

Yanagida Dormitory, Taizo-in Zen Buddhist Temple, Kyoto

Application guidelines for students in 2026

Taizo-in Zen Buddhist Temple (Ukyo-ku, Kyoto) started operating the student dormitory, Yanagida Dormitory, from April 2025. The facility will offer free rent and breakfast on the condition that students participate in the temple's samu (daily training, such as cleaning at the temple). The dormitory carries on the legacy of Mr. and Mrs. Yanagida, who were supporters of Taizo-in and philanthropists, and nurturing future leaders from the Zen temple.

Features

- Rent and simple temple breakfast are provided at no charge. Tenants are required to participate in temple training, such as cleaning the garden and mopping the floor, every morning from around 6.30. This samu ordinarily lasts one to one-and-a-half hours. (Note that lunch and dinner are not served. Students are expected to cook for themselves in the kitchen in each room).
- Support for human development through the practice of temple service and a scheduled healthy lifestyle.
- Convenient location, a three-minute walk from JR Hanazono Station.
- A comfortable living environment in a fully renovated property in a quiet atmosphere near Myoshinji.

Application process

Start of applications: November 2025

Tenant decisions: Beginning of January 2026

Start of tenancy: April 2026

Applicants must be second-year students or above (as of April 2026), attending a vocational school, university, or graduate school in Kyoto. They must be able to communicate in Japanese or English. We accept applications from anyone who meets the criteria, irrespective of gender and nationality.

Capacity: 2 people (2 private rooms) *The remaining 2 rooms are occupied by first-term students.

Residence period: One to two years. We want to make the temple experience available to as many students as possible, so the maximum is two years.

Facility overview

- Location: 52-1 Hanazono Teranomae-cho, Ukyo-ku, Kyoto 616-8041 (3-minute walk from JR Hanazono Station)

- Room type: Four private rooms

- Facilities in each room:

1DK type, approx. 25 sq.m., IH cooking heater kitchen, bathroom with drying function, air conditioner.

Notes on living in the facility

- Furniture and other furnishings may be brought in freely; Do-it-yourself or other changes to the room

shape or structure are not permitted. Utility costs (including Wi-Fi and communication expenses) are to be paid by the residents. Smoking of any kind (including electric cigarettes) is prohibited.

- There is no curfew, but tenants must participate in the morning samu training.

- With prior application, holidays can be taken to return home or travel.

For details, please refer to the contract on the website below.

[Yanagida Dormitory Lease Use Agreement](#)

Objective of the project

Taizo-in aims to return to the temple's original role of nurturing human resources. The project will contribute to the development of young people, in cooperation with the community. Through this project, the temple will provide a new type of educational environment in which future leaders can be exposed to Japanese traditions and the spirit of Zen as part of their student life.

The property is a fully renovated dormitory just in front of the main gate of Myoshinji. The renovation was funded by Mr. and Mrs. Yanagida. They donated a large sum of money for the future of the temple, which was their spiritual home. This project is based on their wish to contribute to the development of society. Several temple-affiliated student dormitories used to exist in Kyoto, but only a few remain. We are making a commitment to human development by reaffirming the importance of role that temples played.

Selection procedure

The following items must be prepared and sent by post or brought directly by hand to Taizo-in by the due date:

(1) Curriculum vitae with photograph. (Any format acceptable)

(ii) An essay of 400-500 words describing the motivation for participating in this project in relation to the applicant's future vision.

(iii) Recommendations from the adults you most respect, **other than** parents and teachers /professors (400-500 words).

Applicants selected for the interviews will be notified of the dates and decisions about offers of tenancy will be made by mid-January.

Documents for the first round of screening must arrive by Monday 15 December 2025. The items must be prepared and sent by post or brought directly to Taizo-in. The second round, interview screening, will take place from late December to early January.

About Taizo-in Zen Buddhist Temple

Taizo-in is one of the sub-temples of Myoshin-ji, the largest Zen temple complex in Japan and the head temple of the Rinzai sect. Taizo-in was founded by Muin Sojin in 1404 in the Senbon-dori Matsubara area. The original structure was built by Hatano Shigemichi. The temple later moved to Myoshin-ji. The dry landscape garden on the west side of the hojo is said to have been created by Kano Motonobu and is designated as a national place of scenic beauty and a historic site. Taizo-in is also famous for owning the National Treasure "Hyonenzu", a representative work of early Japanese ink painting by Josetsu. In 1965, Nakane Kinsaku created the temple's pond garden "Yokoen".

<http://www.taizoin.com/en>

Contact information

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