

Newsletter

June 2024

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DISCOVER JAPAN

Welcome to Nara City

Welcome to Nara City!

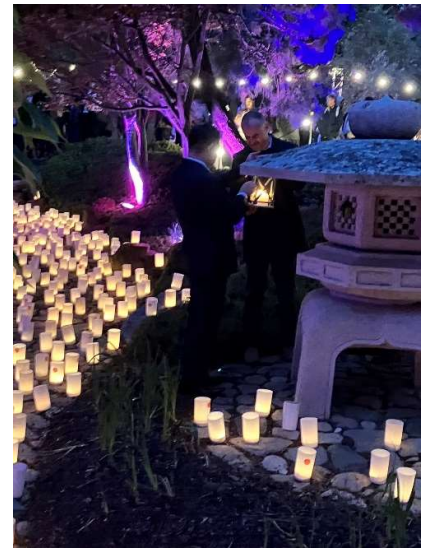
Nara City, located in the Kansai region of western Japan, boasts a population of approximately 350,000 (as of 1 Feb 2024). It is easily accessible from large cities in Kansai such as Osaka and Kyoto, as well as from Tokyo, Japan's capital, which is just a three-hour train and bullet train ride away. Renowned for its rich history, Nara City served as the capital of ancient Japan in the 8th century. It is the only place in the world where you can see a unique sight: more than 1,200 wild deer freely roam and coexist with local people.

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Welcome to Nara City

The city's beauty shines in every season. In spring, visitors can enjoy cherry blossoms at Nara Park, listed as one of Japan's Top 100 Cherry Blossom Spots. In summer, there is the candle-lit event "Nara Tokae", the origin of the "Canberra Nara Candle Festival".



There are many attractive seasonal and historical events throughout autumn to winter as well, making it a destination worth visiting year-round.



Last year was significant in the city's history, with several notable events. One such event was the 25th anniversary of the inscription of its 8 cultural sites - Todaiji Temple, built in the 8th century, Kohfukuji Temple, Kasugataisha Shrine, Kasugayama Primeval Forest, Gangoji Temple, Yakushiji Temple, Toshodaiji Temple and Nara Palace Site - as "Cultural Properties of Ancient Nara" on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Additionally, Nara City celebrated the 30th anniversary of its sister city affiliation with Canberra on 26 October. The following month, a delegation led by the Nara City Mayor Gen Nakagawa, visited Canberra to commemorate this significant milestone. The delegation expressed their appreciation to the Chief Minister of ACT, Andrew Barr and to all who have supported the sister city relationship for their achievements and heartwarming cooperation thus far.



During their time in Canberra, the delegation paid a visit to the Australian War Memorial, where they reflected on the history of World War II. This visit reaffirmed their appreciation for the collaborative efforts to reconstruct the Australia-Japan relationship after the war and emphasised the importance of strengthening ties with Canberra as a historical city that values peace.

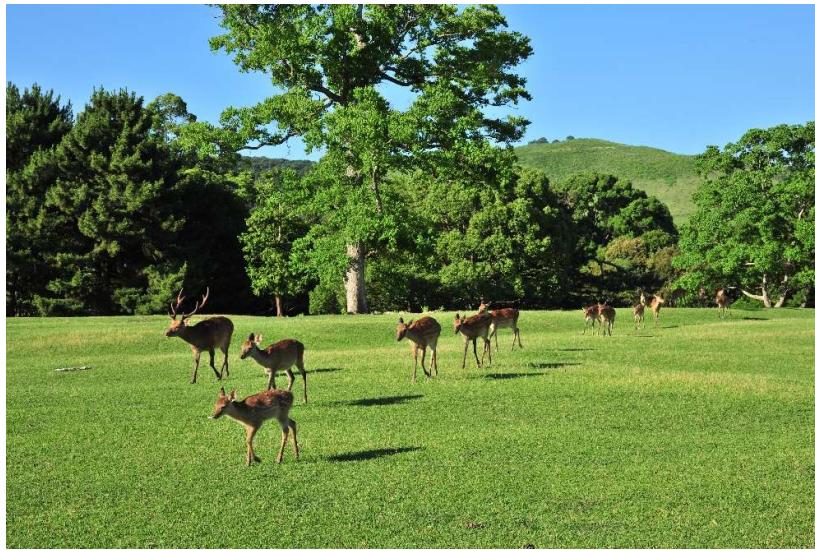
Currently, Nara City is moving towards the next 30 years with the aim of celebrating the 60th anniversary of its sister city relationship with Canberra. Building on this relationship, the city hopes to further contribute to the development of a stronger bilateral relationship between Australia and Japan.



Nara City aims to share its charm not only with the people of Canberra but also with those in other cities in Australia and New Zealand.

