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2026 Enrollment Guidelines for International Students at Sun Yat-sen University (Doctoral Degree)

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Sun Yat-sen University (hereinafter referred to as “SYSU”) was founded in 1924 by Dr. Sun Yat-sen, a great national hero, patriot, and pioneer of China's democratic revolution. It is a comprehensive, research-driven, and internationally-oriented university. Rooted in the three core cities of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area, i.e., Guangzhou, Zhuhai, and Shenzhen, the University has developed a coordinated structure of three campuses across five cities and operates ten well-established affiliated hospitals.

SYSU offers a comprehensive range of disciplines and majors, and has developed an integrated academic structure covering humanities, sciences, medicine, engineering, agriculture, and the arts. Eleven disciplines of SYSU have been selected for China's second round of the “Double First-Class” initiative, twenty-one disciplines rank among the global top 1% in the Essential Science Indicators (ESI), and thirteen are listed in the global top 0.1%.

The University currently hosts 43 national-level research and innovation platforms and 270 provincial or ministerial-level platforms. It is home to 23 academicians of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Chinese Academy of Engineering, as well as over 600 national-level high-caliber talents, placing it among China's leading universities in terms of talent strength.

I. Eligibility

1. Applicants must be non-Chinese citizens who hold a valid foreign passport.

Attachment(s)

- [1. Catalog of Doctoral Programs for International Students at Sun Yat-sen University in 2026](#)
- [2. Directory of Doctoral Programs for International Students at Sun Yat-sen University in 2026](#)
- [3. Letter of Recommendation](#)
- [4. Plan of Study and Research in China](#)
- [5. Foreigner Physical Examination Form](#)

2. Applicants must be in good physical and mental health and meet the physical examination requirements for obtaining a student visa or residence permit for study in China.

3. Applicants for doctoral programs must hold a degree equivalent to a master's degree conferred by Chinese universities.

4. Applicants must demonstrate friendliness toward China, diligence in their studies, excellent academic performance, good moral character, and compliance with laws and regulations. They must have no record of school disciplinary violations, security penalties, or criminal offenses.

5. Applicants for scholarship programs must meet the age requirements specified for each program.

II. Application Time

First Round: January 1-February 15, 2026

Second Round: February 16-April 30, 2026

The application deadlines for scholarship programs are provided in the scholarship application guidelines on the website of the Office of International Students' Affairs, Sun Yat-sen University, at the following link: <https://iso.sysu.edu.cn/cn/jxjxm/index.htm>.

III. Programs Offered

Please refer to the Catalog of Doctoral Programs for International Students at Sun Yat-sen University in 2026 (see **Attachment 1**) and the Directory of Doctoral Programs for International Students at Sun Yat-sen University in 2026 (see **Attachment 2**).

IV. Application and Admission Procedures

Step 1: Complete and Submit the Online Application

Applicants should register an account on the International Student Application System (hereinafter referred to as the “Application System”) at <http://apply.sysu.edu.cn>.

After completing the registration, applicants can log in to the system to fill in their personal information and submit the required application materials (see Article V for details).

Step 2: Upload Signed Documents

Applicants should download the automatically generated Application Information Form (including the Commitment Letter and Proof of Financial Support or Financial Guarantee) from the Application System, print it out, sign it by hand, and then upload the signed copies back to the system.

Step 3: Pay the Application Fee Online

The application fee is RMB 400. Once paid, it is non-refundable. Applications without payment of the fee will be considered invalid.

Step 4: Qualification Review and Interview

SYSU will review the submitted application documents, and qualified applicants will be invited to attend an interview.

The interview will assess the applicant's overall competence and language

proficiency. The interview schedule and format will be notified through the Application System or via email.

Step 5: Check the Preliminary Admission Results

SYSU will determine the preliminary admission list based on a comprehensive evaluation. Applicants can log in to the Application System to check their preliminary admission results 15 days after the interview.

Step 6: Download the Admission Letter

Starting from July of 2026, admission letters will be issued gradually. Applicants may log in to the Application System to download their admission letter.

V. Application Materials

1. A valid ordinary passport and a personal profile photo

Applicants' passports must remain valid until at least December 1, 2026. Please renew your passport if necessary. Applicants currently residing in the Chinese mainland should provide a scanned copy of their valid Chinese visa or residence permit page, as well as the entry stamp page.

For applicants who were originally citizens of the Chinese mainland, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Macao Special Administrative Region, or Taiwan, and later acquired foreign nationality, the following documents must be additionally provided:

(1) Proof of the cancellation of household registration, or proof of renunciation of Chinese nationality.

(2) An official certificate issued by a Chinese diplomatic or consular mission certifying that the applicant does not hold Chinese nationality

2. Bachelor's and Master's degree certificates, diplomas, and verification reports

(1) Applicants who graduated from institutions in the Chinese mainland must submit the following documents from the Chinese Higher Education Student Information Network via its official website link: <https://www.chsi.com.cn>:

a. Electronic Registration and Verification Form of Higher Education Qualification Certificate issued by the Ministry of Education for both the master's and bachelor's degrees.

b. Online Verification Report of Higher Education Degree Certificate for both the master's and bachelor's degrees.

