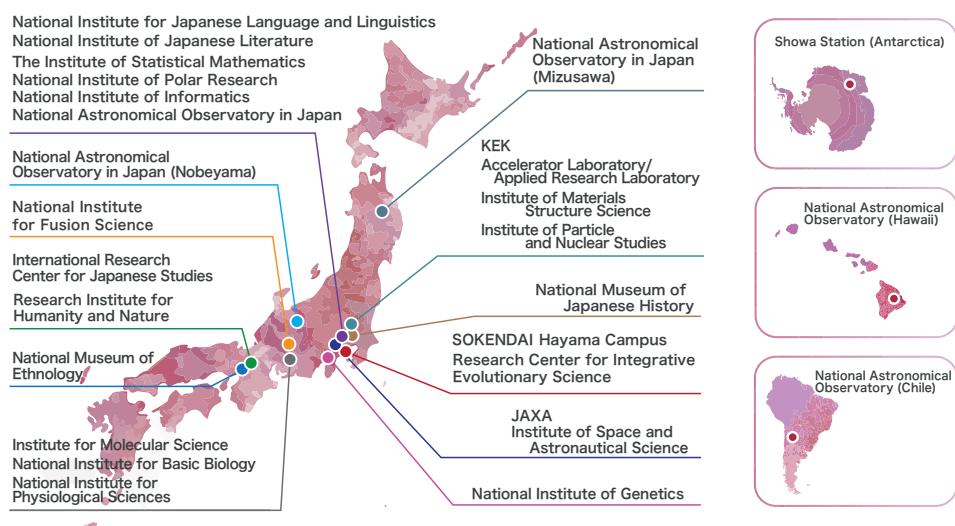


National Institutes for the Humanities
**INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER
FOR JAPANESE STUDIES**

The Graduate University for Advanced Studies



● Location of the Inter-University Research Institutes



Messages from the Director-General and Chair

Director-General of Nichibunken



Director-General
INOUE Shōichi

The International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) is the institutional home of the Japanese Studies Program within Graduate Institute for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI. Nichibunken was established to further interdisciplinary research on Japanese culture from an international perspective and also to facilitate and promote research cooperation with overseas scholars. In addition to deepening the study of Japan in the humanities, social sciences, and related fields, Nichibunken also collects and makes available information and materials pertaining to Japanese studies.

Supported by the presence of distinguished senior scholars and a rich research environment, education and research on Japanese culture at Nichibunken aims to nurture young scholars—both from Japan and other countries—through its international and interdisciplinary graduate courses and research programs. The Japanese Studies Program also seeks actively to admit promising young scholars from abroad as part of this endeavor.

In order to fulfill its mission of international and interdisciplinary study, Nichibunken is administratively organized under a single chair, allowing for a curriculum that makes possible multifaceted perspectives on Japanese studies and a uniquely flexible teaching and research organization. Nichibunken has also established an environment conducive to team research projects that include scholars from other institutions working in various fields. Postgraduate scholars who seek to continue their research at Nichibunken are encouraged to make full use of its well-endowed teaching and research environment to complete their doctoral degree.

Japanese Studies Program



Chair (Japanese Studies)
ZHAN Xiaomei

The Japanese Studies Program offers a highly interdisciplinary research environment. This is reflected in the list of teaching staff. Each member of the faculty brings a different perspective to the study of Japanese culture. The faculty members are experts in their fields, but also have the ability to work across a variety of other research fields. Graduate students entering the program will be able to develop their research skills from a broad perspective under the guidance of not only their supervisor but also other faculty members. Moreover, through team research meetings, symposiums, seminars, and research projects, students are exposed to the academic activities of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken), which is the parent institution of our program. In doing so, students will develop an interdisciplinary spirit and cultivate their abilities to expand the frontiers of Japanese studies.

Besides its interdisciplinary nature, Nichibunken's activities are also international in scope. Apart from organising and taking part in academic events abroad, every year we invite several leading international researchers to our Center. Interaction with these researchers enriches the research life of the graduate students and provides them with fresh ideas for their doctoral theses. Furthermore, there are opportunities for exchange with students from other programs of the Graduate University for Advanced Studies, such as the National Museum of Ethnology, the National Museum of Japanese History, the National Institute of Japanese Literature, the National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics, and the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature.

In this international and interdisciplinary research environment, the mission of the program is to nurture future researchers who will be active in the academic world at home and abroad. We welcome applicants who aspire to conduct original research with a global perspective.

Japanese Studies Program: Overview

Organization

The Japanese Studies Program facilitates the pursuit of an international and interdisciplinary Japanese studies encompassing the humanities, social sciences, and the natural sciences. Key to this is the involvement of all our faculty in teaching and research guidance.

The program requires candidates to take courses on “Theory and Methodology in Japanese Studies”, “Interdisciplinary Research”, and “Dissertation Work in Advanced Studies”, which provide the theoretical and methodological basis for conducting Japanese studies from a global perspective. Through these courses and guided research, we will foster researchers with creative and highly specialized perspectives, equipped to undertake Japanese studies in the twenty-first century.

Purpose

The Japanese Studies Program supports education and research on Japanese culture and civilization in international and interdisciplinary perspective through its diverse faculty and the rich resources of its research environment and aims to nurture researchers with an international and broadminded perspective.

● Courses offered in FY 2026

	Subject	Course Description	Teaching Staff
Elective	Theory and Methodology in Japanese Studies	Lectures present the latest research themes, objectives, and methodologies of each member of the Nichibunken faculty and introduce the latest developments in Japanese studies. Participants engage in research to clarify the theoretical and methodological frameworks of Japanese studies.	All members of faculty
	Interdisciplinary Research	Practice through oral presentations and question-and-answer sessions to promote the writing of an interdisciplinary thesis, thereby offering specific encouragement to a candidate's writing of the doctoral thesis.	All members of faculty
	Practical Training in Symposium Management	Participation in planning and organizing symposiums, seminars, team research projects, and the like, held at the program's home institute (Nichibunken).	Academic supervisor and associated faculty members
Required	Dissertation Work in Advanced Studies	Individually programmed lectures, seminars, and workshops necessary for writing the thesis. The programs are implemented with the support of faculty members working in relevant fields.	Academic supervisor and associated faculty members

Faculty Guidance

In addition to the main academic supervisor assigned to them, graduate students in the Japanese Studies Program receive guidance from two sub-advisors. Students are also free to consult at any time with other faculty or with the visiting scholars. Graduate students may participate in team research projects organized by the faculty, receive training in basic area research, as well as take part in seminars and other symposiums held at Nichibunken bringing together scholars from both within and outside the institute. We hope this stimulating research environment will help students complete the work for their degrees.



