



JSPS QUARTERLY

JAPAN SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF SCIENCE

FEATURE

WPI Program Holds Tenth Year
Commemorative Symposium

No.59 2017 Spring



WPI Program Holds Tenth Year Commemorative Symposium

On 17 December, the WPI Program held a meeting to celebrate the tenth year of its operation. Themed “For the Future of Science in Japan,” the event was tailored to the general public, with a special focus on high school students.

The meeting opened with welcoming messages from Mr. Yasunao Seki, director-general, Research Promotion Bureau, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), Dr. Yuichiro Anzai, president, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, and Dr. Hiroo Imura, initial chair of the WPI Program Committee (video message). They were followed by a keynote lecture given by Dr. Toshio Kuroki, director of the WPI Program, on the theme “Toward Science without Borders or Barriers.” In it, he described how Japanese science had initially been ranked relatively low within the global spectrum, explaining that a major cause was a falling behind other countries in the international circulation of highly talented researchers. To hurdle this impediment, he said that it was necessary for Japan to take on a new challenge, one that, transcending borders and barriers, took the form of establishing the World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI Program). This initiative allowed for the pioneering of new sciences within a border- and barrier-free environment that overarches research fields, languages and systems and that, moreover, is conducive to attracting the world’s top researchers. After describing the transition of the WPI Program from its early beginnings, Dr. Kuroki introduced its four missions: To achieve top world-level research, fuse diverse research fields, promulgate internationalization, and reform universities and research systems. Nine WPI centers are working with a high level of success in carrying out these missions. Dr. Kuroki introduced them and their respective research activities, then finished up by elaborating the future plan being set for advancing the WPI Program in its next phase.

The meeting was held in three sessions, titled “Science: Beautiful and Deep,” “Life, Veiled in Mystery,” and “Science’s Contributions to Society.” In each, three researchers from the nine WPI centers



Dr. Noyori



Dr. Kuroki

gave talks on cutting-edge research topics, in which they spoke about the alluring appeal of science and about its co-relationship with society. In their presentations, the researchers conveyed special messages of encouragement geared to the high school students.

The meeting concluded with remarks from Dr. Ryoji Noyori, chair of WPI Program Committee, who addressed the topic “Science, Leading the Way to Japan’s Future.” Dr. Noyori defined the creed of the WPI Program as being “Science One, Borders None.” He stressed the imperativeness of science being advanced in ways that achieve quantum leaps in innovation that benefits society by tackling and solving a wide array of contemporary issues. He emphasized that accomplishing this objective requires the sort of close collaboration that transcends mere international competition.

Following this series of lectures, time was set aside for the high school students to interact with the top world-level WPI researchers, to whom they pitched a great many questions—some about the science that the researchers are pursuing, others about the career paths they have walked. Stimulated by these interactions, the students could be seen throughout the room brimming with enthusiasm about their own futures. They could be heard saying “Such-and-such a lecture was inspiring; it gave me pointers on blazing my own path forward.” Or, “The lectures gave me a greater awareness of the diversity of research, inspiring me to expand my own fields of study in the future.”

A brochure commemorating the tenth anniversary of the WPI Program was distributed to the meeting participants. It described the WPI Program’s systems and objectives and recapped the various WPI center initiatives and achievements. This blending of literature, lectures and interactions served to stimulate and deepen the interest of the high school students and other participants in science while providing them with a detailed knowledge of the WPI Program.

The meeting, attended by 441 high school students and members of public, was carried live over Ustream on the Internet.

For further information on the WPI Program, please see the following site: <https://www.jps.go.jp/english/e-toplevel/index.html>

University-Industry Cooperation and Research Program Division



Conversing with lecturer

List of Symposium Lecturers and Themes

Lecture Session 1

Science, Beautiful and Deep

The Beginning and End of the Universe

Hitoshi Murayama, Director, Kavli Institute for the Physics and Mathematics of the Universe (Kavli IPMU), The University of Tokyo/MacAdams Professor of Physics, University of California, Berkeley

How Did the Earth Form—This Earth and Earths

Shigeru Ida, Vice Director, Earth-Life Science Institute (ELSI), Tokyo Institute of Technology

The Beauty of Mathematics

Motoko Kotani, Director, Advanced Institute for Materials Research (AIMR), Tohoku University

Lecture Session 2

Life, Veiled in Mystery

From Fertilization to Body Formation

Ryoichiro Kageyama, Deputy Director, Institute for Integrated Cell-Material Sciences (iCeMS), Kyoto University

Solving the Mystery of Sleep

Masashi Yanagisawa, Director, International Institute for Integrative Sleep Medicine (IIIS), University of Tsukuba/Professor, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

Regulatory T Cells: Immunology of Self and Non-self

Shimon Sakaguchi, Deputy Director, Osaka University Immunology Frontier Research Center (IFReC)

Lecture Session 3

Science's Contributions to Society

Contribution of New Materials to Society

Masakazu Aono, Director, International Center for Materials Nanoarchitectonics (MANA)

Making Powerful Molecules

Kenichiro Itami, Director, Institute of Transformative Bio-Molecules (ITbM), Nagoya University

Science for Solving the Energy Problem

Seiji Ogo, Lead Principal Investigator, Catalytic Materials Transformations Division, International Institute for Carbon-Neutral Energy Research (I²CNER), Kyushu University