(2) Applicants who graduated from institutions outside the Chinese mainland must submit the Foreign Academic Degree and Qualification Verification Report for both the master's and bachelor's degrees issued by the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE) via its official website: <https://www.cscse.edu.cn>.

(3) For current-year graduates, a pre-graduation certificate issued by the applicant's school may be submitted during the application process. However, if they fail to provide the degree certificate of master's degree before enrollment, their admission offer will be considered invalid.

3. Complete academic transcripts of both the bachelor's and master's degrees

Transcripts from both the bachelor's and master's degrees must be issued and

stamped by the academic affairs office or the relevant student administration department of the applicant's institution.

For current-year graduates, the most recent transcripts issued by their school may be submitted during the application process. However, if they fail to provide the complete bachelor's and master's transcripts before enrollment, their admission offer will be considered invalid.

4. Proof of language proficiency

(1) Applicants applying for a program taught in Chinese must submit a valid HSK ([Chinese Proficiency Test](#)) certificate with a minimum score of 180 at Level 5 or above.

Applicants who completed a degree program where Chinese was one of the primary languages of instruction (i.e., with some major courses taught in Chinese) may submit a Certificate of Chinese-Medium Instruction issued by their school. Upon verification by SYSU, submission of the HSK certificate may be waived.

(2) Applicants applying for a program taught in English, whose native language is not English, must submit proof of English proficiency through either the TOEFL iBT, with a minimum total score of 79 and no less than 15 in each section, or the IELTS Academic, with a minimum overall band score of 6.5 and no less than 5.5 in each component.

Applicants who have taken courses taught in English may submit a "Certificate of English-Medium Instruction" issued by their school. Upon verification by SYSU, submission of English proficiency test scores may be waived.

The specific English proficiency requirements are subject to the application guidelines for each English-taught program.

5. Two academic recommendation letters

Referees of the recommendation letters must be professors, associate professors, or experts with equivalent professional or technical titles in the applicant's field of study (see template in Attachment 3).

6. Plan of study and research in China

The content of the plan should be approximately 6,000 words and include, but not be limited to, the applicant's academic and professional background, research achievements, doctoral research plan, and post-graduation career plans (see template in Attachment 4).

7. Physical examination report and test results

Applicants must submit the Foreigner Physical Examination Form along with scanned copies of the original reports for a chest X-ray, electrocardiogram (ECG), and laboratory tests for specified items (see template in Attachment 5). All documents must bear the official seal of the hospital and must be issued within the past six months.

Applicants currently residing in the Chinese mainland who hold a valid Foreigner Residence Permit or Permanent Residence ID Card for Foreigners may submit either of these documents in place of the Foreigner Physical Examination Form.

8. Certificate of Non-Criminal Record

The Certificate of Non-Criminal Record must be issued within six months before the date of application submission.

9. Supplementary supporting documents

Applicants may submit certificates of awards or documents verifying relevant experience to support their application.

Note: All application materials must be original documents in Chinese or English. For documents in other languages, a notarized Chinese or English translation must be provided.

VI. Application Fee and Tuition

1. Application Fee (including required entrance assessment fees): RMB 400 per person. Once paid, the fee is non-refundable.

Applications without payment of the application fee will be considered invalid.

2. Tuition: See Table 1 for details.

Table 1: Tuition for Doctoral Programs for International Students at SYSU in 2026

Category	Humanities and Liberal Arts	Natural Science, Engineering and Agricultural Science	Medical Science
Doctor	RMB 34,000	RMB 44,200	RMB 65,000

Note: (1) The tuition and fees are subject to the official Sun Yat-sen University Education Fee Announcement for the respective year. (2) The fee is denominated in RMB. (3) The unit is RMB per student per academic year.

VII. Scholarship Programs

For details on the scholarship programs, please visit the “SCHOLARSHIP” section at the website of the Office of International Students' Affairs of SYSU (<http://iso.sysu.edu.cn>). See Table 2 for the basic information of scholarship programs.

Table 2: Scholarship Programs for International Students at SYSU in 2026 (Doctoral Degree)

Scholarship Programs	Application Website	Notes
National Scholarship	Chinese Government Scholarship application system: https://campuschina.org Sun Yat-sen University International Student Application System: http://apply.sysu.edu.cn	Applicants should submit their application directly to the international student dispatching authorities in their home country or the Education Section of the Chinese Embassy (or Consulate) in their country, and obtain a processing Agency Number.
Chinese Government Scholarship—Bilateral Program (Type A)	Chinese Government Scholarship application system: https://campuschina.org Sun Yat-sen University International Student Application System: http://apply.sysu.edu.cn	Agency Number of Sun Yat-sen University in the Chinese Government Scholarship System: 10558 .
Chinese Government Scholarship—High-Level Graduate Program (Type B)	Chinese Government Scholarship application system: https://campuschina.org Sun Yat-sen University International Student Application System: http://apply.sysu.edu.cn	

