

Newsletter

July 2024

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DISCOVER
JAPAN

Welcome to
Bizen City

Bizen City, located in southeastern part of Okayama Prefecture, faces the calm Seto Inland Sea and is blessed with rich nature surrounded by lush green mountains. The city is famous for its seafood from the Seto Inland Sea, such as fresh oysters, and its beautiful natural landscape, which spreads out to the north.

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Welcome to Bizen City

Furthermore, it is also well-known as a cultural site that boasts three 'Japan Heritage' certified items - 'Bizen Ware' with a thousand-year history, 'Shizutani School' which passes on the spirit of learning, and 'Port of Kitamae-bune', an old port of call that brought prosperity to many parts of Japan from mid-Edo to late Meiji period.



In January 1990, Yoshinaga Town and Clare and Gilbert Valley started a sister city relationship. Since the merger of Yoshinaga Town and Bizen City in 2005, Bizen City has taken over the relationship.

The two municipalities have deepened their bond by biennial mutual student exchanges, offering experiences such as homestays and tours of school facilities and so on. For example, in 2018, students from Clare & Gilbert Valley visited Bizen City and experienced *Mochitsuki* (rice cake pounding) and Bizen Ware pottery in Hattoji Furusato Village, as well as a visit to a childcare centre.

The following year, visits to wineries and primary schools were arranged for Bizen City students by Clare & Gilbert Valley,

where sheep farming and winemaking are the primary industries.

The mutual exchange was temporarily suspended due to the pandemic, but it resumed in 2023 after a 4-year interval.

From 17 to 26 August 2023, a friendship delegation consisting of 10 high school students from Bizen City and three chaperons (from the City Council and International Exchange Association) visited Clare & Gilbert Valley, where the students stayed with host families.



During the stay, they participated in a school visit, Australian football and an Aboriginal art program, and also enjoyed encounters with koalas and kangaroos. They were able to experience the differences between Australia and Japan firsthand through interactions with locals and immersion in their lifestyle and culture. The 33rd anniversary of the sister city affiliation was marked by the unveiling of a monument at an event attended by Clare & Gilbert Valley Council Mayor Allan Aughey and Bizen City Deputy Mayor Shuntaro Sugiura.



This year, the city is planning to host a delegation from Clare & Gilbert Valley from 30 September to 7 October. Bizen City will strive to further promote sister city exchanges and continue fostering friendship by implementing various mutual exchanges, including student exchanges.



News from CLAIR Sydney

School Exchange Opportunities

To support cultural exchange between schools in Japan and Australia/New Zealand, CLAIR Sydney has a dedicated page on our website that lists schools in Japan that are interested in initiating cultural exchange with schools in Australia/New Zealand.

Please click on the link or scan the QR code below for more information on the respective schools.

Should you be interested in a particular school, please get in touch with them!



[Schools interested in exchange opportunities - CLAIR Sydney \(jlgc.org.au\)](http://jlgc.org.au)



Announcement from Osaka Prefectural Government

Please see the information below about overseas promotional videos.

OPEN!! OSAKA -Information about starting a business in Osaka-

Osaka Prefecture has launched a program to effectively communicate the appeal of Osaka business and investment to a global audience of businesses, investors, and other stakeholders in the run-up to the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. The program seeks to raise interest in Osaka on the part of global business to spur tourism, encourage businesses to establish a presence in the area, promote investment, and facilitate business matching.

We've published a video introducing Osaka's business and investment appeal around five reasons that start with the letters O, S, A, K, and A on the prefecture's website and YouTube. There are also interviews with foreign companies that have come to Osaka and local startups embracing global challenges, so be sure to check it out. Please follow the prefecture on social media and share posts, too.

- **O (Openness):** Osaka, the city and people that enjoy doing business. Working together with partners across a diverse range of industries.
- **S (Smart investment):** Office space and employees can be acquired at a lower cost.
- **A (Accessibility):** Top-notch infrastructure to service convenient access throughout Japan and to the wider world.
- **K (Key to Japan):** Osaka is centre stage as the Kansai area sees continued development with the Osaka Expo drawing ever closer.
- **A (Assistance):** Subsidy systems and tax credits for foreign companies are fully implemented. Support services are also comprehensive and available.

