

The Japan Foundation Asia Center



About the Japan Foundation Asia Center

Cultivating Ties for Asia's Future

The Japan Foundation Asia Center strengthens ties among Asia through Japanese-language education, art and culture, sports, and grassroots and intellectual exchanges. Transcending national boundaries, the Asia Center's cultural exchange programs build up heart-to-heart relationships between people and enrich Asia's future.

Harmony and Coexistence in Diversity

The Asia Center promotes interactive exchanges that respect the diverse cultures and identities of Asia, pursuing the development of a sense of kinship and coexistence as neighbors.



Fostering the People who Connect Asia

As a bridge that connects Asia together, the Asia Center is fostering people who can work together, respect others with diverse backgrounds and learn from each other.



Photo: Kenichi Tanaka

The Asia Center's Two Main Pillars

The Asia Center carries out a wide range of interactive cultural exchange programs, focused on two main pillars.

1 Support for Japanese-Language Learning [NIHONGO Partners program]

The Asia Center dispatches Japanese citizens mainly to secondary schools in Asia to support local Japanese-language classes, introducing Japanese culture while learning local languages and cultures and working as a bridge that connects Asia together.



2 Arts and Cultural Exchange

The Asia Center promotes exchange activities to bring together the people of Asia, including visual arts, film, performing arts, sports, grassroots and intellectual exchanges, and more. These cooperative efforts help to create an enriching new culture for the future of Asia.



PRATTHANA – A PORTRAIT OF POSSESSION
Photo: Sopanat Somkhanngoen

The Establishment of the Asia Center

December 2013

At the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit, a new policy for cultural exchange in Asia named the "WA Project" – Toward Interactive Asia through "Fusion and Harmony" was announced with the aim to promote coexistence throughout Asia as "heart-to-heart partners."

April 2014

The Asia Center was established within the Japan Foundation to implement the "WA Project" – Toward Interactive Asia through "Fusion and Harmony."



December 2013, ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit (Tokyo)
Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office



ASIA IN RESONANCE 2019

The Asia Center has organized "Asia in Resonance 2019" to introduce its cultural exchange programs between Japan and Southeast Asia. Looking back on the results of our mutual exchange projects through to 2019, this broad range of events is a starting point to further deepen the relationship between Japan and Southeast Asia.

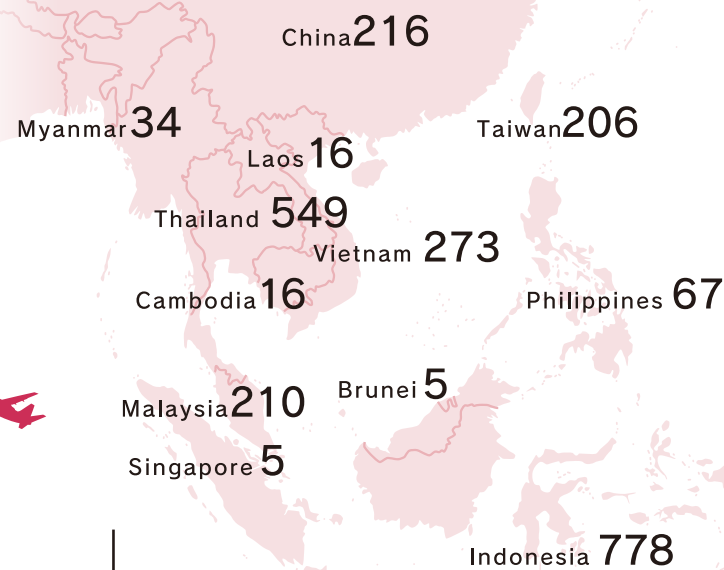
NIHONGO Partners Program — Support for Japanese- Language Learning

Learn Together to Deepen Mutual Understanding

The Asia Center will dispatch 3,000 NIHONGO Partners mainly to secondary schools in Asia by 2023. They become bridges that connect Asia together not only by supporting Japanese classes and introducing Japanese culture but also learning the local languages and cultures at the same time.

2,375

NIHONGO Partners were dispatched in the past 7 years



(The number of NIHONGO Partners who have been dispatched from FY2014 through FY2019 / There were no records in FY 2020)

1.78 million

people benefitted *1



98.8%

of schools receiving NIHONGO Partners gave a high review *2



The number of students taking Japanese courses rose at

39.5%

of schools which received NIHONGO Partners *2



The number of Japanese classes increased at

19.5%

of schools which received NIHONGO Partners *2



850,000 Japanese-Language Learners

Secondary school students in Southeast Asia make up one-quarter of those learning Japanese in the world. They dream of using their knowledge to become a bridge between Japan and their own countries.