WPI Centers and Year Adopted

Origin of Universe/Earth/Life



Life Science



Materials/Energy



ITbM
Nagoya
Nagoya University

iCeMS
Kyoto
Kyoto University

IFReC
Osaka
Osaka University

ELSI
Tokyo
Tokyo Institute of Technology

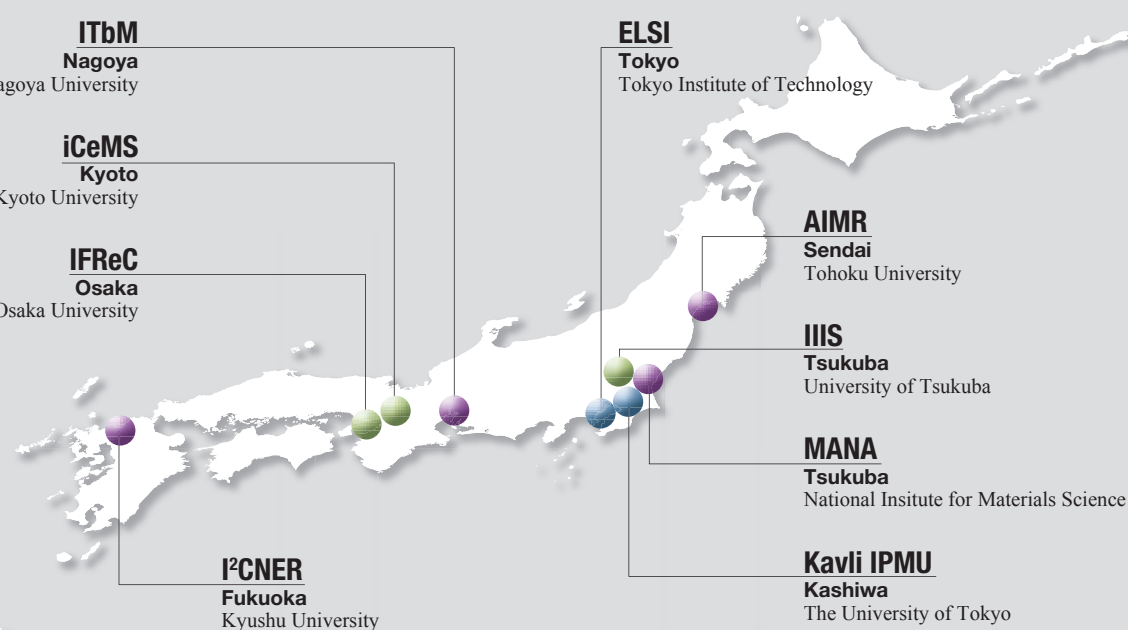
AIMR
Sendai
Tohoku University

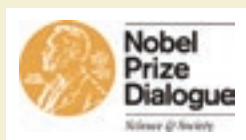
IIIS
Tsukuba
University of Tsukuba

MANA
Tsukuba
National Institute for Materials Science

I²CNER
Fukuoka
Kyushu University

Kavli IPMU
Kashiwa
The University of Tokyo

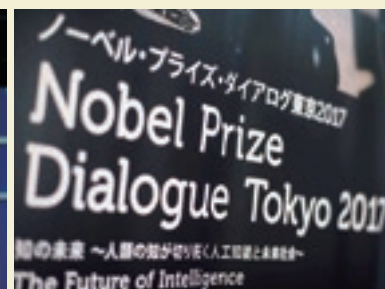




Nobel Prize Dialogue Tokyo 2017



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©Nobel Media AB/ Photo: Alexander Mahmoud



©Nobel Media AB/ Photo: Yuki Kato

On February 26, JSPS and Nobel Media AB, a subsidiary of the Nobel Foundation, co-organized Nobel Prize Dialogue Tokyo 2017, held in the conference hall of the Tokyo International Forum. This event was inspired by “Nobel Week Dialogue,” which has been held in Sweden on the day before the Nobel Prize Ceremony since 2012.

At this all-day event, a vibrant constellation of five Nobel Laureates, including Dr. Jean-Pierre Sauvage, emeritus professor, University of Strasbourg and former JSPS Fellow, and array of world-leading scientists delivered lectures at the frontiers of their respective fields and participated in lively panel discussions.

In the opening ceremony, welcoming messages were offered by JSPS president Dr. Yuichiro Anzai and Nobel Foundation executive director Dr. Lars Heikensten on behalf of the co-producing organizations. Then, guest remarks were delivered by Mr. Toshiei

Mizuochi, State Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

This *dialogue* on “The Future of Intelligence” explored the nature of human intelligence along with the application of artificial intelligence (AI). The various topics addressed spoke to the interconnectivity between science and society, advancing in interesting directions a spirited discussion that cascaded across lectures, panel discussion streams, and Q&A sessions, including audience participation. The curtain closed on this powerful event with a razor-sharp exchange among a panel of Nobel Laureates.



Dr. Sauvage (on the right) ©Nobel Media AB/ Photo: Yuki Kato



©Nobel Media AB/ Photo: Alexander Mahmoud

Over the course of the day, an audience of over 1,000, comprising both Japanese and people from countries around the world, engaged in a stimulating dialogue with the eminent lecturers, bringing science and society yet another step closer together. People, both in Japan and abroad, who were unable to attend the event could view it live over the Dialogue’s dedicated website.

For highlights of the event, please see the following posted video:
<https://www.youtube.com/nobeldialogue>

Research Cooperation Division

JSPS and Nobel Media AB to Hold Nobel Prize Dialogue Tokyo 2018



Dr. Anzai and Dr. Heikensten

On 10 December in Stockholm, Sweden, JSPS president Dr. Yuichiro Anzai attended the Nobel Prize Award Ceremony and Nobel Banquet, where he congratulated the new Nobel Laureates including Dr. Yoshinori Ohsumi, who won the 2016 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

The day before, Dr. Anzai also attended the Nobel Week Dialogue, an open-forum held by Nobel Media AB. Themed “The Future of Food,” it was addressed by 25 eminent scientists including six Nobel Laureates, who gave presentations and participated in panel discussions. Approximately 1,300 people from all over the world attended the event and enjoyed a captivating experience in dialogue with the panellists.

Nobel Foundation executive director Dr. Lars Heikensten, Nobel Media AB CEO Mr. Mattias Fyrenius, and Dr. Anzai signed a memorandum of understanding on holding the third Nobel Prize Dialogue on 11 March 2018 as a jointly produced symposium between JSPS and Nobel Media AB.

Nobel Prize Dialogue Tokyo 2018

Organizers: Nobel Media AB and JSPS

Date: Sunday, 11 March 2018

Venue: To be announced

Theme (tentative): The Future of Food

Program (tentative): Keynote lectures, parallel discussion streams, panel discussions

Language: English (Japanese simultaneous interpretation provided)

Capacity: 1,000 people

Entrance fee: Free

Research Cooperation Division



FoS Symposia Held with Germany, the UK and the US in 2016

In 2016, three Frontiers of Science (FoS) Symposia were held with JSPS counterpart organizations in Germany, the UK, and the US. The 13th Japanese-German FoS Symposium was held with the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) in Potsdam on 7-9 October. Introductory messages were given by the co-chairs, Dr.



JGFoS social sciences session

Yvonne Stahl (Heinrich Heine University) and Dr. Takashi Nakanishi (National Institute for Materials Science (NIMS)), offering a prelude to a highly fruitful experience had by a total of 57 German and Japanese participants, who interacted collegially and networked with each other over the course of the event.



UK-Japan FoS discussion

After an 8-year interlude between symposia, the second UK-Japan FoS Symposium was held on 7-9 November 2016. Thanks to an invitation from the co-organizing Royal Society, the symposium was held at the traditional English manor Chicheley Hall. The co-chairs, Prof. Nicholas Smith (National Nuclear Laboratory

Ltd) and Dr. Hirohiko Masunaga (Nagoya University), piloted the event within a highly electrified atmosphere, one that engaged the 54 British and Japanese researchers in animated discussions on six topics.



JAFoS poster session

On 1-4 December, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) and JSPS held the 15th Japanese-American FoS Symposium at Arnold and Mabel Beckman Center in Irvine, California. Its co-chairs, Dr. Jacob Hooker (Harvard Medical School) and Prof. Kensuke Kobayashi (Osaka University), energized the event in ways that invigorated intermingling and exchange among the 66 participants of different nationalities and various specialties.

The Frontiers of Science (FoS) symposia are designed to help nurture excellent young researchers who, passionate about scientific pursuit, are eager to exchange ideas and form colleagues across borders and academic disciplines. They do this by engaging in spirited discussions not only in the program and poster sessions, but also in the intervals between and after official events at the symposia.

This year, JSPS will hold FoS symposia in two new formats. One will be a trilateral Japanese-American-German FoS Symposium to be held in Germany and mark a new juncture of JSPS collaboration with AvH and NAS. The other will be a joint Japanese-Canadian FoS Symposium held in Japan, co-organized with the Royal Society of Canada (RSC) and Canadian Institute for Advanced Research (CIFAR).

For more information on the Frontiers of Science Program, please visit its website: <http://www.jps.go.jp/english/e-fos/index.html>

Research Cooperation Division



Commemorative Interview on the Publication of *Five Years After— Reassessing Japan's Responses to the Earthquake, Tsunami, and the Nuclear Disaster*

To commemorate the publishing of the book *Five Years After—Reassessing Japan's Responses to the Earthquake, Tsunami, and the Nuclear Disaster*, an interview was held with Dr. Michio Muramatsu, Professor Emeritus, Kyoto University and Senior Advisor, JSPS Research Center for Science System, who has been closely involved in the editing of both the Japanese and English editions of this book.