Graduate Student Class

Student Support

Financial Aid

To defray expenses related to survey and research activities, travel expenses, conference registration fees, copying of documents, etc., support in the form of Graduate Student Project Stipends, the short-stay Study Abroad Program Grants, etc. are provided. Students may also submit requests for help in purchasing books and other materials necessary for research and writing the dissertation.

Scholarships

The following scholarships are offered to help privately financed international students: If the number of applicants exceeds the quota, an internal selection process will be conducted.

- The International Foundation for Japanese Studies scholarships

Japanese students can apply for Japanese Student Services Organization scholarships.

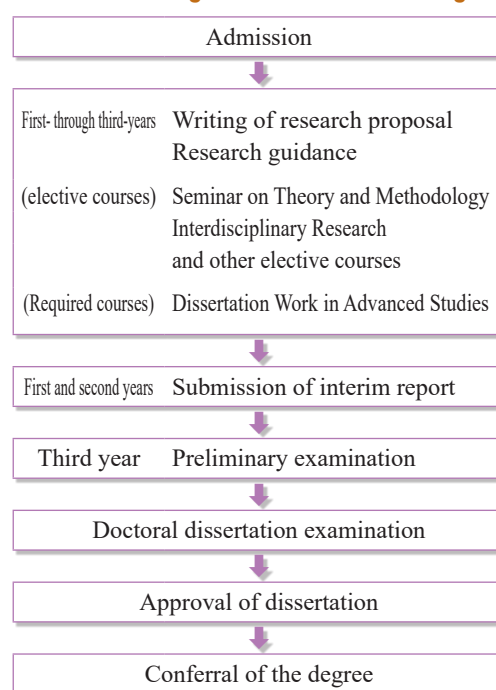


Use of the Nichibun Library



Graduate Students' Room

Timeline Leading to Conferral of the Degree



Message from a Student

An Invitation to The Japanese Studies Program

ZHANG Jingyi

“What research do you do?” was the question which greeted me after joining the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) as a graduate student of Japanese Studies Program, SOKENDAI. Set among the green hills of Rakusai, the Center hosts international, interdisciplinary workshops and research seminars nearly every week. Researchers and graduate students converge here from around the world, creating a space where dense knowledge and thinking intersect.

Being immersed in such an intense, diverse space is, I’ve come to realize, also the course’s greatest challenge. Conducting doctoral research here demands that you dig deeply into your own specialized field while carving out new lines of inquiry under the banner of “Global Japanese Studies.” In an age when AI can readily analyze literature through existing frameworks, I’ve come to feel that the true value of the course lies in developing an original angle and approach, generating new questions at the boundaries between fields.

To support this challenge, the course offers substantial financial assistance, and generous support from faculty and staff. ‘Graduate Student Research Projects’ and overseas dispatch programs enable conference participation and fieldwork both in Japan and abroad, while a well-stocked library acquisition system, research assistant (RA) employment opportunities, and support for grant applications all offer a tremendous support system underpinning research activities.

Set apart from the city center in quiet natural surroundings, this place—and its tight-knit scholarly network—offers an environment where “research is all there is.” The people around you come from different backgrounds and specializations, and it’s easy to accentuate the differences and retreat into your own world. But during a doctoral course, when time is restricted and specialization essential, dialogue with those outside one’s own field takes on real importance. It reveals things unable to be seen from within the confines of one’s own research field, and allows one to discern what your research can and cannot explain. Fostering dialogue with others while conducting your own research and developing an original perspective—these are the benefits of honing your scholarship at Nichibunken.

Faculty Profiles (as of July 2026)

1) Specialized Fields; 2) Current Research Themes;

ZHAN Xiaomei (Chair) Professor

1) History of artistic connections between Japan and China in the modern age; 2) I investigate internal factors out of western influences in the formation and transition of modern Japan and China art, from the perspective of cultural history. I purpose the common situation and the relation of the traditional Artists' Society, including Literati Paintings—a common genre between China and Japan. Furthermore, I pursue the Manchurian Experiences of Japanese Artists.



Frederik CRYNS Professor

1) History of the Sengoku period; interaction between the Western world and Japan; 2) My current research focuses on the personalities of Tokugawa Ieyasu, Hosokawa Gracia and William Adams in the late Sengoku period. Recently, I've been delving into the history of the Ashikaga shoguns as well. I am also working on the early history of Japan's foreign relations by researching the documents of the Dutch factory in Hirado.



ENOMOTO Wataru Professor

1) Medieval history of international exchange; 2) My research focuses on relations between Japan and other countries from the ninth through fourteenth centuries. While Japan's interest in diplomacy was low in this period, private or unofficial relations with other countries were even more active than before or after that time. As manifestations of that activity, I take up mainly merchants engaged in overseas trade and priests who went to China to study.



ISODA Michifumi Professor

1) Japanese history; 2) I am studying reforms of the bakuhan system of the middle to late early-modern period. Following the Tōhoku Earthquake and Tsunami I began gathering historical material about previous earthquakes and tsunami in an effort to put the information to use in disaster prevention. Recently, in cooperation with local governments, I have begun to investigate old documents concerning the shinobi (ninja) of Iga and Kōga.



ITŌ Takayuki (Vice Chair) Professor

1) History of Chinese thought; cultural interaction in East Asia; comparative culture; 2) My research focuses on the philosophical and intellectual history of China, placing it in the context of the East Asian culture sphere including Japan and Korea. In some cases, my consideration adds global viewpoints including that of the West or a comparative or international relations perspective.



KUSUNOKI Ayako Professor

1) Japanese political and diplomatic history; security studies; 2) Japan's post Asia-Pacific war policies on diplomacy and security took shape during the period from the occupation to the peace treaty. Why is that these policies have been basically adhered to over the long term? We shall consider the outcomes of the intermingling of two contexts: that of Japan's international relations since the nineteenth century, and that of international politics and domestic environment during the cold war.



LIU Jianhui Professor

1) History of cultural connections between Japan and China; 2) I pursue the mutual cultural influences and interventions in the modern East Asian region as a whole (including those between Japan and China), transcending one-country views of history and reappraising the region as a cultural community that together experienced the impact of Western modernization.



