

TOP ASIAN DESTINATIONS FOR INDIAN STUDENTS · #4 OF 6

Study in South Korea

Eligibility · Cost · Language · Courses · Post-Study Work · Scholarships

Best known for	Tech/engineering, semiconductor & electronics industry, K-culture appeal, GKS scholarship
Typical annual cost (tuition + living)	Generally lower than Singapore/Hong Kong/Japan private tuition — budget-friendly with GKS or public-university placement
Language of instruction	Korean-taught (TOPIK Level 3+ typically required) or English-taught programs (no TOPIK needed, but IELTS 5.5+/TOEFL 80+ common)
Post-study work	D-10 Job Seeking visa — 6 months, extendable, cited by some sources up to 1–3 years depending on route — bridges to E-7 work visa
Flagship scholarship	Global Korea Scholarship (GKS) — full tuition, stipend, airfare, Korean-language training

Eligibility

- UG: Age limits generally apply (commonly under 25); Class XII completion with a solid academic record; TOPIK Level 3+ for Korean-taught programs or IELTS/TOEFL for English-taught ones.
- PG: Relevant Bachelor's degree with good GPA (commonly ~80%+ equivalent); age limits generally under 40 for graduate applicants (varies by year/university).
- GKS applicants apply via either the Korean Embassy track or a direct university track — timelines and requirements differ between the two.

Cost breakdown

- GKS scholarship stipend: ₩900,000/month (undergraduate) to ₩1,000,000/month (graduate), plus tuition, airfare, and health insurance.
- National Health Insurance enrollment is mandatory for all students: roughly ₩50,000–80,000/month, partially subsidized.
- Self-funded tuition and living costs vary by city and university type but are broadly positioned as more affordable than Singapore or Hong Kong for comparable rankings.

Popular courses

- Computer Science, AI, Data Science
- Business/Global Business
- Engineering (mechanical, electrical) — strong industry ties to Hyundai, Samsung, LG

Post-study work

- D-10 Job Seeking visa: an initial 6-month period to search for employment, tied to holding a Korean degree or relevant Korean work/study experience; renewal is possible.
- D-10 does not itself authorize employment — paid work requires converting to a work visa (commonly E-7, Professional Employment) once a job offer is secured.
- Marketing from Korea-focused education consultancies frequently cites a longer effective post-study runway (up to 3 years across D-10 renewals and related routes) — worth confirming current caps directly with Korea Immigration before applying, as terms have shifted in recent cycles.

Job options & career outlook

- Outcomes for foreign graduates are improving steadily: the share of bachelor's-degree foreign graduates earning at least ₩3 million/month rose from 16.1% in 2017 to 30.8% in 2023, and 63% of currently-enrolled international students now say they want to stay and work in Korea after graduation (up from 41.2% in 2017).
- Strongest sectors: computer science/AI/data science (riding both India's IT strength and Korea's tech edge), electronics/semiconductors, and engineering, with Hyundai, Samsung, and LG among the most active recruiters of technical graduates.
- Korean conglomerates pay entry-level graduates notably more than comparable firms in Japan or Taiwan on a purchasing-power basis, though hiring at these firms is competitive and often expects working Korean proficiency.
- Foreign-invested companies operating in Korea have historically offered competitive packages for new graduates as an alternative route into the job market without needing native-level Korean.

Accommodation

- University dormitories are the most affordable and common option for new international students — cheaper than private housing and usually the default for the first year or two.
 - Private housing options include officetels (self-contained studio apartments) and goshiwons (small, budget single rooms, often the cheapest private option) — both popular with international students once they move off-campus.
 - Private rentals in Korea often run on a deposit-based system (jeonse or wolsse) requiring a lump-sum or monthly deposit alongside rent — worth budgeting for separately from tuition and living costs.
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Social life & student community

- K-culture (K-pop, K-dramas, webtoons) is a genuine pull factor and an easy on-ramp into campus social life, with language-exchange programs and K-culture clubs widely available at most universities.
- South Korea consistently ranks in the Global Peace Index top 40, and many international female students report feeling safer in Seoul than in Indian metro cities — a frequently cited reassurance for families.
- The Indian student community is smaller than in Singapore or Hong Kong but growing quickly, with an increasing number of Indian associations, informal mess groups, and Diwali/Holi events organized by student bodies.
- TOPIK Korean classes (often built into the GKS scholarship's mandatory 1-year language program) double as a structured way to build a local friend group early.

Scholarships

- Global Korea Scholarship (GKS) — Embassy or University track.
- Silk-Road Scholarship (Seoul National University) — small, humanities/social-science-focused award.

Other relevant details

- South Korea aims to host 300,000 international students by 2027, and its foreign student population grew 24% year-over-year as of 2023 — reflecting active government investment in international recruitment.
- TOPIK 3+ is also generally required for part-time work permits during study.

Verify before you apply

Visa and post-study work rules change often, and several changed more than once during the 2026 cycle. Tuition and living figures are indicative. Always confirm current terms with the official immigration source and the university before making a decision.

Explore South Korea. Discover your possibilities.

Not sure if South Korea is the right fit? Book a free counselling conversation with Aurevia.

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