JSPS established a committee to carry out research on the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Accident so as to create a record of the catastrophe that would be widely disseminated. The research results were published in Japanese in an eight-volume series by Toyo Keizai Inc. in 2015-16. Now, those volumes have been compiled into an English edition with the above title, edited by Dr. Keiichi Tsunekawa and published by the University of Tokyo Press.

Interview with Dr. Michio Muramatsu

Q: The day of 11 March 2011 saw the triple catastrophe of the Tohoku Earthquake, Tsunami, and Nuclear Accident. As there is much international interest in this event, we would like to ask you about the purpose of the *Five Years After* book and the sequence of initiatives that led to its publication.

As a person who is himself engaged in social science research, I was shocked to learn about the effects of the catastrophe and wanted to get involved scientifically in the recovery effort. Many scientists shared this sentiment. In the wake of the earthquake, the government-run "Reconstruction Design Council in Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake" proposed preparing a report containing scientific analysis by a wide range of researchers that would be long-enduring and convey lessons learned from this experience to future generations in both Japan and the wider world. In tandem, JSPS established the "Research Committee on the Great East Japan Earthquake," which amassed leading researchers in various fields such as political science and economics. Eight research teams were organized under the Committee, which involved more than 90 researchers.

Q: The eight volumes contained some 90 papers authored by Japanese researchers. Please tell us about the plan carried out for compiling these volumes into a one-volume English edition for an overseas readership.

The plan was Dr. Tsunekawa's. In the book's first chapter, I read that the editor was trying to balance the views expressed regarding

the government's responses. This was because papers and articles written about the event in English and other languages had over-emphasized the negative aspects of the government's response while heaping praise on the response efforts carried out by affected residents, volunteers, and the wider civil society.

In the English edition, I contributed an article about the housing issue. I found local administrations to be responding proactively to this problem. Even before official rules and procedures had been issued by the government, the staffs of the local administrations were already taking action in matters requiring urgent response. Swayed by the activities of the local people, the prefectural governments endorsed the local administrations' initiatives, which in turn led the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) to also recognize them. In that way, good collaboration coalesced between the central and local governments.

Q: The nuclear reactor accident has had long after-effects. Was there a policy related to papers on nuclear reactors?

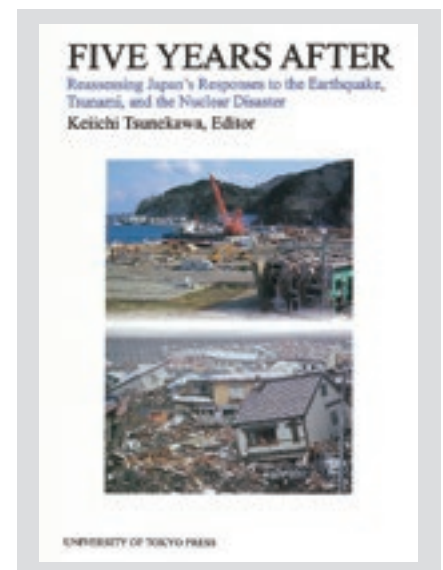
Maybe, yes and no. "No" in the sense that only one volume of the series was allocated to the theme "Science and Reactors." However, I can say "Yes" in the sense that as it turned out about half of the report's content did treat the subject of nuclear reactors.

Q: Did the researchers who wrote the report conduct a lot of on-site surveys?

I, myself, participated in a number of interviews with local leaders and on-site personnel. In the course of conducting these interviews and surveys, there was something that really surprised me. To explain, we carried out a questionnaire survey of local governmental personnel, all the section chiefs of the three affected prefectures and of the 13 municipalities in them, totalling about 2,000 samples altogether. Normally in cases when the respondents mail in their answers, there is about a 25 to 35% response rate. What was so surprising in the case of our questionnaire is that there was a 77% response rate! People on the ground had a mountain of things that they were eager to say.

Q: Are you considering a sequel to this report?

I think it would be a good idea to publish another volume of the English edition. I also think that it would be very significant in terms of advancing social science for JSPS to carry out a follow-up survey in another three to five years.



For more detailed information on this survey, please see the following website:
http://www.jps.go.jp/j-gakujutsuchosa/e_report.html

University-Industry Cooperation and Research Program Division

Analysis of UK-Japan Co-authored Publications

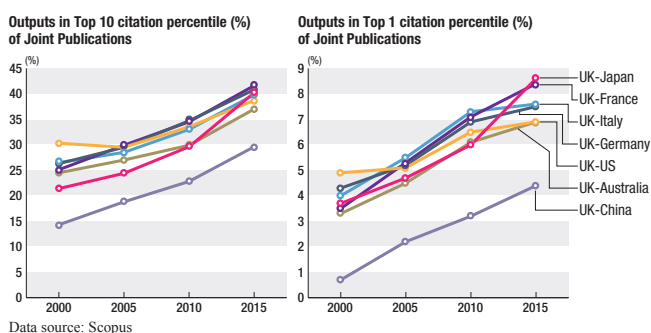
One of the missions of JSPS's London Office is to convey to excellent researchers and top universities in the UK the merits of conducting joint research with Japan under JSPS programs. To gauge those merits, in November the office conducted an analysis using the Scopus Database with focus on research papers co-authored by Japanese and UK researchers, and compiled the results into the "Report on Research Publications Co-authored by Japan and the UK."

It was found that as a general trend these co-authored papers are seeing a steady increase in number. During the period from 2000-2015, there was a three-fold increase in their publication. When, however, comparing the proportion of these co-authored papers with those of other countries among the UK's international joint publications, the ratio of UK-Japan papers has been slightly decreasing. Whereas Japan was ranked 9th among the UK's international joint publications in 2000, its share had fallen to 13th in 2015. In contrast, UK-Japan joint publications have increased remarkably among both the top 1 and 10 citation percentiles, reaching first place in the top 1 citation percentile and third place in the top 10 citation percentile after only cited publications between the UK and France and UK and Germany. (Please see the graphs on the right.) When compared to other countries, joint UK-Japan publications perform highly among the top citation percentile especially in the following fields: Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology, Earth and Planetary Sciences, Immunology and Microbiology, Medicine, and Physics and Astronomy.

Whereas it may be argued whether the number of paper citations accurately reflects the quality of research, it is generally agreed that UK-Japan joint research is high in quality. As evidence of that, we believe that this survey and report will aid British researchers in seeing

Comparison of Citation Percentiles

Top 1 and 10 citation percentiles of UK's international joint publications with six countries (USA, Germany, France, Italy, Australia, China and Japan)



Data source: Scopus

the merits of conducting joint research with Japanese counterparts. That said, the merits of joint research cannot always be judged by the number of papers and citations it produces. An important case in point is the educational effect that participating in international joint research has on young researchers, who can also contribute fresh and innovative ideas to those undertakings—ideas that may even spawn new research fields. Believing the wellspring of scientific advancement to be international collaboration among researchers working in friendly rivalry, JSPS London vigorously supports the implementation of joint research between British and Japanese colleagues.

More details on this report can be found on the following news page: <http://www.jspss.org/news/2016/11>

JSPS London Office

Japan-UK Research Promotion Conference Held in London

On 16 November, the JSPS London Office held "Japan-UK Research Promotion Conference 2016" at the Embassy of Japan in the UK. This is a networking event held for members of the JSPS Alumni Association of the UK and Republic of Ireland and the Japanese Researchers' Network Based in the UK (JBUK) along with their colleagues and students. The conference works to generate new ideas for UK-Japan joint research and assist the participants in identifying joint-research partners. The alumni association with its approximately 600 members and JBUK with its 450 members form the core of research collaboration with Japan in the UK. Believing that collegiality and collaboration among these researchers will greatly advance joint research over the long term, JSPS London held this first conference.

