

AY2026
TEILHARD DE CHARDIN SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY AWARDS
AWARD IN MEMORY OF TAKASHI KITAHARA

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As in previous years, Teilhard de Chardin scholarship grants will be awarded for the better essays submitted under the conditions explained below. These scholarship awards are made possible through a fund donated to Sophia University by Belgian admirers of Teilhard de Chardin. This donation was received by the late Professor Emeritus (Father) Jean Kitahara-Frisch of the Sophia Life Science Institute. Starting in 2008, a new Award in memory of Takashi Kitahara has been presented, in honor of the late Professor.

1. Qualifications

Graduate students enrolled in any graduate program of Sophia University.
Fourth-year undergraduate students in any faculty of Sophia University.
Third-year undergraduate students who have been approved for early graduation.
(Applicants must be enrolled in a regular course at the time of submission.)

2. Language

Japanese or English

3. Topic

Safeguarding Humanity at a Time of Transformation

* Read at least one book by Teilhard de Chardin and write along his ideas.

However, your essay should strictly adhere to the topic.

* Chapter Four of Magnifica Humanitas titled "Safeguarding Humanity at a Time of Transformation: Truth, Work, Freedom." Alongside the works of Teilhard de Chardin, please also use this chapter as a reference.

<https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/encyclicals/documents/20260515-magnifica-humanitas.html>



For your reference: On May 25 of this year, Pope Leo XIV issued his first encyclical, Magnifica Humanitas ("Magnificent Humanity"). It was published in continuity with the encyclical Rerum Novarum ("Of New Things"), issued 135 years earlier by Pope Leo XIII. While the earlier encyclical was a landmark of Catholic social teaching that called for the protection of human dignity in response to the emergence of the new industrial society following the Industrial Revolution, the new encyclical warns of the turning point the world faces with the use of artificial intelligence, particularly in the military sphere.

4. Format

- Written using a word processing program (e.g., Microsoft Word) on A4-size paper; 6000 to 8000 characters in Japanese or 3000 to 5000 words in English.
- Give a subtitle to your essay in addition to the above main title.
- On the first page, write down the title, subtitle, student number, name, department/graduate program and a short summary: 600-800 Japanese characters or 300-500 English words. Begin your essay on the second page.
- Each page must have [Name, Page / Total pages] right-aligned in the header.
- This essay should be an original submission; the copyright on each essay will belong to the educational legal person *Jochi Gakuin*.
- The use of any generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) in the preparation of your essay is strictly prohibited. Generative AIs cannot be considered “authors” as defined by copyright law because they are not accountable for the content of the essay as authors. Therefore, copyright law and other laws do not apply to the content using generative AI. All content must be the applicant's own original work.
- The award-winning essays will be uploaded on the official website of the Faculty of Science and Technology, Sophia University.

5. Deadline

Thursday, December 3, 2026, at 23:59 (JST)

6. Submission address (email) : f-scitec@sophia.ac.jp

- The essay in MS Word (DOCX format), together with the submission sheet, must be submitted as email attachments by the deadline. Hard copy submission is not required.
- Applicants who are expected to graduate early must also attach a PDF file of their certificate of expected graduation.

7. Awards

Gold Prize: 300,000 yen (1 recipient)

Silver Prize: 200,000 yen (1 recipient)

Bronze Prize: 100,000 yen (2 recipients)

Award in Memorial of Takashi Kitahara: 50,000 yen (a few recipients)

8. Award Ceremony

Tuesday, March 16, 2027

* Award recipients are, in principle, expected to attend.

* Details will be provided separately to the recipients.

9. Further information & queries

Office of Faculty of Science and Technology

Tel: 03-3238-3300

Email: f-scitec@sophia.ac.jp

TEILHARD DE CHARDIN'S SIGNIFICANCE TODAY

As the accompanying curriculum vitae clearly indicates, Teilhard de Chardin was a well-known and respected scientist. His contributions to the geology and paleontology of China are still highly estimated in that country today.

Yet, Teilhard could never bring himself to limit his interests to the field of science. Research was, in his eyes, a springboard to allow him to penetrate the meaning of cosmic and biological evolution and to situate the human race therein. Above all, while tracing our roots in this evolving universe, his eyes remained focused on the future of the cosmos and of Homo.

Such a perspective led him to interpret the future of human society as a prolongation of the history of Life and to urge us to become aware of our responsibility not only toward our own future, but also toward that of Life and of the Earth as a whole.

We thus understand why Teilhard still inspires scientists and all of us, even long after his death in 1955. It is not because he provides us with ready-made solutions to today's problems. Rather, it is because he shows us by his example what should be our attitude for grasping the full meaning of the problems that confront us in the opening decade of this century.

Above all, we learn from him that a more intense and more human way of life has become the first and essential condition for survival --- both for our own and for that of Life on earth.

TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

1881.5.1	Born in Auvergne region (Central France).
1889	Graduated from high school and entered the Society of Jesus.
1911	Ordained a priest after completing the study of philosophy and theology. Began the study of human paleontology in Paris under the direction of Marcelin Boule, well-known for his research on Neanderthal Man.
1914	Called to service in the French army; served as a stretcher bearer in a colonial regiment.
1919	Returned to the Paleontology Institute to work on his doctoral thesis.
1922	Publication of his doctoral thesis, "The Mammals of the French Eocene", which earned him recognition as an authority on mammalian paleontology. Appointed Associate Professor of geology at the Institut Catholique of Paris.
1923	Departed for China. He explored the Ordos Region and the Gobi Desert where he found evidence of paleolithic instruments -- a prelude to the discovery of Peking Man.
1924	Returned to Paris. His work in China was recognized at several international conventions.
1926	Returned to China where he took part in three expeditions.
1929	Appointed Adviser to the Chinese Geological Survey: in charge of the study of geology and animal paleontology of Chou-Kou-Tien.
1931	In Chou-Kou-Tien he found evidence of stone-tool making and the use of fire by Peking Man.
1937-38	Participated in the Harvard-Carnegie expedition to Burma.
1939-46	World War II immobilized him in Beijing.
1946	Returned to France.
1950	Elected to the Science Academy.
1951	Sojourn in South Africa. Associate of the Viking Foundation for Anthropological Research (New York)
1953	Traveled to Rhodesia and South Africa.
1955.4.10	Died in New York City and buried in Poughkeepsie, New York. Posthumous publication of "The Phenomenon of Man."

AWARD IN MEMORY OF TAKASHI KITAHARA

The funds that support the Teilhard de Chardin Scholarship were a gift to the Faculty of Science and Technology of Sophia University from kind and generous benefactors in Belgium. These gifts came to the university through the mediation of the late Emeritus Professor Takashi Kitahara (1926-2007). At the time of the gift he was a full-time faculty member in Sophia's Institute of Life Sciences. During his lifetime at the university he worked untiringly to take care of the administrative details of the Scholarship.

A number of grateful Sophia graduates, who formed a group that took its Japanese name from Dr. Kitahara's birthday, continue to recall the many benefits they received from Dr. Kitahara's example and teaching. They want to repay their debt of gratitude to Dr. Kitahara in a way that will benefit their younger academic and professional colleagues.

Thus, in 2008, they have established this award in memory of Takashi Kitahara through a generous contribution to the fundraising efforts related to the one-hundredth anniversary of the founding of Sophia University.