Last year, the city launched a new slogan, “Old History, New Discovery”. Even after more than a thousand years since its establishment as the capital, Nara City continues to boast beautiful landscapes and traditional crafts of the old capital. Additionally, new tourist spots, cultural works, and exchanges

between people are continually being developed. Nara City looks forward to welcoming visitors to experience its beauty firsthand.



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 \(jilgc.org.au\)](https://www.jilgc.org.au)



Introducing our new staff



Hana GLEESON, Research & Liaison Officer

Hi my name is Hana Gleeson, a new Research & Liaison Officer at CLAIR. I was born in Tokyo, Japan, and grew up in the North Shore area here in Sydney, Australia. After completing my Bachelors at Sydney University, and a Masters in Translation at Macquarie University, I worked in Tokyo for 6 years as a professional translator.

The highlights of working in Tokyo was being seconded to Toyota Tokyo Office and working on Toyota CEO 's speeches, the Toyota Global Website and the English Toyota Times website, as well as working for the Tokyo Metropolitan Government in writing articles for their Tokyo Updates website and translating Tokyo Governor, Yuriko Koike's, speeches.

I currently live in Roseville with my husband, and enjoy catching the ferry to different suburbs, and shopping at the Sydney Markets, Costco and Op Shops on weekends.

I am very excited and honoured to be able to continue working for Japan here in Sydney with highly talented and intelligent government representatives, and look forward to learning more about the important cultural ties that exist and the many cultural exchanges that occur between Japan and Australia, with Japan being considered Australia's most trusted global power and Australia's best friend in Asia (according to the 2024 Lowy Institute Poll).

Announcement from Tottori Prefectural Government

Please see the information below about “The 13th Annual Manga Kingdom Tottori International Comic Art Contest.”

Grand Prize ¥500,000

SUBMISSIONS WANTED!

13th Annual Manga Kingdom Tottori International Comic Art Contest

Deadline: 31 August

Submissions are OPEN for the 13th installment of the Manga Kingdom Tottori International Comic Art Contest, which includes a ‘U-15 Youth Manga Artist Prize’ for entrants aged 15 years and under. The contest is open to artists worldwide and works will be accepted in any language!

This year’s theme is ‘Scent’.

Entries will be accepted until 31 August, Saturday (JST).

The Grand Prize winner will receive a cash prize of ¥500,000. Other successful entrants will also be invited to Tottori Prefecture for the award ceremony and the winning works will be compiled into a published collection. Be sure to get your entries in before the deadline!

Website: (EN) https://www.pref.tottori.lg.jp/mangacontest_13/eng/



Announcement from Kitakyushu City Government

Please see the information below about “Kitakyushu International Manga Competition.”

Send us your great four-panel manga!!

Kitakyushu International Manga Competition



Kitakyushu Manga Museum is accepting applications for four-panel manga.

<Entry Details>

Division: General Division, Junior Division (Age 12 or under as of 1 April, 2025)

*Professional and amateur

Theme: “PLAY” (theme for the general and junior categories)

Work: Original, unpublished work of your own

Application period : From 11:00 AM (Japan Standard Time) on Saturday, 1 June, 2024
To 2:00 PM (Japan Standard Time) on Monday, 2 September, 2024

<Announcement of awarded works >

The winners will be published in early December 2024 on the official Kitakyushu International Manga Competition website, along with prize-winning works and excellent entries.

<Application method >

All applications will be accepted on the official website.

Fill out the application form and upload the data file of each work.

Website:(EN) <https://kitakyushu-mangataisho.com/en/>

Inquiry about the submission of your work: manga@kitakyushu-mangataisho.com

Other inquiries: manga@city.kitakyushu.lg.jp

Kitakyushu International Manga Competition Application Requirements

Purpose of Kitakyushu International Manga Competition
Widely disseminating the charm and potential of Manga from Kitakyushu in order to spread manga culture throughout Japan and abroad.

GENERAL DIVISION (Age 12 or older as of April 1, 2024)
● "Play" (Theme for the general and junior categories)
● We are not accepting free choice themes.

GENERAL DIVISION
● Original, unpublished work of your own

Application period
From 11:00 AM (Japan Standard Time) on Saturday, June 1, 2024, to 2:00 PM (Japan Standard Time) on Monday, September 2, 2024.

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|---|-------------------------------|
| Grand Prize (Grand Prix) | 300,000 yen |
| General Division Overseas Participant Award | 200,000 yen |
| Manga Museum Award | 100,000 yen |
| TOKIWA Creator Award | 100,000 yen |
| Junior Division (Child's work) | Junior Award |
| | Manga Artist Introductory Set |

Final screening The organizer will conduct an initial screening. (Final screening) The judges will conduct the final screening of works passing the initial screening.