To cover as much research content as possible, this conference adopted an optional presentation format, under which three sessions were held on the themes "Humanities and Social Sciences," "Medical and Life Sciences," and "Engineering and Physical Sciences." Convened in parallel, each featured 20 presentations chosen by the speakers themselves. Each of the 60 presenters was given five minutes to talk. They had been selected from some 150 researchers who responded to a pre-conference solicitation for speakers. During their allotted five minutes, the presenters did a marvellous job of describing in interesting ways their research, including their topics and possibilities for joint research, to an audience of people with differing disciplines. During the poster sessions, the participants could be seen holding a coffee cup in one hand while engaging each other in spirited discussions.

Upon the conclusion of the three sessions, a vote was taken among the members to choose the two presentations that they would "most want to hear again." Then, a cross-disciplinary session was



© Embassy of Japan in the UK

held in which the six finalists repeated their presentations in front of all the conference participants.

Attended by representatives of the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and other funding agencies, a reception was held after the conference. Conversation bustled among the some 120 people attending it until late into the evening.

JSPS London has recently established a new award called the "Collaboration Prize," which supports the travel costs between the labs of researchers who have found new collaborative partners and are preparing to carry out a joint project. Application screening is currently being carried out for this award, which will support the actual implementation of collaboration seeded by these conferences.

More information about this event can be found on the following website: <http://www.jspss.org/news/2016/11/jspss-london-japan-uk-research-promotion-conference-2016.html>

JSPS London Office

The Japan-US Science Forum Held in Boston



The JSPS Washington Office has launched a new annual event series: “The Japan-US Science Forum.” This year, its inaugural forum was held under the banner “Changing the World through Japan’s Scientific Endeavors.” After experiencing unprecedentedly high economic growth in the post-war period and experiencing a “bubble economy” in the late 1980s, Japan now faces a host of challenges that are likely to test other developed countries in the near future. As Japan works to solve such issues as societal aging, population decline, and energy supply, it is well positioned to offer the world innovative ways to address shared challenges.

With support from the Consulate-General of Japan in Boston and in cooperation with “United Japanese researchers Around the world” (UJA), the forum was held on 12 November at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Themed “Japan’s Rapidly Aging Society,” this multidisciplinary event started with opening remarks from Dr. Mitsuaki Nozaki, director of JSPS’s Washington Office, and Mr. Rokuichiro Michii, Consul General, Consulate-General of Japan in Boston. Lectures were given by Japanese researchers who are playing active roles in the US in a variety of research fields, including public health, biology, medical devices, AI, public policy and sociology. Throughout the event, the speakers delivered

compelling talks, which triggered many questions and a lively Q&A discussion.

Following the forum, a poster session, themed “Rapidly Aging Society,” was held, and the “JSPS Washington Director Award” and “Consul General of Japan Award” were given to the most remarkable presentations.

Approximately 140 participants, including researchers from universities and research institutes in the US and interested members of the public, attended the forum. Several Japanese universities and institutions participated as poster exhibitors to introduce their respective research activities.

By way of activities like this forum, the JSPS Washington Office will continue to provide opportunities to create researcher networks and to support the implementation of research collaboration between Japan and the United States.

For the agenda of this event, a list of the speakers, and related documents, please see the following website:

http://jpsusa.org/wp/11122016_the-japan-us-science-forum-in-boston-cambridge-ma/

JSPS Washington Office

KVA-JSPS Seminar on Topological Phases Held in Sweden

On 26 October and 1 and 3 November, seminars jointly sponsored by JSPS and the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (KVA) were held at Uppsala University, Stockholm University, and University of Gothenburg. KVA-JSPS seminars are planned by members of the Swedish Academy who play leading roles in a wide variety of research fields. Distinguished Japanese researchers, whose work is of great interest in both countries, are invited to give lectures in these seminars. This time, Dr. Masatoshi Sato, professor, Yukawa Institute for Theoretical Physics, Kyoto University, came from Japan as the invited lecturer.

Dr. Sato is an internationally renowned expert in the topological phases of matter, most particularly exotic forms of superconductivity,



in which his work on non-centrosymmetric superconductors is of fundamental importance. In the seminars at Uppsala University and University of Gothenburg, he delivered a lecture on “Topological superconductors and Majorana fermions” and discussed the notion that topological superconductors may host Majorana fermions¹, which may provide topologically protected non-Abelian qubits².

He, then, described his work on realizing Majorana fermions in condensed matter physics, focusing on some recent results. In the other seminar on “Topological superconductivity in doped topological materials” held at Stockholm University, he spoke about how nontrivial topological structures of such materials in normal states may affect their topological properties in superconducting states.

Showing a keen interest in Dr. Sato’s lecture, one by one the participants showered him with questions. The active and in-depth discussion spawned between Dr. Sato and the participants continued to effervesce even after the seminar.

For more details, please see the following website:

<http://www.jsps-sto.com/activities.aspx>

JSPS Stockholm Office

1. These Majorana fermions are quasi-particles, which can be viewed as ‘half of an ordinary fermion.’

2. A non-Abelian qubit is a quantum bit, constructed from so-called Non-Abelian particles. These quantum bits are resilient to noise, which poses a problem for other types of quantum bits.

Joint Symposium on “Womenomics” Held at Stanford

The JSPS San Francisco Office co-sponsored this year’s Stanford Silicon Valley US-Japan Dialogue on a theme of high relevance within the Japanese economy: “Womenomics, the Workplace, and Women.” Held on 4 November, the symposium was organized by Stanford University’s Walter H. Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center (Shorenstein APARC) Japan Program and also co-sponsored by the university’s Clayman Institute for Gender Research and the United States-Japan Foundation (USJF). It brought together the brightest minds from a variety of related sectors, including academia, business, government and technology for the purpose of creating both a vision and a concrete plan for women’s empowerment in the Japanese workforce economy.

The symposium came at a critical time for Japan, when a decreasing birth rate and aging society are creating a hurdle for sustaining economic growth. In a pointed effort to advance an economy in which every individual can participate fully, in 2013 the Abe Administration made a commitment to promoting women’s economic empowerment. After that, the National Diet passed a law requiring large companies to set numerical targets for female employment in their workplace and to make related hiring policies public. Even though “womenomics” was made a key pillar of the “Abenomics” economic reform plan, Japan still ranks 111th out of 144 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum. So, many issues remain to be solved. Across the globe from Japan in California’s Silicon Valley, venture capital is still said to be a “boys club,” where gender inequality persists and female attrition rates are high.



Prof. Nagase (second right)

Against this backdrop, over 70 people, including 21 distinguished speakers, from the US and Japan came together to participate in four panel discussions, themed “Women in the Silicon Valley Ecosystem—Progress and Challenges,” “Women in the Japanese Economy—Progress and Challenges,” “Women’s Advancement in the Workplace,” and “Work-Life Balance and Womenomics.”



Prof. Osawa

A diverse range of male and female panelists, ranging from Silicon Valley leaders to Japanese professors, brought an equally diverse range of viewpoints and expertise to the discussion, as they shared ideas and considered conceptual frameworks. The discussion outcomes included the articulation of a need for a bidirectional rectification approach in which bottom-up education, such as mentoring programs and unconscious-bias training, is balanced against top-down policy initiatives, such as labor reform, external labor market development, and employment quotas.

JSPS sponsored two key contributors to the symposium: Prof. Machiko Osawa of Japan Women’s University and Prof. Nobuko Nagase of Ochanomizu University. Prof. Osawa presented data on shortfalls in employment trends of highly educated women and offered insights into possible causes underlying them, while suggesting ways to reverse the trends. Prof. Nagase focused her comments on labor law and its effects on female mobility, while suggesting key labor policy changes to improve women’s status in the workforce.