MATSUDA Toshihiko Professor

1) History of Japanese and Korean relations; 2) I study medical care and sanitation policy in Korea during the period of Japanese rule. Particularly by following the activities in Korea of bacteriologist Shiga Kiyoshi, known for discovering the dysentery bacterium, army doctor Satō Tsunemaru, whose papers are in the collection of the Nichibunken Library, and others, I consider the relationship between Japanese medical researchers' work and Japan's policies for rule of Korea.



Timon SCREECH Professor

1) History of the Edo period; 2) 1. Art history and visual culture of the Edo Period. History of anatomy and body criticism; erotica. 2. Rethinking 'sakoku', and international exchange. 3. Deification of warriors in the early-modern period (Toyokuni daimyōjin, Tōshō daigongen). Nationwide network of Tōshō-gū shrines. 4. International exchange in the early-modern Kingdom of Lūchū (J: Ryūkyū). Cultural history of the Yaima (J: Yaeyama) islands.



SEKINO Tatsuki Professor

1) Informatics; 2) I conduct research and development for visualization and analysis of information based on time. Results of this research are made available to the public in the form of the time information system HuTime, Web applications, and basic data for dealing with dates in the Japanese calendar.



TAKII Kazuhiro
Professor

1) Constitutional history; comparative legal history; 2) I study the formation and development of the Meiji constitutional system from the standpoint of the history of intellectual society and international relations. By approaching the history of Japan's constitution from both internal and external perspectives rather than simply as a phenomenon of one country, I hope to generate research that will have currency at an international level.



YAMADA Shōji
Professor

1) Informatics; history of cultural exchange; 2) I am engaged in the study of changes in the copyright law and their impact on culture, of the changes that occur in such traditions as Zen or popular culture when they are transmitted overseas and of the responses to them on the Japanese side, and of Digital Humanities, and other topics.



YASUI Manami
Professor

1) Cultural anthropology; Japanese folklore studies; 2) I continue to conduct fieldwork in Japan and Micronesia in order to shed light on folk customs and human interactions as they relate to changes in practices revolving around such issues as childbirth and medical care. I am also engaged in exploring how people have imagined the body and expressed it symbolically in iconography, from a perspective in which such fields as folk belief, medicine, and art overlap.



Edward BOYLE
Associate Professor

1) Border studies; heritage; islands; 2) My work examines borders from the early-modern to the contemporary era, looking at sovereignty and territory, spatial representation, the politics of belonging and marginalization, and memorialization. I study borders and borderland spaces in Japan and Northeast Asia.



KATAOKA Mai
Associate Professor

1) Modern Japanese literature; comparative literature; 2) I conduct research on the English translation, editing and publishing processes of modern Japanese literature, and the reception and dissemination of that literature. My specific focus is on the English-speaking world after the Pacific War, and I examine the inside history of the "passage" across borders of works of translated literature and the transformations they undergo. I am concerned with the reality and possibilities of modern Japanese literature as it takes shape under an international gaze.



NAKAMARU Takafumi
Associate Professor

1) Japanese classical literature; 2) My research is aimed at placing Japanese texts of the ancient and medieval periods in a world context and making them open to society. In this process, *kanbun* is key. Centering on *kanbun* texts written by Japanese (I am currently reading Fujiwara no Tadazane's *Denryaku*), I am examining works such as *Genji monogatari*, *Eiga monogatari*, *Tosa nikki*, and *Sanuki no Suke nikki*.



ŌTA Nanako
Associate Professor

1) Media history; 2) I am determined to pursue a research for the public good including the following topics: postwar Japanese radio broadcast, media and language in modern Japan, digital archiving for education.



Professor LIU, Professor SCREECH will retire in March 2027.
Professor ITO, Professor YAMADA will retire in March 2028.

※ Alphabetical order by last name

Degrees Awarded

● Degree for The Japanese Studies Program

Those who have completed the requirements for the degree in Japanese Studies will be awarded a doctoral degree.

● Number of Doctoral Degrees Awarded, by Year

Fiscal Year	1994 ~2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Coursework Doctorates	29	0	0	3	1	3	1	2	3	2	3	2	1	4	3	2	3	4	1	4	0	1	72
Thesis Doctorates	11	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	4	1	0	0	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	29
Total	40	1	1	3	1	3	1	3	6	6	4	2	1	7	4	3	4	4	1	5	0	1	101

