

JAPAN SOCIETY JUNIOR FELLOWS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

JUNE 30—JULY 15, 2026

AUGUST 19, 2026

The Junior Fellows Leadership Program

is a culturally immersive learning experience for high school students who possess the potential for strong leadership and demonstrate the skills necessary to be future leaders. During this program conducted in New York and Japan, Junior Fellows have the opportunity to build networks with current industry leaders and program alumni, stay with a host family, participate in activities at a local high school and college and experience Japanese history and culture through hands-on experiences and historical site visits.



Program Schedule (Tentative)*

- **February 27** Application Deadline
- **April 4**
(tentative) Group Interviews
- **May 16**
(tentative) Program Orientation at
Japan Society, New York
- **June 30—July 1** Pre-Departure New York Program
at Japan Society, New York
- **July 2—3** Departure for and Arrival in Japan
- **July 3—15** In-Japan Program
- **July 15** Return to the U.S.
- **August 19** Post-Program Presentation &
Networking Reception

*Program contents and dates are subject to change.

“

“The Junior Fellows Program was the most singular experience I have ever had in my life. My experience in the Japan program has been invaluable in preparing me for my future goal of collaborating with diverse groups to tackle humanity’s greatest challenges. Through cultural immersion and teamwork with Japanese peers, I’ve honed my ability to communicate and cooperate across cultural boundaries. The program taught me to appreciate different perspectives and problem-solving approaches, skills crucial for addressing global issues.”

– Participant from Greenwich, CT

Program Highlights

- Meet and learn from industry leaders in business, arts and sciences, nonprofit organizations and government entities
- Visit leading companies to learn and compare what they value and look for in building our future
- Live with a Japanese host family and explore local communities in Japan
- Experience Japanese high school and college life
- Carry out a team project focused on a global issue
- Visit significant cultural and historic sites
- Learn basic Japanese in an immersion setting
- Join the Junior Fellows Alumni Association (JFAA)

Guidelines for Application

Application and recommendation forms are available at: japansociety.org/teacher-k-12/junior-fellows

All application packets must include the following documents:

1. **Completed application form**
2. **Two (2) signed letters of recommendation (at least one from a teacher or faculty member at the student's school)**
3. **Copy of school transcript**
4. **Two (2) short responses to the following questions (500-word limit for each question):**

Q1. How are you qualified to participate in the Junior Fellows Leadership Program?

Q2. How will this program help you to achieve your career goals?

5. **Application checklist**

- **Applications are accepted by postal mail or hand delivery to Japan Society ONLY (no electronic submissions accepted). In order to avoid lost mail, we strongly recommend your application be sent via certified mail.**
- **Only complete application packets will be considered. Please send all required documents as a set.**

Fellowship & Participation Fee

- The Junior Fellows Leadership Program is made possible by the generous underwriting of Japan Society donors and supporters. Tuition offsets the partial cost of the 2.5-week program: orientation and arrangements, all international and domestic travel, meals and accommodations as well as all admissions during study trips. Fellows are responsible for additional expenses, such as pocket money and additional meals/snacks that are not taken with host families or program staff.
- Tuition: \$3,800

Qualifications

- U.S. high school students from 9th to 11th grade are eligible to apply.
- Junior Fellows will be selected based on demonstrated leadership potential and skills, as well as the qualities necessary to have a successful and engaging experience with other program participants, including (but not limited to): ability to adapt to a foreign culture, emotional and interpersonal maturity, strong academic background and a demonstrated interest in Japan.
- Knowledge of Japanese language is helpful, but not required.
- Priority is given to students from the New York Metropolitan Area (NY, NJ, CT).

Mailing Address

Attn: Junior Fellows Program
Japan Society
333 East 47th Street
New York, NY 10017

Application Timeline

February 27 (Friday), 2026:	Application Deadline (postmarked)
March:	Announcement of 1st selection
April 4 (Saturday):	Group interviews with finalists (invitation only)
Mid-April:	Final selection and announcement of 2026 Junior Fellow participants

Notes

- Application documents will not be returned.
- Applications submitted by ineligible participants or postmarked after the deadline will not be considered.
- Each applicant is responsible for ensuring that their application is complete. Only complete applications will be considered for review.
- Due to the large number of applications received, we are unable to provide feedback to applicants who are not admitted.

Additional Financial Aid

Japan Society offers need-based financial aid to provide support for students facing financial barriers who are participating in the Junior Fellows Leadership Program. We are committed to ensuring that financial constraints do not prevent students from participating in this program. Once you are selected as a Junior Fellow, Japan Society will work closely with you and your family to understand your family's needs and situation so that we can provide necessary financial support. After your selection, you will be requested to submit official financial information such as IRS Form 1040.