An open dialogue between leaders and experts in the field of women’s workforce empowerment, coupled with the diverse backgrounds of the participants, made the symposium an incubator for new and highly innovative ideas, which if put into practice can have a very large and positive impact on the societies and economies of both countries.

Please visit the following website for more information about the San Francisco Office: <http://www.jspssusa-sf.org/index.php>

JSPS San Francisco Office

Japanese–Swiss Colloquium Held on Ecohealth

On 11-12 January, the JSPS Bonn Office held its 13th Japanese-German Colloquium, this time titled “Japanese–Swiss Ecohealth Colloquium.” It was cosponsored by Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH) and National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU).

Beginning with Swiss TPH director Dr. Jürg Utzinger, representatives from Switzerland and Japan offered remarks to kick off this colloquium on the theme “Ecohealth.” Five sessions were held in which frontline Japanese and Swiss researchers gave presentations on the session topics, which were “Ecohealth in the 21st century,” “Transdisciplinarity,” “Food and health,” “Africa,” and “Environmental risks and long-term effects on non-communicable disease.”

This closed event was carried out amidst a highly collegial atmosphere among the participants. At the end of the first day, the Africa session was open to the interested public including Swiss TPH doctoral students, whose questions demonstrated a riveting interest in the presentations. The latter part of the second day featured a science café session, in which three groups of six participants exchanged views in a discussion of the ideas that emerged from the presentations in the previous five sessions. They, then, reported their discussion results from a perspective of ecosystem approaches to health in a following closed session. Throughout the event, spirited discussions



and opinion exchanges followed each presentation in not only the Q&A periods but also the coffee breaks.

After all of the sessions had been completed, JSPS Bonn Office director Prof. Keiichi Kodaira offered a closing message to the 17 participants from Switzerland and Japan, thanking and congratulating them on the success of the colloquium. He voiced high expectation in the continued advancement of Japan-Swiss scientific collaboration in the future.

Please see the following site for more details about this event: <http://www.jspss-bonn.de/veranstaltungen/kolloquien/2017-ecohealth/>

JSPS Bonn Office

JSPS Guidance Seminar and BJSPSAA Executive Meeting Held in Bangladesh



On 29 November, the JSPS Bangkok Office held a Guidance Seminar at Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University (SAU) in Dhaka, Bangladesh. It was co-hosted with the Bangladesh JSPS Alumni Association (BJSPSAA). Under appropriate security by local police amidst a security warning by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, the seminar enjoyed the vigorous participation of more than 120 people, mainly young researchers.

The seminar was moderated by BJSPSAA member Dr. Tuhin Suvra Roy, professor, SAU Department of Agronomy. BJSPSAA general secretary Dr. Nur Ahamed Khondaker delivered an opening address. After members of the Bangkok Office introduced JSPS's international programs, SAU vice-chancellor Prof. Kamal Uddin Ahamed talked about the university's MoUs with several Japanese counterpart institutions and expressed high expectation for further academic collaboration between Japan and Bangladesh.

The last speaker, BJSPSAA president Dr. M. Afzal Hossain, who chaired the seminar, introduced the BJSPSAA's menus of activities and spoke about the role of agriculture in solving several of the nation's problems, including rapid population increase and climate change. He said that a lot of young Bangladeshi researchers wish to do research in Japan because of the high level of its academic

and research facilities. In a Q&A session about JSPS international programs, the participants asked several questions on such matters as a follow-up program for Bangladeshi research conducted in Japan and the sharing of information on the activities of JSPS alumni associations in other countries. At the following reception, the participants enjoyed hearing firsthand about alumni members' experiences in Japan.

In the alumni association's executive committee meeting held on 28 November in the office of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Dhaka, Bangladesh, the alumni executives discussed with members of the Bangkok Office details of the International Academic Seminar to be held in February in Bangladesh.

For more information about the JSPS Guidance Seminar and BJSPSAA executive committee meeting, please visit the following sites:

http://jsps-th.org/jsps_en/2016/11/28/1253/

http://jsps-th.org/jsps_en/2016/11/29/1239/

JSPS Bangkok Office



Essay by a Former Fellow Dr. Zsuzsanna Kemenesi

In-depth research and analysis in the field of material arts and cultural arts is my field of specialty. Beyond the fine art scene, various forms of the cultural arts, found in local religions, ideologies and craftsmanship, embody significant issues when we discuss current societies. During my JSPS fellowship for eight months between 2008 and 2009, I had irreplaceable opportunities to study the collections and curatorial concepts of a series of world-class art institutions in Japan. The experience immensely helped me cultivate my understanding of the relationship between the arts and culture.

Prior to my academic venture in Japan, I had since 2005 held a teaching position in Hungary as an associate professor in the Media Art Institute at the University of Kaposvár. Visual culture, aesthetics of photography, cultural anthropology and visual communication were my fields of study. I conducted comparative analyses in the forms of art across local, regional, national, international, and multinational levels. During my tenure in that post, I received a grant from the International Partnership Among Museums, a program of the American Association of Museums. Under it, I conducted collaborative work with a museum curator, Dr. Steve Yates, who helped me further pursue my academic career.

The mentorship of Steve Yates opened the door for me to receive

a highly rewarding fellowship from the JSPS to pursue my postdoctoral research on "The Synthesis of Visual and Verbal Knowledge in Art and Communication," which I carried out also with support from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. My research host during that tenure was the late Dr. Wani Yoshitaka, professor at the University of Creation; Art, Design, Music & Social Work in Gunma, Japan. The publications I accomplished during that time included a comparison of Japanese and Australian photo media and an essay on the Good Design Expo in Tokyo.



Photo by Sándor Benkő

The new type of theoretical approach I learned in Japan has certainly helped me to further nurture my academic career back in Hungary. At an annual meeting of the Hungarian Psychological Association, I recently presented the latest developments in my field at a scientific session titled: "Constitute Imagination—Material and Cultural Arts." My aim is to organize the endless interpretation of phenomena surrounding us in the changing world. I think that the language of art and science should be unlimited and freely unleashed in today's altering world, though I unchangeably cherish the values I acquired during my JSPS fellowship tenure.

Dr. Kemenesi's website: <http://www.infranesia.com>



Science Dialogue

Scientific Adventure of an American Fellow in Japan

Dr. Holly Lynn Walen



On 28 January, Dr. Walen visited Kiryu High School in Gunma Prefecture to give a lecture under JSPS's Science Dialogue program to 23 selected students in the first and second grades. Hailing from the United States, Dr. Walen is currently carrying out research in the field of analytical chemistry at the Surface and Interface Science Laboratory in RIKEN.

Her main focus is on an investigation of the optical properties of transition metal dichalcogenides. While this theme would seem a bit intimidating for high school students, Dr. Walen softened its edges with a student-friendly presentation delivered with gentle charm.

Stained Glass and Stainless Passion

Before Dr. Walen started talking about her research, she introduced her hometown in Minnesota, a state in the northern mid-western of the US, known by its nickname "Land of 10,000 Lakes." She, then, described her nanoscience research, especially as it pertains to materials and surface science. To enhance the students' understanding, she used a series of interesting slides. The discussion prompted one of the students to ask how stained glass works. Dr. Walen explained that the colors of stained glass arise from the metal nanoparticles dissolved in the glass. The size, shape, and the electronic properties (i.e. identity) of the metal nanoparticles determine the color of the glass. The larger point that she was trying to make was that the optical and physical properties of materials change with size. As technol-

ogy becomes smaller, it's important to understand those changes from the perspective of fabrication to manufacturing for a specific purpose.