● Past Recipients of the Doctoral Degree

Coursework Doctorates

Year of Admission	Name	Title of Thesis	Date of Award
2000	NAGAMATSU Atsushi	Study of the Beginning and Transition of Hunting in Japan from the Viewpoint of History and Folklore	March 24, 2003
	ITO Akiko	The Development of Statements on Science and Technology in the History and Transformation of the National Identity: Overview during the Two World Wars and the Following Period	September 30, 2003
	ULKER Bahadır Bogac	Napoleonic Wars and International System: With Special Reference to the Ottoman Empire and Japan	March 24, 2005
2001	NASU Hiroo	The Origin and Spread of Agriculture in China and Japan: Archaeo-botanical Study of Chengtoushan Site, Hunan, China	March 24, 2004
	IWAI Shigeki	Love Poems (<i>Renka</i>) and Related Issues in Japanese Poetry (<i>Kado</i>) and Tea Ceremony (<i>Sado</i>): Historical Development and Social Background	September 30, 2004
	NAKATANI Masakazu	Cooking Techniques in Prehistoric East Asia Seen in Material Culture: Cases in the Coastal Region of China and Japan in the Early Agricultural Period	March 24, 2005
	MUTŌ Shutarō	The Social Sciences in Modern Japan: Reconsidering East Asia	March 19, 2008
2003	LI Wei	The Use of Space in Edo-Period Daimyo Gardens: A Focus on “View” (<i>Chōbō</i>)	March 19, 2008
	HORI Madoka	Yone Noguchi: His Life and Work as a Writer of Dual Nationality	September 30, 2009
	TOYA Riina	“Tokyo Ginza Shiseido”: Fukuhara Shinzō and the Construction of Corporate Image	September 30, 2010
2004	SAKAI Junichirō	Educational and Cultural Interchange of Qing’s International Students in Japan: Contribution of Kōbun Gakuin	March 19, 2008
	SAWADA Harumi	Traditional Theatre and Chikamatsu Monzaemon in Modern Japanese Culture: Academicism/Theatre Criticism/Actor’s Body	March 24, 2009
2005	NAKANO Yōhei	The Study of Shinano Miko: The Formation and Transformation of Popular Religious Specialist Groups in the Edo Period	March 24, 2010
	YOKOYAMA Teruki	The Edo Shogunate’s Policy of Encouraging <i>Bugei</i> (Martial Arts): Tokugawa Yoshimune’s Epochal Idea	March 22, 2013
2006	MEI Dingge	Changes in Guding’s Thought in Manchukuo as Seen in His Translations, Works, and Publishing Activities	March 24, 2010
	KOYAMA Shuko	Taishō Shin Hanga: Birth of the Art of Modern Japanese Woodblock Print, its Structure and Development, Focusing on the Role of the Publisher	March 20, 2014
2007	NAGATO Yōhei	The Aesthetics of Sound and Image in the Films of Mizoguchi Kenji: The Audio-Visual Analysis of Narrative Structure	March 23, 2012
	SUZUKI Kenkō	<i>Shunga</i> Iconology in the Edo Period: Studies of the Background Art of Erotic Images	September 28, 2012
2008	CHEN Ling Hong	Japan-China Theater Exchange in the Modern Age: The Impact of <i>Shinpa on Wenming-xi</i>	March 23, 2012
	TOKUNAGA Seiko	A Study of the <i>Yūzū Nembutsu Engi</i> : Religious Belief as Seen in Medieval Illustrated Tales	March 22, 2013
	OKAMOTO Kikuko	Memorial Tree-Planting in Modern Japan: Examining Honda Seiroku’s Thoughts and Achievements in Forestry	March 20, 2014
2010	URUSHIZAKI Mari	Textual Approaches to Edo Nagauta Music	September 29, 2014
	HAN Lingling	The Literary Activities of Kitamura Kenjiro in Manchuria	March 24, 2015
2011	Anton Luis Capistrano SEVILLA	Exporting the Ethics of Emptiness: Applications, Limitations, and Possibilities of Watsuji Tetsurō’s Ethical System	March 24, 2015
	CHIEN Chung-Hao	“Barbarian”; The understanding of Taiwanese aborigines in Modern Japan from the Writers’ point of view	March 24, 2016
2012	RONG Yuan	Activities Organized by Newspaper Companies in the Concession City of Dalian: Focusing on the <i>ManshuNchinichishimbun</i>	March 24, 2017
	NISHIDA Shoichi	Kokutai Theorist KAKEHI Katsuhiko: His Thought and Action	September 28, 2017
2013	MITSUHIRA Yuki	Music Therapy and its Ideological Foundation in the Edo and Meiji Periods: A Study of the Reception of the Healing Qualities of Music in Chinese Nourishing Life Doctrines and western Music Therapy	March 24, 2016
	USAMI Tomoyuki	The Society of the Northern Kyushu Region in the Yayoi Period as Seen from the Development and Changes of Settlements	March 23, 2018
	KOIZUMI Tomonori	The History of Childhood Sexuality in Early Modern and Modern Japan	March 23, 2018
	YAMAMURA Shou	A Genealogy of Understanding Yang-Ming Learning in Modern Japan	March 23, 2018
2014	SAKA Chihiro	From Old Hag in Hell to Guide to the Pure Land: An Examination of the Representation of Datsueba in Literature and Visual Imagery Together with Rituals and Worship Practices	March 22, 2019
	Gouranga Charan PRADHAN	Reception of <i>Hōjōki</i> in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century England and America: With a focus on Natsume Sōseki’s English Translation of the Work	March 22, 2019
	KIMISHIMA Ayako	A Study of Kannon Statuary and Faith in Prayers for Peace	March 22, 2019
	SHUNTŌ Ken’ichi	The Humane Treatment of Animals in Postwar Japan: Social Movements for the Humane Treatment (of Dogs and Cats) and the Administration and Management of Animal Protection, 1947-2000	September 27, 2019
	ŌISHI Masumi	Japanese TV Commercials in the 1970s and 1980s: A Perspective Based on the Structure and Ordering of Image Components	September 28, 2020

Degrees Awarded

2015	KATAOKA Mai	Between <i>Shōsetsu</i> and the ‘Novel’: With a Focus on the English Translation and the Publishing Process of Modern Japanese Novels in Post-war Japan	September 27, 2019
	TAMURA Miyuki	Disability and Gender in Modern Japanese Literature: Body, Sex, Writing	March 24, 2021
	MASUDA Itsuki	Shūsaku Endō and the Postwar Experience: Fumi-e and Tenkō as Literary Practice for Wartime Christian Authors	September 28, 2023
2016	SONG QI	Shinto, Confucianism and Buddhism or “Three Teachings Thought” in the Late Edo Period: An Analysis of Form and Structure	March 24, 2021
	SHAN Hejun	The Transformation of Urban Space in Modern Qingdao: Continuity and Discontinuity in Japanese elements	September 28, 2021
2017	GAO Yanwen	The Discursive Space of “Manchurian and Mongolian Settlement”: Focusing on Continental Settlement Literature	March 24, 2022
	GONG Ting	Urban Heiankyō - Conditions from the end of the Eighth to the Beginning of the Twelfth Centuries	March 22, 2024
2018	CHEN Yijie	Seeing the West in Japan: A Study of Western Influences on Fu Baoshi	March 24, 2022
	KUBA Tomoyo	The Perception of Space in Classical Japan	March 24, 2023
	SONG DanDan	Rock Legends in Body and Mind - Examining Rites of Passage	September 28, 2023
2019	YE Xiaoyao	“Kyoto” in the Work of Kawabata Yasunari: Wartime and Postwar Periods	March 24, 2022
	YU XueJian	Adaptations of Chinese Dream Stories in Japanese Classical Literature	March 22, 2024
2020	WANG Ziqin	Visiting Chinese Painters in Edo-Period Japan and Their Reception: A Study from the Nanga Perspective	September 26, 2025

