

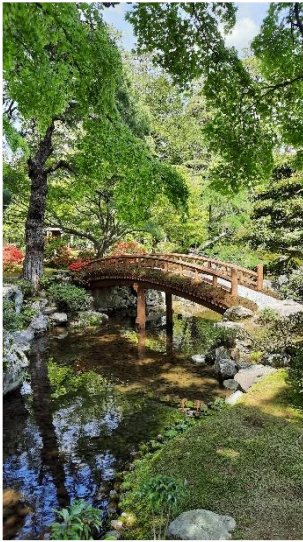


Double degree program at Tohoku University

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Home university: Centrale Lyon



Student life

- **Do you think the program and the educational environment helped promote your research?**

The double degree program means that we can do a master's degree like any Japanese student, without any difference to the courses' content. To complete the master's degree, you will need to earn credits through courses, research, and seminars (the ratio changes depending on the graduate school and department). I need to attend 8 courses (1.5h/week during a semester), and a weekly seminar (2.5h) for 2 years. Everything else is dedicated to your own research.

During the 6 months of JLPK, enjoy this period to focus entirely on Japanese language. It is a unique opportunity to improve, and it can easily boost your Japanese from beginner to N4/N3. Your laboratory professors might try to sway you into doing research but remember you will be doing it for the next 2 years. There is a time for everything.

Your lab can perhaps provide you with a computer to work, and access to servers to train models. Having other international students really depends on your lab, so you may find yourself with Japanese only, that don't speak English well.

- **Suggestions and criticisms for space of improvement**

Your environment really changes depending on your graduate school, department, laboratory. The credits, the administrative procedures, the deadlines are all different.

When you are looking for information, it is difficult to navigate through the numerous websites (often outdated) and services of the Tohoku University. Dates for the master thesis submission and thesis defense could also be told sooner for better anticipation.

The automatic GKMS academic information system spams multiple mails a day, which is quite burdensome, as it makes it difficult to differentiate between spam and the important content. A better highlight of essential material could help students access information.

Living in Sendai: Experience and Advice

- **Tips for new arrivals (food and traffic)**

Engage with the students of your dorm and your DD seniors, as they are the ones who have the best addresses (restaurant, administration, lessons, travel).

- **What is the monthly cost of maintenance in Sendai beyond the dormitory?**

If we ignore the 40,000¥ of rent for the University House Aobayama, your monthly expenditure will be affected by food, transport, and phone bills. Food costs from 20,000¥ to 35,000¥ depending on whether you go out at restaurants or often, or prefer to cook, or go to the University Restaurant. The metro amounts to 4,500¥ per month if you go into town from Aobayama twice a week, plus any occasional outing. Finally, the phone bill is about 3,000¥ for a few Gigabytes of data. Overall, you can expect to pay 27,500¥-42,500¥ per month for your daily life. The JASSO scholarship we are eligible to covers 80,000¥ per month, which means approximately the monthly expenditure and the dormitory rent!

- **Preparation for essential items for maintenance prior to arrival: living accessories, manuals of various kinds, etc...**

The dormitory comes furnished, so you don't need to buy any kind of furnishing or tableware. The manuals for Japanese studies can be bought at the University's shops, or even bought back from your seniors who did the same program as you (it's a lot cheaper than getting them outside of Japan).

- **Difficulties you may encounter after arriving in Japan (shopping, hospitality) if any**

The first barrier in linguistics. Japanese are often uncomfortable with English, so you will quickly need to speak in Japanese (even a basic level makes the difference). Nonetheless any effort you make in both understanding and speaking in Japanese will be rewarded. Don't hesitate to join clubs and circles to socialize and meet Japanese students.

- **Leisure (photos)**

Sendai and the Miyagi Prefecture are full of beautiful environments. Sendai prides itself on its rich history dating back to the warlord Date Masamune who transformed a fishing village into a provincial power, with both military and cultural influence. You can admire the city from the ruins of his castle on the slopes of the Aobayama mountain or relax in the Rinnoji temple's inner gardens dedicated to his family.



But living in Sendai isn't just about historical places. It's a living city with many events. Through the seasons, enjoy the *Suzume odōri* (Sparrow dance) at the Aoba festival, the handcrafted streamers at the Tanabata festival, or make a prayer at the Dontosai Festival ritual.



Outside of Sendai, go explore the Yamadera temple, hidden in the mountains, during the こうよう 紅葉 (Autumn leaves season). Take a trip by bike to Miyato island during summer. Visit the foxes at the Zaō Fox Village. Stroll along the river at Ōgawara during はなみ 花見 (Cherry blossom viewing). Everything is accessible by public transport or by car and can be done on a day-trip.





Career paths

I do not plan to do a PhD after the end of the master, and plan to find a job in France or in Europe depending on the opportunities. Japan is a lovely country to live in, and I wouldn't mind staying here for a few more years. But I think it will be easier to find jobs with interesting salaries and international reach outside Japan. Maybe in 10 years I will come back, I'm open to it.