Kiryu High School is well suited for a Science Dialogue lecture as it is designated by the Ministry of Education as a Super Science High School. Its students are looking forward to a school trip that will take them to the US this spring. During her lecture, Dr. Walen shared with the students her story of why she decided to become a researcher. She said that she had once worked as a corporate researcher, where she undertook a series of tasks that were for her rather monotonous. That experience caused her to ponder what she really wanted to do, sparking what was a passion to become a full-time researcher in an academic laboratory.

After the lecture, a survey of the students' responses was taken. The results showed that their experience with Dr. Walen had given them a stronger incentive to study both English and nanoscience. Having worked through some twists and turns in paving her own path as a researcher, Dr. Walen inspired the students in a way that may help them chart their own courses as Japan's next-generation and coming researchers.

Overseas Fellowship Division

The following fellows participated in JSPS's Science Dialogue Program during the period from October through December 2016. For details about the program, please see its website: www.jspss.go.jp/english/e-plaza/e-sdialogue

Venue	Lecturer	Nationality
Iwate Prefectural Kamaishi High School	Dr. MEZIL, S. J.	France
	Dr. TSAI, C.	Taiwan
	Dr. ASLAM, M.	India
Iwate Prefectural Mizusawa High School	Dr. BACHMANN, H.	Germany
	Dr. CRAIG, G. A.	UK
	Dr. LE, P. Q.	Vietnam
	Dr. SINGH, T.	India
	Dr. WEINER, A. K.	Germany
Akita Prefectural Yokote High School	Dr. LLAVE PEREZ, Y. A.	Peru
Seishin Gakuen High School (Ibaraki)	Dr. APPELLANT, R.	Belgium
	Dr. CHAKRABORTY, S.	India
Tochigi Prefectural Utsunomiya Girls' High School	Dr. AWASTHI, S.	India
	Dr. BALOIS, M. C.	Philippines
	Dr. BOUCHET, A.	France
	Dr. KOID, S.	Malaysia
Gunma Prefectural Takasaki Girls' High School	Dr. RYAN, K. R.	UK
Saitama Prefectural Kumagaya Girls' High School	Dr. TSAI, C.	Taiwan
Chiba Municipal Chiba High School	Dr. THANGAVEL, S.	India
Chiba Prefectural Chosei Senior High School	Dr. BUI, C.	Vietnam
	Dr. POPPE, C. P.	Netherlands
	Dr. BORAH, P.	India
Ichikawa Gakuen Ichikawa Junior & Senior High School (Chiba)	Dr. KAUNITZ, L. N.	Argentina
	Dr. KUCHTA, K.	Germany
	Dr. LAU, Q.	Australia
	Dr. MOTAKATLA, V.	India
	Dr. NAVANEETHAIYER, U.	Sri Lanka
Junior High School at Komaba, University of Tsukuba (Tokyo)	Dr. THEURKAUFF, I.	France
Senior High School at Komaba, University of Tsukuba (Tokyo)	Dr. TRAORE, A.	Mali
	Dr. KOLOMENSKIY, D.	Russia
Soka Senior High School (Tokyo)	Dr. ZOUJIKR, I.	Australia
Tokyo Metropolitan Hibiya High School	Dr. ARES, A.	Spain
Tokyo Metropolitan High School of Science and Technology	Dr. SCHWEIGHAUSER, L.	Switzerland
	Dr. THOMSON, R. J.	New Zealand

Venue	Lecturer	Nationality
Tokyo Metropolitan Tama High School of Science and Technology	Dr. TAMBI, R.	India
Toshimagaoka Joshi Gakuen Senior High School (Tokyo)	Dr. ROSNER, K.	Hungary
Keio Futsubu School (Kanagawa)	Dr. MARTIN, J. D.	USA
Niigata Prefectural Takada High School	Dr. JI, Y.	Korea
Toyama Prefectural Toyama Senior High School	Dr. GOMEZ-CASTRO, D.	Spain
	Dr. QUILAIN, B.	France
Fukui Prefectural Fujishima Senior High School	Dr. BOOKER, I. D.	Germany
	Dr. CHING, C.	Taiwan
Yamanashi Prefectural Hikawa High School	Dr. KARLSSON, C.	Sweden
Yamanashi Prefectural Kofu Nishi High School	Dr. MA, J.	Korea
Yamanashi Prefectural Nirasaki High School	Dr. YIM, J. C.	Canada
Gifu Prefectural Kamo Senior High School	Dr. KHUJANAZAROV, T.	Uzbekistan
	Dr. LOPEZ DAVILA, V.	Spain
Shizuoka Prefectural Nirayama High School	Dr. KUMAR, R.	India
Nagoya City Koyo Senior High School (Aichi)	Dr. MEEBOON, J.	Thailand
	Dr. TURRIZIANI, S.	Italy
	Dr. ALI, S.	Pakistan
Aichi Prefectural Kariya Senior High School	Dr. GOVINDAN, A.	India
	Dr. KIM, E.	Korea
Aichi Prefectural Kasugai Senior High School	Dr. WEST, C.	UK
Aichi Prefectural Okazaki Senior High School	Dr. PASTUHOV, S. I.	Bulgaria
Aichi Prefectural Zuiryo High School	Dr. WARMER, F.	Germany
Kyoto Prefectural Yamashiro High School	Dr. CASTILLO, C. C.	Spain
	Dr. KAMRUZZAMAN, M.	Bangladesh
	Dr. PAUTY, J.	France
	Dr. SKALOMENOS, K. A.	Greece
Hyogo Prefectural Kobe High School	Dr. HONG, Y.	Korea
Kagawa Prefectural Takamatsu Sakurai High School	Dr. VODICKA, P.	Czech
Fukuoka Prefectural Kasumigaoka Senior High School	Dr. SINGHVI, M. S.	India
Kumamoto Prefectural Kawaura High School	Dr. DUWAL, R. K.	Nepal
Miyazaki Prefectural Nobeoka High School	Dr. CIFTCI, H. I.	Turkey



Top Global University Project

Introducing the Participating Schools



CHIBA UNIVERSITY

The challenge is to foster students within a world thirsting for people who can play a critical role on the global stage and can produce the next generations of innovation while flexibly adapting to dynamic changes in the socio-economic environment. In taking up this challenge, Chiba University is *rising* as a future-oriented institution of higher learning, establishing new systems for providing education in an integrative approach to the arts and sciences and in specialized fields.

The University's Vision

In 2014, the university instituted a new reform concept called the "TRIPLE PEAKS CHALLENGE." Under this reform, the university's specialized disciplines have been categorized into three domains (Natural Sciences, Life Sciences, and Social Sciences and Humanities) with an aim to fostering highly professional people in each field. In addition, systems for early entrance and early graduation have been expanded, a second liberal arts program "International Japanology" has been established, and opportunities for overseas study are continuing to be increased, as are opportunities to gain international experience.

In the 1960s, Chiba University was a hub for international student education in Japan. As of FY 2014, the university had for four straight years been the number one national university for dispatching Japanese students overseas. It now has around 400 cooperative agreements with overseas partner institutions. Situated between Narita and Haneda International Airports, the university's location is ideal for carrying out a growing agenda of international activities.

RISING Initiatives to Realize the University's Vision—*RISING* program

The *RISING* program is focused on fostering future generations of global leaders. To that end, the university aims to strengthen

student capabilities in three areas, which are "Forming an overview," "Discovering new perspectives," and "Finding practical solutions." In order to develop these aptitudes, the university has set four goals toward which it is carrying out four reforms.