(Cumulative number of degree awarded since 1992 entrance) Total = 72

Thesis Doctorates

Name	Title of Thesis	Date of Award
WANG Yong	Prince Shotoku (Shōtoku Taishi) and Chinese Culture: Theory of the Reincarnation of Eshi That Changed History	September 30, 1996
SHIVANI Nandi	Socio-Technological Issues of Technology Transfer: A Specific Case Study of the Maruti-Suzuki Collaboration	March 24, 1997
MANOJ L. Shrestha	Multinational Businesses and Technology Transfer: Business Strategy of Post Echelon Structure	March 24, 1997
SUZUKI Sadami	Study of Kajii Motojirō	March 24, 1997
ITŌ Kenji	Japanese Business Management in East Asia: Globalization of Management and Transfer of “Japanese Corporate Management”	March 24, 1998
KITAGAWA Katsuhiko	Japan: Study of Trading Relations with South Africa	March 24, 1999
KOGUCHI Yasuo	Omi Imperial Court and Emissaries (Torai-jin) from Abroad: Kudara-Kishitsu-shi and Related People	March 24, 1999
TAKADA Yasutaka	Study of Life Culture and Change of Social Situations: Japan’s High Economic Growth in the 20th Century	March 24, 1999
HAMAGUCHI Eshun	Principles of Japanology: Japanese People and Society as “Relatum”	September 30, 1999
HANIHARA CHOW Misuzu	Japanese Literacy in Australia: A Changing Demand over Eighty Years	September 28, 2001
KITAGAWA Junko	The Nature and Development of Chestnut (<i>Castanea Crenata</i>) and Horse Chestnut (<i>Aesculus Turbinata</i>) Culture in Japan	September 30, 2004
OKAMURA Keiji	History of Japan Manchukuo Culture Association: From Foundation to Dissolution	March 24, 2006
KAGAWA Masanobu	Studies of Changing Japanese Perception of <i>Yōkai</i> : “Yōkai Goraku” from the Late Kinsei Period	September 29, 2006
YAMAGUCHI Hiroshi	An Archaeological Study of the Landscapes of Ancient Society: Digital Documentation of Historic Sites and Landscape Analysis	September 30, 2011
JIANG Yingyan	Changes in the Social Status of Tokugawa Shogunal Retainers: With Special Reference to the Trade in <i>Gokenin-kabu</i>	September 28, 2012
SHIBATA Yoriko	Paul-Louis Couchoud and Japan: His Life and the Reception of Haiku in France	March 22, 2013
NOROTA Jun’ichi	Aesthetics and Public Art Policy in the Late Tokugawa Period and the Meiji Era	March 22, 2013
AONO Masaaki	The Logic of State Shinto Established in Colonial Korea : The Shrine Policy of the Japanese Government-General of Korea in the 1930s	March 20, 2014
NEGAWA Sachio	Historical Studies about the Education of Children of Japanese Descent in Brazil during and before the World War II Period	March 20, 2014
KIM Byeongjin	The Revolutionary Syndicalist Ōsugi Sakae: His Ideas on Revolution Based on the concept of “Sei no sōzō” [Creation of Life]	March 20, 2014
SVETLANA KORNEEVA	A Historico-Sociological Study of Actions to Contain Quarrels and Altercations during the Early Edo Period: Cases in the Morioka and Kaga Domains	March 20, 2014
ISHIKAWA Hajime	A Study of Funahashi Seiichi: Reappraising the “Literature of Resistance”	March 24, 2015
KADOWAKI Tomohiro	A Study of the Transmission and Enforcement of the Shogunate’s National Laws in the First Half of the Early Modern Period	September 28, 2017
NAGAO Yoko	The Cultural Topography of “A Singing Town”: Modernity and the Formation of Owara Kaze-no-bon	March 23, 2018
LARKING Matthew	The Pan Real Art Association as an Early Postwar Avant-Garde of Nihonga	March 23, 2018
ISHIKAWA Takumi	Research on Rare Magazines and Publishing Culture during and after the War	September 28, 2018
MATSUMIYA Takayuki	Practical Utility in Ruling the Realm and Calligraphy in Modern China: With Special Reference to Guomoru	March 24, 2020
SHINOSAKI Atsushi	Research on International Relations and Diplomacy in Heian Japan: The Historical Significance of Intercourse with East Asia from Ancient Times to the Medieval Transition	March 24, 2021
YAMAMOTO Tadahiro	Manga with a Camera - Methodological Practice for Analyzing, Experimenting, and Teaching “Cinematic” Manga	March 22, 2024

Total = 29

Admissions Data and Postgraduate Career Tracking

● Admissions

Admissions in FY 2024-2026

	Number Admitted	Selection		Admitted Students	Background			
		Applicants	Successful Applicants		Sex		International Students	Jobholders
					Male	Female		
2026	Around 3	7	2	2	0	2	0	1
2025	Around 3	4	1	1	1	0	0	1
2024	Around 3	4	1	1	0	1	0	1

● Number of Students by Nationality (As of May 1, 2026)

	Japan	China	Total
1st yr.	2	0	2
2nd yr.	1	0	1
3rd yr.	3	6	9
Total	6	6	12

● Graduates Places of Employment

The University of Tokyo

Osaka University

Kyushu University

Okayama University

Nagasaki University

Osaka Metropolitan University

Nara Prefectural University

The University of Shimane

Rikkyo University

Kyoto Seika University

Teikyo University

Shanghai University

Yunnan University

Qufu Normal University

Japan Society for the Promotion of

Science

Nagasaki Prefectural Board of

Education

International Research Center for

Japanese Studies

and other organizations

Message from an Alumnus

WANG Ziqin (Degree awarded in September 2025)

Before I enrolled in Japanese Studies Program, SOKENDAI, that hosted at the International Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken), I asked a senior acquaintance of mine about the atmosphere. I was told that every student's research field is different. Having spent my entire academic career at an arts university, I couldn't begin to imagine what kind of environment that would be. But looking back now, I can wholeheartedly affirm that I really enjoyed my time here at Nichibunken. Set in a quiet environment surrounded by the rich greenery of Kyoto's western hills, this is a small community where boundaries between fields barely exist, and where exchanges with fellow students from many countries provide valuable stimulation across disciplinary specialisms.

