



University for Peace



University for Peace
Doctoral Degree Programme in Peace and Conflict
Studies in association with The Nippon Foundation
A Policy-Oriented Approach to Peacebuilding in Asia
(Scholarship Programme)

Modalities	Programme Start	Application Deadline
Part-time	September 2026	15 August 2026

General Information

UPEACE, in partnership with The Nippon Foundation, launches a unique doctoral opportunity designed to prepare the next generation of peacebuilders, scholar-practitioners, and policy leaders. The Programme combines academic excellence, practical experience, and international engagement through a distinctive **policy-oriented approach to peacebuilding in Asia**.

This innovative **Doctoral Degree Programme in Peace and Conflict Studies** is designed for professionals who wish to remain active in their careers while pursuing doctoral studies. Built around a **part-time and hybrid format**, the Programme allows students to continue working in governments, international organizations, NGOs, academia, diplomacy, and development sectors while integrating their professional experience directly into their doctoral research. The philosophy of the Programme is based on the idea that peace research becomes stronger when developed in close interaction with real-world challenges and practice.

The Programme seeks applicants interested in developing applied and interdisciplinary research in areas including, but not limited to; *Peace and Conflict Studies, Peace Education, International Law and Human Rights, Environmental Security, Gender and Peacebuilding, Sustainable Development, Human Security, Migration and Human Mobility, Social Media, Conflict and Peace, AI and Peacebuilding, Governance and Public Policy, Emerging challenges affecting Asia and the global peace agenda*.

Research is expected to move beyond purely theoretical discussions and instead generate **policy-oriented solutions to concrete peacebuilding challenges**, using evidence-based and interdisciplinary approaches.

The Programme will accept **ten (10) scholars** with financial support. The doctoral



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cycle for the cohort lasts **approximately 3 years**. Students will participate in a hybrid academic model that combines online learning with international residential experiences in **Costa Rica and Japan**, including academic activities at **UPEACE** and the **Graduate School of International Studies at Hiroshima City University (GIS-HCU)**, as well as engagement with UN-related environments.

Graduates will emerge as **scholar-practitioners**, equipped for leadership roles in universities, governments, international organizations, civil society, and policy institutions, with the ability to **transform knowledge into action** and contribute meaningfully to peacebuilding efforts in Asia and globally.

Eligibility and Admission

The University for Peace (UPEACE) accepts applications in electronic format through email (doctorateadmissionsTNF@upeace.org). Applicants are advised to gather all supporting documents and required information before submission.

The quality of an application reflects the quality of the applicant. Misrepresenting accomplishments, borrowing from others' work without proper acknowledgment, or submitting material that has been written, rewritten, or heavily edited by others, or produced by Gen-AI, is unacceptable. Such breaches will result in the immediate rejection of the application.

Each application must include the following documents:

1. Statement of Purpose
 2. Letters of Recommendation
 3. Official Graduate Transcripts and Copy of Graduate Diploma (Master's Degree)
 4. Publication/Writing Sample
 5. Concept Paper
 6. Curriculum Vitae or Résumé
 7. Copy of Passport (Photo Page)
 8. Passport Size Photo
 9. English Proficiency Test Scores Report (TOEFL, IELTS)
- (1) Statement of Purpose is between 1,500 and 2,000 words (approx. 4 pages) that clearly states the applicant's name, his/her/their area of interest with regards to their doctorate studies, and clear responses to the following questions:
- Why have you decided to pursue this area of study?
 - What are your expectations of this Programme?



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- What are your career plans upon completion of this Programme?
 - If the applicant has an interest in working with a specific supervisor, she/he/they should also indicate it. Supervisor might be UPEACE Faculty (resident or visiting), or a professor who is not connected to UPEACE but is familiar with the applicant's work and holds a PhD. You may propose an external supervisor by including their name in your Statement of Purpose. If available, please also provide their contact information.
- (2) Each applicant must provide a letter that should be from faculty or academic advisors from previous academic experience, or managers or other superiors from a professional work environment who are qualified to evaluate the applicant's potential for the Doctoral Programme. The letter of recommendation from a UPEACE faculty member will be the most relevant part of the process. In the absence of a UPEACE faculty recommendation, the candidate must provide two letters of recommendation.
- (3) If the candidate is a UPEACE alumnus, they just need to present a simple copy.
- (4) The publication/writing samples should be on a topic related to the area of study to be pursued at UPEACE and incorporating the policy-oriented approach, in which the applicant is the main author. Such examples include peer-reviewed journal publications, book chapters, master's thesis chapters, or reports.
- (5) This concept paper should be comparable to the eventual research proposal. It should be between 2,000 – 5,000 words (between 4 - 10 pages). The document should clearly outline the following:
- Research Topic - what the applicant will focus his/her/their research on throughout the Doctoral Programme. Identification of a potential academic gap that will be filled with the doctoral research. The applicant must demonstrate the academic need for conducting the research and indicate why the applicant is suited to conduct the proposed research.)
 - Research Objective or Questions - indicate what new knowledge will be created from the proposed research.
 - Conceptual Framework - refers to the approach and/or authors that the applicant uses. Citations are required.
 - Methodology - either feasible or potential. This section must clarify how the study is intended to be conducted
- (6) This is only required for all applicants from non-English-speaking countries. An exception can be granted to applicants who obtained a university degree in



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English or who have more than 5 years of working experience in English. For any of these cases, applicants must submit documents that demonstrate their professional knowledge of English. This requirement is exempted from APS alumni.

Application Periods

Deadline for submission of applications is 15 August 2026.

For more information on the application process, contact doctorateTNF@upeace.org