The Four Goals

- (1) 700 subjects to be taught in English
- (2) 50% of each year's student intake to study overseas
- (3) 3,000 overseas students to be accepted
- (4) 10% of students to be admitted by alternative processes

The Four Reforms

To achieve these goals, it will be necessary to take a step-by-step approach to fully implement governance reform, learning system reform, and program reform. Related to these reforms, global network reform is also being implemented.

- (1) Governance: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was established in April 2016 and special academic advisors have been appointed to assist in the implementation of tailor-made education.
- (2) Learning Systems: Our system for early university entrance has been expanded, and we are in the process of diversifying our entrance exams.
- (3) Program: During this fiscal year, a program for one-semester dispatch of Japanese students abroad and acceptance of overseas students is scheduled to start, and the creation of programs for double and joint degrees obtained through international joint education at a graduate level is ongoing.
- (4) Global Network: An overseas campus is scheduled to be opened in Thailand this year, with an aim to establishing overseas schools in the future.

Website: <http://www.chiba-u.ac.jp/e/index.html>



Hiroaki Ozawa

Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences / Vice President

Our College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was newly established last April as a pilot initiative toward globalizing the entire Chiba University campus. Its curriculum is geared towards studies aimed at identifying and solving global issues and to fostering students with the wide perspectives and precise skills needed to do so. The College provides its students with a well-balanced education in the humanities and social sciences, natural sciences, and life sciences, while requiring them to study abroad during their enrollment to gain international perspectives in these areas.

The education program is tailor-made in a way that invites each student to choose his/her own study theme from three majors: Global Studies, Contemporary Japanese Studies, and Integrated Science. In the same way, there is no single pattern prescribed for the students' overseas studies: A tailor-made program is prepared for them to choose their own course of overseas study from among many options. To aid the

students in their studies, specialized teaching staff who carry out collateral student-support duties are available. Moreover, special academic advisors are on hand to give the students an added dimension of support. To help the students in building their careers, from their first year a variety of courses are provided to give them an on-the-ground knowledge of international relations, finance, development assistance, and other pertinent areas, along with research symposiums held on such issues as immigration and refugee movements and in International Japanology.

The educational practices and modalities initiated in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences are meant to provide a model for Chiba University's overall educational program reform and for upscaling specialized education in its various departments. Also in response to student expectations, we will continue to work on devising educational systems in line with the standards and ideals of the Top Global University Project.

The project's aim is to enhance the international compatibility and competitiveness of higher education in Japan. It provides prioritized support for top world-class and highly innovative universities that can lead the internationalization of Japanese universities.

Top Global University Project website: <http://www.jspss.go.jp/english/e-tgu/index.html>



International University of Japan

Fostering Global Leaders

Ever since International University of Japan (IUJ) opened its doors 35 years ago, we have been committed to “fostering global leaders” through our educational and research activities. In that process, we have created an unprecedented international environment for our students, one which has produced more than 4,000 graduates from 116 countries. This success owes much to the dedication of our outstanding academic staff and to the substantial support we receive from Japan's private sector. Building upon this solid foundation of achievement and experience, our aim now is to further develop the universities resourcefulness in ways that will contribute to the world community by fostering future global leaders.

Establishing a New Global Standard from Asia

IUJ's founding mission is to foster leaders—people who not only possess high-caliber expertise and interdisciplinary perspectives but who are capable of applying them within a dynamic international environment. To that end, IUJ is advancing the internationalization of its campus in various ways including its institutional philosophy, which places strong emphasis on gathering people together from all over the world. Over the next decade, we will continue to leave the status quo behind in fostering human resources who can understand others and promote accommodation to diversity throughout the world. By fostering people who can serve both their own nations and global interests, we will strive to be a university that contributes ever-more substantially to a harmonious world.

1. Producing adaptable global leaders

By sending our students to countries throughout Asia and by way of our alumni networks and collaborative activities with partner universities in the region, we are working to foster global leaders who are adaptable to other cultures and able to play

Top Global University the IUJ



active cross-border roles immediately after graduation.

2. Supporting companies with education

The university supports the entry of Japanese companies into Asian and African markets through educational services such as providing English education in business practices for the Japanese employees of their overseas offices. In such ways, the university promotes academia-industry collaboration.

3. Creating a network in Africa

To extend our university brand that has already been established in Asian countries into Africa, we promote accepting international students from African countries and academic exchange with affiliated universities.

Website: http://www.iuj.ac.jp/sgu/index_en.html



Dr. Mohammed K. Ahmed
Director of Center for Language Education and Research

To contribute toward the development of International University of Japan, the Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR) was established in April 2014 with a mandate to offer high-quality foreign language education to students who aspire to play leading roles on the world stage. CLEAR is actively involved in providing support for the educational endeavors of the Top Global University Project. Faculty members of the Japanese Language Program have developed a business practices textbook, published in Japanese, English, and Vietnamese. The textbook includes information on business manners needed to work in Japanese companies. Another textbook they've developed is focused on IT engineering students. It provides them with rudimentary learning material geared to honing their ability to engage Japanese counterparts in business conversations. Besides books, the faculty has also developed electronic learning

materials, including a series of e-learning video clips for exchange students coming to Japan for the first time. They've also designed and developed two apps: “Ganbatte Kana” for self-learning *hiragana* and *katakana* syllabaries through voice and character recognition, and “Ganbatte Shadowing” for self-learning Japanese utilizing the listen-repeat technique of shadowing, which in our program uses the students' own recorded voices.

Faculty members of the English Language Program conduct sessions for SGH (Super Global High School) students participating in short English programs facilitated by IUJ students, in IUJ's cross-cultural, English-only, interactive environment. Through these various activities, CLEAR is supporting IUJ's mission by preparing both linguistically and culturally its students to be the kind of leaders who will contribute to creating practical solutions for both regional and global issues.

Research and Life in Japan
By a JSPS Fellow
No. 41

Dr. Lyle De Souza
“Literature of the Japanese Diaspora”

JSPS Postdoctoral Fellow, Kyoto University, 2016-present
Associate Lecturer, Birkbeck, University of London, UK, 2012-2016
Visiting Scholar, University of British Columbia, Canada, 2013



Coming to Japan from the UK, Dr. Lyle De Souza is conducting research with his host, Professor Yasuko Takezawa, at Kyoto University under a JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship. We asked him about his research topics and activities.

Q: What are you currently researching under your JSPS fellowship?

I am researching literature written by the Japanese diaspora, often called “Nikkei.” These are people of Japanese origin who have either themselves or their ancestors emigrated from Japan to other countries. I hope to complete a monograph on this topic by the end of my two-year stay here in Kyoto. I’ve found that many Japanese are surprised to hear that there are about three million people of Japanese descent residing in various countries around the world. Some are even more surprised to learn about the unique histories of the Nikkei communities in those countries, particularly the internment of Nikkei people during World War II. The novels written by Nikkei that I am researching not only breathe fresh life into those historical events but also portray them from the special perspectives and sensitivities of people in the Japanese diaspora. This is important because for a

long time their voices have been submerged beneath more dominant narratives. My work focuses on cultural identity embedded in these novels, particularly in relation to setting straight contested representations or stereotypes of Nikkei identity and history.

Q: Why did you choose this research subject?

Identity and diaspora are topics that are directly relevant to me. I am British, as I was educated and have lived most of my life in the UK. However, I was born in Kenya into a mixed Portuguese-Indian family. I have lived in those countries and others including the US, Canada and Australia. For me, identity is fluid, evolving, and sometimes ambiguous, even confusing. I did not want to research my own background directly, so I chose instead to focus my research on the Nikkei, who have a fascinating history. I particularly like the portrayals of cultural identity suffused in Nikkei novels. Wide in variety, I find these novels to be a more nuanced way of understanding identity than most identity theories are capable of achieving.