There are many things I'm grateful to have learned here. First, the opportunity to receive guidance from faculty working in a wide range of fields. Encountering fresh perspectives I never would have considered on my own allowed me to reexamine my own research while also deepening my interdisciplinary inquiry—a truly valuable experience. Second, there generous support for graduate research. Beyond the library's extensive holdings and databases, there is support for locating and acquiring materials, and I was able to travel across Japan and around the world for conference presentations and archival research. Third, the chance to connect with researchers from around the globe. With scholars converging at Nichibunken from all over the world throughout the year, I was able to immerse myself in an international environment and encounter cutting-edge insights without ever leaving Japan. Fourth, there was the chance to experience a wide range of duties as a research assistant. From building databases to helping run joint research seminars and international symposiums, and giving presentations at public events, I accumulated experiences that went beyond desk-based research, disseminating findings back to society.

The time I spent in this environment, so internationally rich and full of interdisciplinary vigour, has made me the researcher I am today. In closing, I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to the faculty for their excellence guidance, and to all those who supported me along the way.



Admission

*For detailed information, see the Application Guidelines for the current fiscal year.

● Number Admitted

The Japanese Studies Program admits up to about 3 persons graduate students each year.

● Application requirements

Those who hold a master's degree or who expect to acquire a master's degree by March 2027. Those who are recognized by the program as having the level of academic ability equal to or higher than that of a person holding a master's degree are also eligible.

● Screening

Screening consists of two stages: first, screening of the documents submitted by the applicant, including the master's degree thesis, and second, screening on the basis of an interview.

Note: Those applicants who have passed the first stage will be notified of the date and time of an interview for the second stage.

● Application Acceptance Period

Applications are accepted between December 3 (Thursday) and December 9 (Wednesday), 2026.

● Second-Stage Screening (Interview): Date and Place

Date: January 25 (Monday), 2027. Emergency back-up date: January 26 (Tuesday), 2027.

Place: International Research Center for Japanese Studies. (Conducted online if necessary).

● Requesting Application Guidelines

Requesting Application Guidelines by post from within Japan

Prepare a self-addressed A4-size (33.2 cm long, 24 cm wide) envelope with stamped for 510 yen to receive Application Guidelines. Send your request with the prepared envelope to the following address:

Research Support Unit, Research Cooperation Section, International Research Center for Japanese Studies

3-2 Oeyama-cho, Goryo, Nishikyo-ku, Kyoto 610-1192 Japan Tel: +81-75-335-2052

Requesting Application Guidelines by e-mail:

Please send an e-mail to **the Student Affairs Section of the Graduate University for Advanced Studies** at the following address

E-mail address: gakusei@ml.soken.ac.jp

Include the following five items of information in your message.

1. Postal code
2. Home address
3. Name
4. Telephone (or mobile phone) number
5. Your request for the Application Guidelines for the Japanese Studies Program

*In order to receive our reply, please use your internet e-mail address and not your mobile phone's e-mail address.

*If you do not receive our reply within 5 weekdays, please contact us again.

Japanese Studies Program Admission Policy

● Qualifications

The Graduate University for Advanced Studies (SOKENDAI) seeks students of any nationality or cultural background who are interested in Japanese studies and motivated to pursue interdisciplinary research from a broad perspective. Accepted students are expected to draw on the diverse knowledge and methodologies of the Japanese Studies Program faculty, and to independently and critically undertake interdisciplinary Japanese studies research. Admissions are open for the three-year doctoral program. Applicants are required to hold a master's degree.

● Selection Criteria

Sokendai screens the submitted documents and interviews potential candidates. Along with an assessment of an applicant's academic abilities and capacity to conduct independent research, candidates are evaluated on the originality, theoretical and empirical, of their master's thesis and any other scholarly papers submitted; on the originality, feasibility, and academic potential of the research the applicant seeks to pursue; and on their presentation skills, communication skills, and overall future potential to contribute to the field.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1 Is there any system for waiver of tuition fees?

There is a system for waiving tuition for students citing economic difficulties and whose academic work is deemed of a high standard. Applications for tuition waivers are offered once each semester each year and are decided on the basis of a fixed screening process.

Q2 Does the Program have a research assistant system?

The Program does employ research assistants, chosen from among current graduate students, to perform support tasks relating to research and teaching, and a system is in place for allowing RAs to perform duties beneficial to their own research in the Program. A salary is paid for the services performed as a form of financial assistance.

Q3 Where do students study and research? At Hayama? Or Kyoto?

The headquarters of The Japanese Studies Program and the base for research guidance and dissertation writing is on the premises of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies, located in Kyoto. Some functions for all students of Sokendai, such as the entrance and degree-awarding ceremonies, are held at the Hayama campus, headquarters of Sokendai.

Q4 Is it necessary to choose an academic supervisor before applying for admission?

Yes, it is necessary to choose an academic supervisor and to consult with the supervisor about the contents of your research before applying for admission. The program administrative staff does not suggest faculty advisors, so applicants should check the faculty profiles provided in the Program brochure and at the Program website in making their choice.

Q5 Does the Program grant degrees to students residing elsewhere?

Currently many of our students are working toward their degrees while living in areas distant from the Department headquarters. It is necessary, however, to be attend in person the lecture class part of the requirements for the degree.

Q6 Is it possible to enroll in October?

The Japanese Studies Program no longer offers October enrollment.

Q7 Is it possible to apply to another program at the same time?

No.

Q8 Does the Program have Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (DC1, 2) fellowships (for doctoral course 1 and 2)?

As for FY 2025, the Program had 1 doctoral course fellowship (DC2) student (Awarded a grant in 2024).



Entrance Ceremony (Hayama campus, SOKENDAI)



Graduate Student Class

Research Activities at Nichibunken

The International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) was established on May 21, 1987 as an inter-university research institute incorporated under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Its purpose is to promote the comprehensive, international, and interdisciplinary study of Japanese culture and provide cooperation and support for the work of Japanese Studies specialists around the world. From April 2004, Nichibunken became a member of the National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU, headquartered in Tokyo). The three main pillars of Nichibunken activities are: Research (individual, basic, and team [joint] research), research cooperation, and outreach. Of these activities, those closely related to the graduate students in The Japanese Studies Program are introduced below:

● Team Research

The pursuit of research on Japanese culture calls for the steady accumulation of the results of study in separate specialized fields related to Japan. It also calls for a place where scholars can transcend the framework of their separate disciplines and expand their insight and knowledge through exchange and collaboration. Such opportunities for team research can play a major role in promoting understanding of Japanese culture as a whole.

Exchange between researchers from Japan and those from other intellectual traditions is also considered an essential part of team research at Nichibunken. Furthermore, as we enter an era of expanding internationalization, such interaction helps the field of Japanese studies to better respond to the needs of the times.