For more information:

Website: <https://www.pref.osaka.lg.jp/.../renkei/openosaka/index.html>

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/@OsakaPrefPR_jp



PREF.OSAKA.LG.JP

OPEN!! OSAKA ~Information about starting a business in Osaka~

CLAIR Sydney June Activity Report

JET Programme Pre-departure Orientations in Brisbane, Sydney, Perth, Melbourne, Christchurch and Wellington (June 2024)

We attended the JET Programme Pre-Departure Orientation held by various overseas diplomatic establishments such as Embassies and Consulates in Australia and New Zealand. The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme is aimed to increase mutual understanding between the people of Japan and other nations and to promote internationalisation in Japan's local communities by improving foreign language education and developing international exchange at the community level. CLAIR works with three ministries, the Ministry of International Affairs and Communications, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.



At each orientation, the representatives from the establishment offered words of encouragement to new JET participants and wished for their success in Japan.

Subsequently, JET program coordinators provided explanations regarding travel to Japan and important precautions. We, the CLAIR office in Sydney, explained the role of CLAIR in the JET Programme and the training and support we offer to them.

Furthermore, members of each JETAA chapters provided information and advice on various aspects of life in Japan, including some tips for teaching, effective ways of building relationships with students, workplace culture/environment in Japan, commuting conditions, and financial matters. Many of the new JET participants had prior experience visiting Japan and eagerly anticipated for their travel to Japan, as observed through their active participation in the question-and-answer session.

We hope that all participants not only deepen their understanding of Japan but also contribute to the mutual exchange and act as a bridge between Japan and Australia/New Zealand through their experiences in Japan.

For more information about the JET Programme, please visit the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/clair.syd/posts/668799495432848>



CLAIR Sydney at the 30th Lismore Lantern Parade (22 June 2024)



On Saturday, 22 June, the Lantern Parade was held in Lismore, New South Wales. The CLAIR Sydney office was invited by the City of Lismore to participate in this event.

Lismore and Yamatotakada in Nara Prefecture were the first cities to establish a sister city relationship between Australia and Japan, celebrating their 60th anniversary last year. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Lismore Lantern Parade, and the CLAIR Sydney office joined the parade, carrying a lantern of Yamatotakada's mascot character, Miku-chan, alongside the people of Lismore. It is said that over 30,000 people gathered along the parade route to watch, and once again, Miku-chan was a big hit.



The CLAIR Sydney office will continue to actively support sister city exchange activities.

From the Executive Director

Attractions of the JET Programme

It's that time of year again. Many of our new JET Programme participants have departed for Japan.

The JET Programme, which began in 1987, aims to foster mutual understanding between the people of Japan and the rest of the world. Thanks to over three decades of excellent work and positive attitudes from participants, the JET Programme has grown into one of the world's largest international exchange programs, earning an outstanding reputation both in Japan and overseas.

This year, 114 new participants from Australia and 66 from New Zealand will join us. They will live and work across Japan's diverse climates, from the northern reaches of Hokkaido Prefecture to the southern tip of Okinawa Prefecture. JET participants bring their own cultural backgrounds into play, enriching their communities and deepening their understanding of Japanese culture.

At the same time, living in Japan provides a valuable opportunity for participants to gain a new perspective on their home countries. By experiencing Japan's lifestyle and customs, national character, and social systems, such as its education system, participants can develop a deeper understanding of their own countries in contrast. Additionally, learning how their home countries are perceived abroad can offer fresh insights. This is something I have strongly felt after living in Australia for two years.

We hope our participants will make the most of their time in the JET Programme, gaining many exciting and unique experiences that they will cherish long after they leave. We are confident that they will all thrive in Japan.

If you are interested in the JET Programme, please see below for more information.

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Level 12, Challis House, 4 Martin Place, Sydney NSW 2000 Australia

Tel: 61-2-9241-5033