Participants from a Variety of Ages and Backgrounds

Everyone who has a passion for exchange with Asia can leverage their respective personal strengths and experiences, even if they have not had specific experience or training.



Communication with Japanese Native Speakers

Because NIHONGO Partners are native Japanese speakers, they can share not only Japanese-language from textbooks but also practical Japanese-language and culture, both in and out of the classroom.



Learning from One Another Creates Strong Ties

NIHONGO Partners also learn the language and culture of where they are dispatched. They will have deeper relationships by spending time in the same community and interacting with respect.

NIHONGO Partners continue to play a role after their activities end by using their life experience in Asia and linguistic ability both at home and abroad



I discovered a new place to use my skills and teaching experience

.....
Mr. Masaaki Takasugi
Samut Prakan, Thailand
Activity period: May 2016 to March 2017

Mr. Takasugi, a former primary school principal, became a NIHONGO Partner in Thailand after his retirement. Using his knowledge as a former teacher, he could enjoy a sense of fulfillment working with students. He has started the next chapter of his life as an education advisor at a school to train teachers in Cambodia.



NIHONGO Partners changed my mindset as a Japanese teacher

.....
Ms. Ayana Taira
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
Activity period: October 2017 to July 2018

Ms. Taira had taught Japanese in Japan before becoming a NIHONGO Partner. Having returned to Japan, she continues to work as a Japanese-language teacher. Thanks to the experience she had through the program, she gained a greater understanding of her students and now finds her job even more rewarding.

*1 Number of those benefitted: students who attended Japanese-language classes and participants in programs to introduce Japanese culture and others by Partners

*2 Results of a survey of schools to which NIHONGO Partners were dispatched who returned to Japan within FY2019

Arts and Cultural Exchange

An Emotional Resonance that Transcends Borders

The Asia Center has carried out a wide range of programs such as visual arts, film, performing arts, sports, and grassroots and intellectual exchanges, bringing together people across Asia. We create a new Asian culture together through interaction, collaboration, and respect for diversity and people's identities.

2,504

cultural and intellectual exchange programs were carried out over 7 years



5.54 million

people took part in the interactive cultural and intellectual exchange programs over 7 years



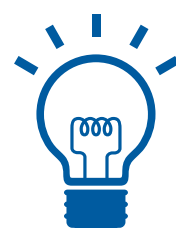
96.7 %

of visitors and participants rated the programs as "Satisfying" *1



89.9 %

of visitors and participants said they "Gained a deeper understanding of Japan" *2



523,000

people in 12 countries and regions watched movies at the Japanese Film Festival *3



354,000

visitors to *SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now* Exhibition in Tokyo



SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now Exhibition

Held at the National Art Center, Tokyo and Mori Art Museum, this was one of the world's largest showcases of contemporary art from Southeast Asia from the 1980s and onward.



Football Exchange with Southeast Asia "ASIAN ELEVEN"

By dispatching coaches from Japan and promoting interaction among players, the Asia Center contributes to encouraging the next generation of football in Asia.



Film Culture Exchange Projects with the Tokyo International Film Festival

To introduce Asia's new talent, the Asia Center showed films from Southeast Asia, invited Asian film professionals and produced an omnibus film series, "Asian Three-Fold Mirror."



Japan-ASEAN Media Forum

Journalists at the frontline from Asian countries met to discuss a wide range of social issues.

In both Japan and Asia, new contacts become new networks that grow and spread outward



Meeting other youths who perform traditional arts changed my awareness

.....
Mr. Kazuma Sasaki
"Sanriku-Asian Network Project"
that connects Asia with Tohoku

Mr. Sasaki, who performs *Shishi-odori* (Deer Dance) in Tohoku, went to Bali where he met young people learning traditional Indonesian performing arts from previous generations. Seeing their work directly changed his awareness and renewed his determination to work toward Tohoku's reconstruction after the 2011 earthquake through *Shishi-odori*.



A visit to Japan gave me a different perspective on Islam

.....
Ms. Monaliza A. Mangelen
Exchange with young Muslim leaders in Southeast Asia "TAMU/Talk with Muslims"

Ms. Mangelen, who works to improve understanding of the Muslim community in the Philippines, came to Japan for the project. By meeting students and Muslim residents in Japan and visiting various cultural and religious institutions, she found a key toward achieving multi-cultural coexistence and mutual recognition between different values in Japan.

*1 Results of a survey of visitors and participants in FY2019 programs

*2 Results of a survey of visitors and participants in FY2019 programs held overseas

*3 The number is the cumulative total from FY 2016 through FY 2020



Photo: Hideto Maezawa



@Tiny Toones in Phnom Penh, Cambodia



Photo: Yuki Ida



ASIA center

JAPAN FOUNDATION 

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