The team research carried out at the Center is not limited to exchange of research findings. The essence of what the Center is trying to achieve is fostering of creative energy generated through the cooperative research of scholars from diverse intellectual traditions.

◆ Seventeen team research projects were organized in FY2026.

Units	Title of project	Project Leader
Perspectives on Nature/ Perspectives on Humanity	City and Monument: Urban Planning and Memory in Japan, from the Perspective of Visual Culture	Timon SCREECH
	Island Japan: Fluid Bodies, Senses, Imaginaries	Edward BOYLE
	The Correlation between Body and Mind (Embodied Knowledge) and Nature (the Environment): Considering and Promoting Alternatives from East Asia	ITŌ Takayuki
	Life, Illness, and Death in the Japanese Colonial Empire	MATSUDA Toshihiko
	Research on Animal Welfare Movements: Diverse Approaches to Aiding Animals	Barbara HOLTHUS NAKAMARU Takafumi
Power and Culture	Beyond the Postwar and Modernity: Japan in the 1970s	KUSUNOKI Ayako
	The Formation and Transformation of the Cultural Commons	YAMADA Shōji
	Anthologizing “ <i>Chi</i> (Knowledge)” for the Future: An Interdisciplinary Perspective	KATAOKA Mai
	Knowledge in State Formation: Japan in Comparative Constitutional History	TAKII Kazuhiro
	Laying the Foundations for the Research and Appreciation of Japanese <i>Kanbun</i> Literature	NAKAMARU Takafumi
	The Direction of Nationalism: Contemporary Politics and the Drift Toward Conservatism, Religion, and Populism	Kenneth James RUOFF
	Rethinking Discourses on East Asia: From Postwar Thought to Regional Praxis	KATAOKA Kōhei GOZA Yūichi
	Intersections of Culture and Power through Practices of Payment: Moneyless Exchange and Order beyond Institutions	KŌNO Kenji YASUI Manami
Developing Research into Popular Culture	The Potential of Statistics, Yearbooks, Gazetteers and Other Materials in the <i>Nitchū Bunko</i> for Research on Modern Chinese History	KAWASHIMA Shin LIU Jianhui
	Comparative History of Cultural Mediators	ENOMOTO Wataru
	The Transformation of “ <i>Bunjin</i> Culture” in Modern Japan	ZHAN Xiaomei
	Reconstructing Modern East Asian Cultural HistoryII: Focusing on the 20th Century	LIU Jianhui
	Voyaging Voices: Global Japanese Studies Resonating through the Radio Waves	ŌTA Nanako
	Historical Change and Contemporary Transformations of the Saigoku Kannon Pilgrimage	KIM Yong Ui

Research Activities at Nichibunken

● Theory and Methodology Seminars

◆ Seminars based on the following five basic research themes are being held in FY2026.

Title	Organizer
Practical Korean Language (Intermediate)	MATSUDA Toshihiko
Study in Modern Historical Documents	TAKII Kazuhiro

Title	Organizer
An Introduction to Chinese Classics	ITŌ Takayuki
Reading Documents and Studies of Japanese Political and Diplomatic History	KUSUNOKI Ayako

● Conference, Events

The regular research-related events held at Nichibunken shown below are provided to facilitate exchange among scholars of Japanese studies from all over the world. Graduate and international students are also welcome. Nichibunken holds other lectures and symposiums in addition to the bellows.

● Nichibunken Forums

Nichibunken Forum mainly aims to introduce to the public the results of Japanese students by non-Japanese researchers at Nichibunken as a means of contributing to international exchange. Since its founding in 1987, the event has been held at venues in the central part of the city of Kyoto.

● Nichibunken Thursday Seminar

These seminars, where scholars give presentations on topics of the latest scholarly research, are held at Nichibunken to promote exchange among researchers.

● Nichibunken Evening Seminar

Presented by researchers from overseas in English, these seminars are held at Nichibunken.

● International Symposiums

With mounting interest in Japanese culture and society among the countries of the world, the issues of scholarly inquiry and research methods have grown increasingly diversified. To deal with these developments, Nichibunken has held international symposiums mainly on the themes of team research projects undertaken at Nichibunken, thereby providing an international forum for debate to propel the further development of Japanese studies. Nichibunken also organizes several types of international symposiums overseas as part of research activities and collaborative research programs outside Japan. Through various support programs the graduate students at The Japanese Studies Program are encouraged to participate in these international meetings.



International Symposium



Presentation by a Graduate Student



Books and Resource Materials

● Library

The Nichibunken Library, opened in April 1991 offers a variety of information services and a wide-ranging collection of books, reference materials and documents—some 600,000 in all—vital to the field of Japanese studies and available for use by all qualified researchers.

Including Library Annex I, Library Annex II and the newly opened Annex III (2014), the library has a total capacity for approximately 700,000 volumes housed in both fixed and electronically controlled compact shelving. The library also has a rare book room, map room, microfilm room, four study rooms for individual researchers, and two for groups.

Research Material Collection Principles

Books and materials related to Japanese studies written in languages other than Japanese

We are trying to acquire as many of these materials as possible.

Books and materials considered basic for any research on Japan

We acquire basic materials published both in and outside of Japan.

Catalogues and indexes of literature related to Japanese studies

We seek to keep up-to-date catalogues and indexes of literature related to studies on Japan, as referring to them is the first step towards gathering the necessary information in scientific research.

Audio-visual materials

The library also holds colored photographs and glass negatives of works from the late Edo and Meiji periods, old maps, DVDs of Japanese movies, and other audio-visual materials.

Usage of Library Materials

The Nichibunken Library is open to unlimited use by all Nichibunken staff and students, with some restrictions for rare books and some other items. Researchers outside Nichibunken may obtain access for scholarly research purposes by applying in advance. The database recording Nichibunken's library holdings may be accessed via the Internet. Documents in the collection may be photocopied or obtained on loan through other libraries and institutions through the NACSIS-ILL (interlibrary loan) system.