Orientation & New York Pre-Departure Program

Selected Fellows will begin the program with an orientation at Japan Society in May where they will meet as a group for the first time, receive useful information to help prepare for their trip to Japan and begin working on their team research projects. The main summer program also begins at Japan Society with leadership talks and workshops, Japanese language lessons, an alumni advisory panel and chances for Fellows to bond.

Leader Meetings & Post-Program Reception

Junior Fellows will meet with current leaders and professionals from various fields through talks, company visits, individual meetings and a post-program reception. Previous Junior Fellows have had the opportunity to speak with senior business executives, government representatives, media personalities, entrepreneurs, ranking UN policy advisors, leading journalists, architects, artists, educators and nonprofit executives.

Homestay & School Experience

Fellows will experience Japanese life through a homestay with a local host family. Fellows will meet local high school and college students for various activities as they complete their team research projects. Fellows will participate in some college-level lectures and experience the college environment of Aizu University while also enjoying an exchange with local high school students through cultural activities. Program leaders will facilitate programs that allow the Junior Fellows to gain a better understanding of local cuisine, traditions and history.

Team Research Project

Prior to departure, Junior Fellows will conduct research in teams on a topic based on one of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Each team will select a topic from the SDGs and develop a survey related to the topic. Fellows will administer their surveys in the U.S. and Japan for a comparative study of the two countries. During their homestay, Fellows will continue to study, discuss and further explore their topic through personal engagement with the local community.

Study Trip & Historical Site Visits

In Fukushima, Fellows will join a one-day trip to the 3/11 Great Eastern Japan Earthquake / Tsunami Affected Area. Fellows will visit the site and related museum, then meet a community leader who has been dedicated to the recovery of his towns since 2011. The study tour will give Fellows an opportunity to think about environmental issues, leadership and community. Fellows also visit historical sites in Aizuwakamatsu to learn about its history, culture and tradition, while also getting the chance to explore more contemporary Japan in Tokyo.

Post-Program Reception & Project Presentation

After their return to the U.S., Fellows will present their research projects to leaders, Fellow alumni, and their cohort at the post-program reception in August. Upon returning to school, Fellows are also encouraged to share their experiences and projects on-campus.

Junior Fellows Alumni Association (JFAA)

Throughout the program, Junior Fellows will meet with program alumni. As mentors, alumni will share tips on how to successfully complete the program and how to make the most out of their experience. Alumni also discuss their post-program experiences with the college selection process, finding internships and career planning. After completion of the program, all Junior Fellows will actively participate in Japan Society programs and continue to expand their network and develop their leadership skills as members of the JFAA.

Japan Society

Japan Society is the leading U.S. organization committed to deepening mutual understanding between the United States and Japan in a global context. Now in its second century, Japan Society serves audiences across the United States and abroad through innovative programs in arts and culture, public policy, business, language, and education. For more information about Japan Society, please visit us at japansociety.org.

Further Questions

For more information, contact the Japan Society Education Department at Japan Society at (212) 715-1275/1216 or at jfellows@japansociety.org.



“This program has truly been life-changing. I gained not only knowledge about Japan and leadership, but also a new sense of confidence, humility, and appreciation for my own life... I learned that leadership is not about commanding but about including everyone around you... I realized good leaders make space for every voice, even those who are shy or hesitant. I also learned that trust is built through credibility, patience, and listening first before speaking. Leadership means creating a win-win environment where everyone feels valued.”

– Participant from New York, NY



“This trip changed who I am as a person; it gave me a whole new thought process. Japan Society helped me create lasting connections across the world, grow as a leader, and change the course of my entire future... My life will never be the same after being a Junior Fellow.”

– Participant from Rapid City, SD



“This was very possibly the best experience of my life. Out of all of the traveling I’ve done, nothing has compared to the Junior Fellows program in terms of cultural immersion, connection-making, and professional experience.”

– Participant from New York, NY



The Japan Society Junior Fellows Leadership program is supported by generous grants from an anonymous family foundation; an anonymous donor; and The Tokyo Club. Transportation assistance is provided by All Nippon Airways Co., Ltd.



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

Japan Society School Partnerships are supported by Ford Foundation; MUFG Bank, Ltd.; and SMBC Global Foundation.



Education and Family Programs are generously supported by Mitsubishi Corporation (Americas); ORIX Corporation USA; The Masako Mera and Koichi Mera, PhD Fund for Education and the Arts; The Norinchukin Foundation; Satoru Murase; Susan J. Onuma; Joshua N. Solomon; and other Education and Family supporters.



Japan Society arts and culture programs are supported by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.



Additional support is provided by a grant from The Venable Foundation.

Japan Society’s 120th anniversary initiatives and related programs are generously supported by Champion Sponsor, MUFG Bank, Ltd.; Advocate Sponsor, Mizuho Americas; and Friend Sponsor, Mitsubishi Corporation (Americas).