Q: Who among the diaspora novelists are you most interested in?

If I had to pick three influential Nikkei writers whose work is closely related to my research, they would be John Okada, Joy Kogawa, and Karen Tei Yamashita. Okada’s 1957 novel *No-No Boy* tells the story of a Japanese American who experienced difficulty in cultural adaptation after being released from a World War II internment camp. On the one hand, his first-generation Nikkei parents didn’t approve of the way he had come to embrace American ways and values while, on the other, American society perceived him as being disloyal for having answered “no, no” on a questionnaire regarding his willingness to serve in the US military. Kogawa’s 1981 novel *Obasan* traces the experience of a Nikkei girl



With Joy Kogawa

interned in Canada, who later recounts her painful childhood memories while staying in the home of her aunt (*Obasan*). In Yamashita’s 1990 novel *Through the Arc of the Rainforest*, a Japanese expatriate goes to Brazil looking for work. While he witnesses the ravaging of Amazonian communities, he discovers a magical site in the rainforest, called “Matacao,” around which the twists and turns of the story unfold. Not to give away the ending, this is a particularly intriguing read.

Q: With the advent of Brexit and the results of the American election, we seem to be witnessing a movement toward conservatism in the West. Concurrently, we are seeing large migration flows. How are Japanese diaspora authors responding to this environment?

Over the past 5-10 years, I think there has been a shift toward extremes on both liberal and conservative sides around the world. Amidst these big transitions, I’ve found in my research so far that the vast majority of Nikkei writers are very liberal. Whilst recently conducting interviews in Australia, I spoke to a number of Nikkei authors, one of whom was self-aware enough to say that she might be stuck in a “liberal bubble.” Even though they dislike what’s happening on the “far right,” they want to be open-minded to differing points of view, not least to address them accurately in their writing.

I think the role of diaspora literature now is



Before Kyoto University’s Clock Tower Centennial Hall

just as important as in the 1980s when Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* was written and most Canadians had no idea about the Japanese internment experience. Nikkei novels are important not just because they tell Nikkei history, but also because their renderings can be emotive, putting the reader in the shoes of people who speak from oft-times bitter experience. Reading *Obasan*, one can vicariously experience the pain of a small Nikkei girl who, uprooted from her home, was forced to live in an internment camp.

Q: What characterizes Japanese diaspora literature within the contemporary environment?

I hope this literature can help us learn from past mistakes. I'm speaking particularly of attitudes towards Muslims living in Western countries. After 9-11, some Nikkei people contacted the Canadian government, asking them to be circumspect in the way they speak about Muslims as an ethnic group so as not to repeat what happened to the Nikkei community in the past. Like the Nikkei Japanese who had no involvement in the Pearl Harbor attack, Muslims living in the West were altogether innocent of any involvement in the 9-11 attack. Picking up this theme, I think Nikkei writers are attempting to foster a more understanding public.

Q: Please give some advice for young researchers who may be thinking about doing research in Japan.

Take the plunge! Many have done so enjoyably and successfully before you. Japan's Ministry of Education and Science and JSPS generally receive amazing reviews for their international programs. Though not essential, it can help to learn some Japanese and as much as you can about the country and its culture before coming here. Pack light as you can get everything you'll need here. Start preparing to apply for your fellowship very early on, as it takes time to find and develop a relationship with a host researcher. My host Prof. Takezawa has been wonderful personally and professionally. I think that's partly because we started collaborating almost a year before my JSPS fellowship actually started. It can also take time to prepare a winning proposal. I found that I needed to write at least three drafts of my proposal and ask several people to look at it before I was confident enough to think that I had a good chance!

In our interview with Dr. De Souza, we found his research to be as unique as interesting. Of course, all eras of Japanese literature from the Tale of Genji to works of Nobel laureates in literature Kawabata Yasunari and Oe Kenzaburo are studied exhaustibly



in Western universities. Dr. De Souza's study, in contrast, delves into a much less explored component of the body of Japanese literature. It would seem that there are marked differences in Nikkei experience and thought vis-à-vis those of Japanese in Japan. Dr. De Souza says that Nikkei writers are liberal. It's imagined that their liberalism is more Western than Japanese, not to mention their slant on the "far right." Being neither Japanese nor Nikkei himself, Dr. De Souza's posture gives him a unique focal point in researching not only the literature of the Nikkei but also the ethnic identity and socio-political bent underlying it. We believe that his analysis and findings can in a uniquely multicultural way inform the research of his Japanese colleagues.

Introducing Japan: Kyoto City

Kyoto University, or Kyodai, is located in the eastern part of Kyoto, so it is where I spend most of my time. There are many famous sights in this area such as Ginkaku-ji (Silver Pavilion) and Nanzen-ji (temple complex). Two of my favorite places are Heian Shrine and the Philosopher's Path (Tetsugaku-no-michi). I love the proximity of Heian Shrine, just five minutes from my dormitory. I know the days and times when the shrine is less crowded and I can enjoy its calmness and familiarity. It's by no means Kyoto's most impressive historical sight but is very special to my friends and me because it's local. Lined with hundreds of cherry trees, the

Philosopher's Path runs about two kilometers along the Lake Biwa Canal between Ginkaku-ji and Nanzen-ji. Just a short distance from the university, the path is named after the late Kyodai philosopher Nishida Kitaro, who walked it for daily meditation and in whose footsteps I now stumble along while thinking about my own work. I find Kyoto's serenity to be very conducive to thinking. Also evocative of drama and passion, it is no surprise that Kyoto provides the setting for famous Japanese novels, such as Murasaki Shikibu's 11th century *The Tale of Genji*, Mishima Yukio's *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*, and Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a Geisha*.



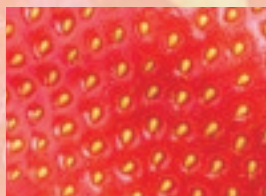
Much of the fun of Kyoto—perhaps even more so now that every major sight tends to be clogged with tourists – is finding new places off the beaten path. Kyoto never fails to surprise. Just recently when attempting a shortcut from Kyodai to Ginkaku-ji, I discovered a wonderful shrine that I had no idea existed! I always love to discover new places in this way, especially restaurants. In Kyoto, the quality of eateries and cuisine is so uniformly good that it's well-worth taking a chance on eating at places of serendipitous discovery. Of course, I'm not going to tell you the names of all my favorite places. Part of the fun is finding places for yourself and making Kyoto your own city.



Philosopher's Path



Heian Shrine



Cover photo:

Though strawberry eating has only become popular in Japan over the past 50 years or so, the country is now one of the world's largest strawberry producers, having created a myriad of varieties with such names as "scent of first love," "lovely princess," and "ruby cheeks."

About JSPS

The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) operates as an independent administrative institution to perform the following main functions: fund scientific research, foster researchers, promote international scientific exchange, and advance university reform.

Crowing Rooster



From days of old in Japan, it has been the belief that the vigorous cry of the rooster in the gray of the morning augurs the coming of a new and bright day. As the crowing rooster can therefore be thought of as a harbinger of the kind of new knowledge that promises a brilliant future for humankind, it was chosen as the emblem of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. This emblem was designed in 1938 by Professor Sanzo Wada of Tokyo Fine Arts School to depict the rooster that symbolizes the breaking dawn in a verse composed by Emperor Showa.

Contact Information quarterly@jsps.go.jp