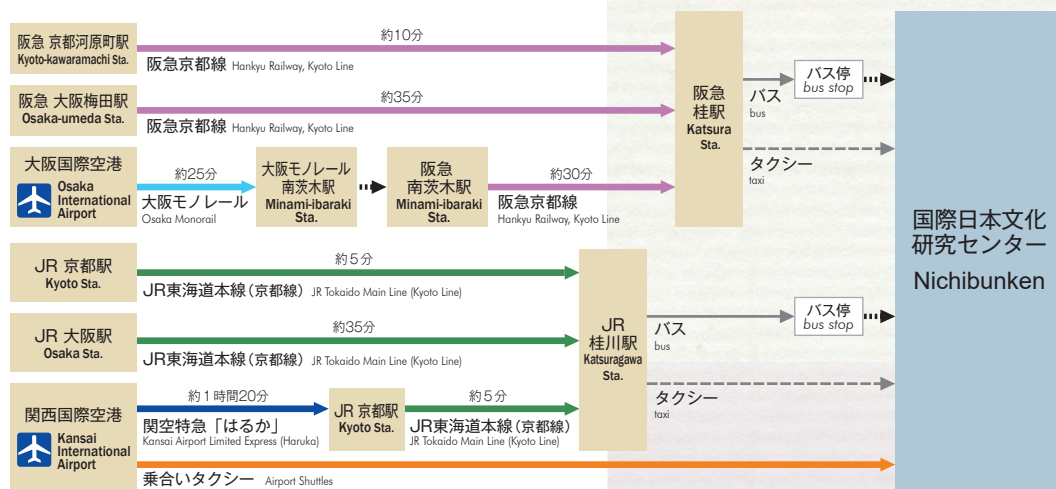
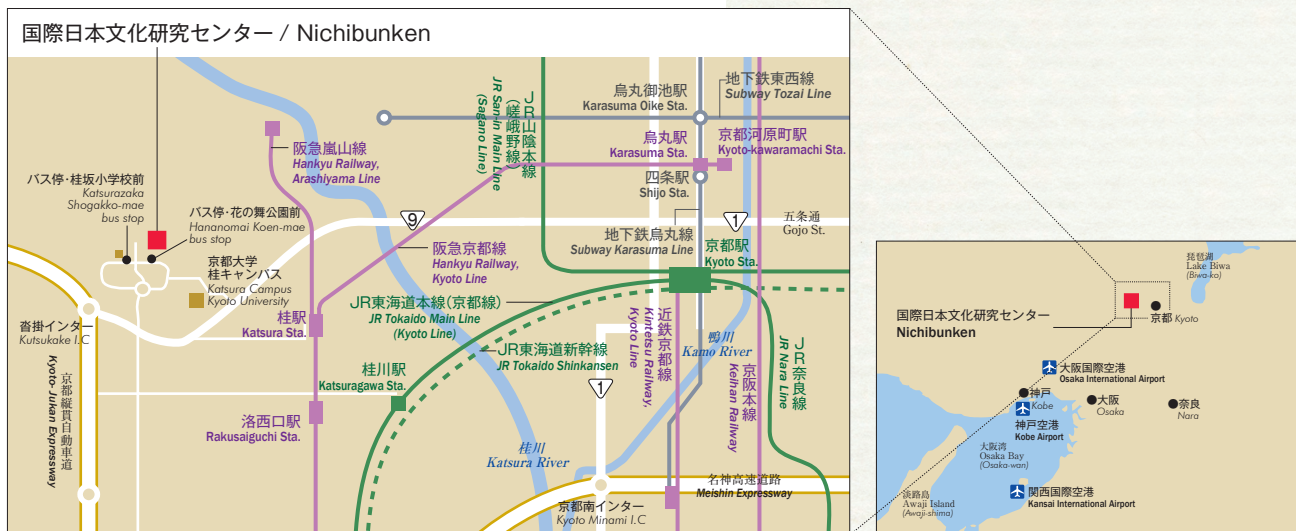
Library staff are on duty between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays. The Library is open to Nichibunken staff and students between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.

● List of Nichibunken Databases

Catalogue of pre-1900 Western-language Publications Related to Japan	Haikai	Nichibunken Map Collection
The Database of Folktales of Mysterious Phenomena and <i>Yōkai</i> (Spirits, Ghosts, and Monsters)	<i>Heian Jinbutsu Shi</i> (Who's Who in Old Kyoto)	Noma Archives (Rare European Medical Books)
The Database of Paintings of Mysterious Phenomena and <i>Yōkai</i> (Spirits, Ghosts, and Monsters)	Heian-Period Chronicles (Old Diaries, Historical Documents)	Overseas Images of Japan
Early Photographs	Illustrations of Historic Places in Kyoto	Rare Books and Maps on Japan in European Languages
<i>Ehon</i> (Ukiyo-e Shunga)	Japanese Art Overseas	<i>Renga</i>
	<i>Kojirui</i> en Page Search System	Sōda Archives: Pictorial and Miscellaneous Materials
	Kyoto Festivals and Customs	Waka
	Letters Addressed to Inoue Tetsujirō	etc.
	Nichibunken Digital Archive	

<https://www.nichibun.ac.jp/en/db/>





From Kansai International Airport

By Airport Shuttles (Shared Ride): 150-min ride from Kansai International Airport.

From JR Kyoto Station (Karasuma Chuo Exit)

By Bus: Take a Keihan Kyoto Kotsu Bus #21 bound for "Katsurazaka Chuo" or #21A bound for "Kyoto Seisho Koko-mae." Get off at "Hananomai Koen-mae" bus stop (45 min.). Take a Keihan Kyoto Kotsu Bus #26 bound for "Katsurazaka Chuo" or #26B bound for "Katsura Innovation Park-mae." Get off at "Katsurazaka Shogakko-mae" bus stop (45 min.).

By Taxi: 40-min ride from Kyoto Station.

From JR Katsuragawa Station

By Bus: Take a Yasaka Bus #1 or #6 bound for "Katsurazaka Chuo." Get off at "Hananomai Koen-mae" bus stop or "Katsurazaka Shogakko-mae" bus stop (30 min.).

By Taxi: 20-min ride from JR Katsuragawa Station.

From Hankyu Railway Katsura Station (West Exit)

By Bus: Take the Kyoto City Bus "Nishi #5" or "Nishi #6" bound for "Katsurazaka Chuo" and get off at "Katsurazaka Shogakko-mae" bus stop (30 min.). Take the Keihan Kyoto Kotsu Bus #20 or #20B bound for "Katsurazaka Chuo" and get off at "Hananomai Koen-mae" bus stop (20 min.).

By Taxi: 15-min ride from Katsura Station West exit.

※ Nichibun is a five-minute walk from the bus stop.

S O K E N D A I

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