Judges ● (Chair Judge) Seizo Watabe (Member, Kitakyushu Manga Museum) ● (Judge) Shochi Miyajima (Manga artist) ● (Judge) Takahiro Miyajima (Manga artist) ● (Judge) Takahiro Miyajima (Manga artist)

[Announcement of awarded works]
The winners will be published in early December 2024 on the official Kitakyushu International Manga Competition website. <https://kitakyushu-mangataisho.com/en/>, along with prize-winning works and excellent entries.

[Application rules]
● Each work must be a four-panel manga strip. Each four-panel manga must consist of a single page, but each panel can be on two pages, three, and four panels. Each applicant can submit up to five works. Each work must be completed in four panels. Each work must be completed in four panels. (You may use the same character and work over it in all your works.)

[Application method]
All applications will be accepted on the official website. Fill out the application form and upload the data file of each work.

[Application rates]
● Each work must be a four-panel manga strip. Each four-panel manga must consist of a single page, but each panel can be on two pages, three, and four panels. Each applicant can submit up to five works. Each work must be completed in four panels. Each work must be completed in four panels. (You may use the same character and work over it in all your works.)

[Application rates]
● Number of panels: Around 3,000 px x 4,000 px
● Manga format: JP2D format (in PDF or grayscale)
● The color in CMYK format or a published requirement will be accepted.
● Works in color or monochrome and any language are acceptable.

CLAIR Sydney April/May Activity Report

40th Anniversary of Sister City Relationship between Koshigaya City and Campbelltown (11 April 2024)

On 11 April, a ceremony was held to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the sister city relationship between Koshigaya City in Saitama Prefecture and Campbelltown City in NSW. Over the past four decades since the establishment of the sister city relationship on 11 April, 1984, the two cities have strengthened their bond through mutual visits by students and council staff.

During the ceremony, participants acknowledged the significance of the sister city relations in fostering multicultural understanding and pledged to work towards further enhancing the future relations, aiming for the advancement of both cities.

We remain committed to supporting and promoting the sister city exchanges between Koshigaya City and Campbelltown City in the future.



Cowra Kōyō MATSURI Oration and Mayoral Reception (3-4 May 2024)

The "Cowra Kōyō MATSURI (Autumn Leaves Festival)" was held on 3 and 4 May in the city of Cowra, located in the interior of New South Wales, Australia and known for its deep ties with Japan. The festival aimed to celebrate both Japan's Greenery Day and Children's Day.





We received an invitation from Cowra City and participated in the Kōyō Mayoral Reception. We had the opportunity to hear the Koyo oration by the writer and translator Roger Pulvers, experience an Urasenke style tea ceremony demonstration, and engage in discussions with stakeholders. Through these activities, we were able to reaffirm the post-war reconciliation and friendship between Japan and Australia.

Moreover, as this year marks the 80th anniversary of the Cowra Breakout, we also visited sites such as the Japanese war cemetery and the former prisoner of war camp.

We will continue to strive to promote friendly exchanges between the cities wishing for peace and to strengthen the ties between Japan and Australia.



The Kodomo no Hi Japan Festival in South Australia (5 May 2024)

On Sunday, 5 May, the Kodomo no Hi Japan Festival was held in the City of West Torrens, bordering the City of Adelaide, the capital city of South Australia.

This Japanese festival, held since 1995, celebrates cultural and social ties between the people of Japan and Australia. CLAIR Sydney has been hosting a booth at this event for four consecutive years.

We promoted tourism from various regions across Japan, including Okayama Prefecture, South Australia's sister state, and Himeji City in Hyogo Prefecture, Adelaide's sister city.



Many people visited our booth, including those planning their first trip within the year and those who have already been to Japan and are looking for their next travel destination within the country.

We conducted a survey regarding experiences of visiting the country, including questions such as "What places in Japan would you recommend visiting?".

Many visitors kindly shared their answers and enthusiastically explained their travel routes to us using the map of Japan set up at our booth. Others nostalgically showed us memorable photos from their trips.



It was a great pleasure to witness the growing enthusiasm for future visits to Japan through these interactions. CLAIR Sydney will continue to promote all of Japan and attract tourists, building on our efforts in municipal PR at Japanese festivals.

We sincerely thank everyone who visited our booth! See you again!



Australia-Japan Society of NSW University Awards 2024 (14 May 2024)

The Australia-Japan Society of NSW (AJS-NSW) hosted the University Awards Night at The Japan Foundation, Sydney, on Tuesday, 14 May. University students studying Japanese and have obtained exceptional academic achievements were presented with the awards by Mr Shuichi Tokuda, Consul-General of Japan in Sydney.