	The Atomic Energy Scholarship Program of China (Type B)	Chinese Government Scholarship application system: https://campuschina.org Sun Yat-sen University International Student Application System: http://apply.sysu.edu.cn	
	Silk Road-Chinese Government Scholarship Program (Type B)	Chinese Government Scholarship application system: https://campuschina.org Sun Yat-sen University International Student Application System: http://apply.sysu.edu.cn	
Provincial Scholarship	China Studies Program (CSP) Ph.D. Fellowships	Center for Language Education and Cooperation Official Website: http://www.chinese.cn Sun Yat-sen University International Student Application System: http://apply.sysu.edu.cn	The "China Studies Program" includes two fellowships: the Ph.D. Fellowship in China and the Joint Research Ph.D. Fellowship.
	Guangdong Government Outstanding International Student Scholarship	SYSU will select outstanding newly admitted non-government scholarship students who have registered and enrolled, based on a comprehensive evaluation of their academic performance, to recommend for this scholarship.	The doctoral scholarship is RMB 30,000 per student and is awarded as a one-time payment.
SYSU Scholarship	Sun Yat-sen University Scholarship for International Students	Sun Yat-sen University International Student Application System: http://apply.sysu.edu.cn	The scholarship will be awarded to applicants who have obtained a recommendation from an agency in their home country or an international student recruitment ambassador recognized by Sun Yat-sen University.

Note: Applicants awarded any of the above scholarship programs must, after enrollment, undergo annual scholarship reviews based on relevant regulations and academic performance in order to continue receiving or renewing the scholarship each year.

VIII. Enrollment and Registration

The enrollment period is at the end of August or the beginning of

September, 2026, with the specific dates indicated on the SYSU Admission Letter.

Admitted students should finish the following three steps to finalize their registration:

Step 1: Use the Admission Letter and the Confirmation Form for Study in China to apply for an X1 visa at the Chinese Embassy or Consulate.

Step 2: Complete registration at SYSU in person according to the registration date and location specified in the Admission Letter.

Step 3: Convert the X1 visa to a student residence permit within 30 days after entering China.

Failure to complete the required procedures on time will result in the cancellation of admission.

SYSU does not accept students holding non-student visas for enrollment. International students with expired visas or residence permits are not allowed to live on campus or participate in campus activities.

IX. Accommodation and Insurance Regulations

1. Accommodation: Due to the limited number of on-campus dormitories, self-funded students are responsible for arranging their own housing. Students awarded the Chinese Government Scholarship or the Sun Yat-sen University Scholarship for International Students will be provided with on-campus accommodation according to relevant regulations.

2. Insurance: SYSU requires all international students to be covered by a broad insurance plan. In accordance with Chinese national regulations and the university's requirements, international students must purchase the comprehensive medical insurance for international students studying in China (covering accidental and illness medical treatment, hospitalization, accidental disability, and death) at a cost of RMB 800 per student per academic year. Students who fail to purchase insurance as required will be given a deadline to obtain coverage; failure to do so will result in ineligibility for registration. For students already enrolled, failure to comply with this requirement will result in dismissal from SYSU.

X. Supervision

1. Responsibility for Submitted Materials: Applicants are responsible for the authenticity of all materials they submit. In accordance with Chinese national regulations and SYSU's rules, any applicant found to have submitted falsified materials will have their admission, enrollment, and student status revoked, and the matter will be reported to the relevant authorities.

2. Registration: Admitted students must complete registration on the date and at the location specified in the Admission Letter. Early registration is not permitted. Failure to register on time without prior approval will be considered a withdrawal of admission, and scholarship recipients will also lose their scholarship eligibility.

3. Post-Admission Physical Examination and Eligibility Review. SYSU will conduct a physical examination and review of admission eligibility for all enrolled students in accordance with regulations and requirements of the Ministry of Education of China. Students who fail to meet the admission requirements or are found to have submitted falsified materials will have their admission and

enrollment revoked, and scholarship recipients will also lose their scholarship eligibility.

XI. Supplementary Provisions

1. These Enrollment Guidelines apply to the 2026 doctoral admissions for international students at Sun Yat-sen University and take effect from the date of their publication.

2. The Office of International Students' Affairs, under the authorization of the SYSU Graduate Admissions Committee, is responsible for the interpretation of these Guidelines.

3. In case of any adjustments to the policies of the Ministry of Education or other relevant authorities, the new regulations shall prevail.

Office of International Students' Affairs, Sun Yat-sen University

Website: <http://iso.sysu.edu.cn>

Online Application Website: <https://apply.sysu.edu.cn>

Email: admissions@mail.sysu.edu.cn

Inquiry Tel: 0086 (20) 84110819

Supervision Department Tel: 0086 (20) 84115582

Address: Office of International Students' Affairs, Sun Yat-sen University, 135

Xingangxi Road, Guangzhou, P.R.China

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Links

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[Sun Yat-sen University](#) [SYSU Student Affair Office](#)

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