During their acceptance speeches, the award winners shared their journeys of becoming interested in the Japanese language, the joy of learning Japanese, and their future goals in life. In the networking session that followed, AJS-NSW affiliates and representatives from various Japanese organisations praised the award recipients' efforts.

CLAIR Sydney has been strengthening ties with AJS-NSW through our participation in events hosted by the society, such as this University Awards Night. We look forward to further deepening our relationships with AJS-NSW and other Japan-related organisations.



Japan Festival 2024 in Victoria (19 May 2024)



On 19 May, Japan Festival 2024 took place at Box Hill Town Hall in Whitehorse City, located in the metropolitan area of Melbourne, Victoria. This event aimed to contribute to the cultural exchange between Japan and Australia by introducing Japanese culture and customs, offering a delightful experience for all attendees.

Visitors immersed themselves in Japanese culture, enjoying *Wadaiko* (Japanese drum) performances and traditional Japanese dance, along with engaging in activities like kimono and cosplay contests. They also indulged in Japanese street food, including *takoyaki* (octopus balls) and *tonjiru* (pork miso soup), as they strolled through the food stalls.

At the CLAIR Sydney booth, we showcased and promoted the JET Programme (Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme) in collaboration with JETAA (JET Alumni Association) providing travel information about various regions of Japan. Many visitors came to our booth seeking insights into popular tourist destinations and locations where they could relish snow during the winter season. Some had already made plans to visit Japan starting from the upcoming autumn or winter, and it was impressive to witness people discussing specific sightseeing itineraries.

Additionally, there were inquiries about sister cities such as Aichi Prefecture (the sister state of Victoria), Osaka City (the sister city of Melbourne), and Matsudo City (the sister city of Whitehorse City).

Furthermore, visitors sought information and brochures for regions they had yet to explore, including internationally renowned tourist destinations like Kyoto and Hokkaido. It was evident that there is an increasing interest in inbound demand, post the COVID-19 pandemic.

Going forward, we will continue to support the promotion of local governments in various regions of Japan, fostering stronger connections between the people of Japan and Australia and further igniting interest in Japan.



Supporting Activity for Aomori Prefecture (19 May 2024)

On 19 May, the Snow Travel Expo 2024 was held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. The expo is a comprehensive ski show attended by representatives from ski resorts, ski and snowboard equipment retailers, and travel agencies from all around the world. CLAIR Sydney assisted the local governments of Aomori Prefecture at the Aomori booth in promoting the ski resorts and accommodations in their local areas.

The event drew many travel agents and individual travellers searching for new destinations. The Aomori booth was bustling with visitors eager to learn about resorts perfect for long family stays and locations offering breathtaking winter activities.





Among the attendees were those who had visited Japan over ten times and were seeking new scenic spots they had yet to explore.

We highlighted not only skiing and snowboarding but also unique Japanese experiences such as hot springs and traditional cuisine. This expo was a great opportunity to promote tourism from Australia to Aomori.

CLAIR Sydney will continue to support local governments in their promotional activities in Australia.



Activity Support for Yamagata City, Yamagata Prefecture (21 May 2024)

On Tuesday, 21 May, Deputy Mayor Takashi Inoue of Yamagata City, Yamagata Prefecture, along with Yamagata City officials and representatives from local tourism businesses, including the CEO of DMC Zao Onsen Tourism Committee Co., Ltd., visited the CLAIR Sydney office.

The delegation participated in the Melbourne Snow Travel Expo held on Sunday, 19 May, where they promoted Yamagata City to attract inbound tourism. Furthermore, on Monday, 20 May, they visited Swan Hill, Victoria, their sister city, to exchange views with the city's mayor and other officials.

During their visit to the CLAIR Sydney office, we presented an overview of Australia and shared feedback we received about visits to Japan from our participation in local events, leading to a lively exchange of ideas on attracting inbound tourists.

The CLAIR Sydney office will continue to support the overseas activities of Japanese municipalities striving to attract inbound tourism.



From the Executive Director

Difference in the local government revenue structure in Japan and Australia/New Zealand

I became interested in the difference in the revenue structure of the local government in Japan and Australia/New Zealand, while revising the “Local Government of Australia and New Zealand” guidebook that I mentioned in the April issue of this newsletter. I would like to introduce the revenue structure of the Japanese local government from the perspective of this difference.

Looking at the revenue breakdown of all local governments in the 2021/22 financial year, in Australia, taxation revenue was 37.9%, sales of goods and services were 26.0%, current grants and subsidies were 14.5% and so on. In New Zealand, taxation revenue was 60.0%, grants, subsidies, and donation income were 15.2% and so on. On the other hand, in Japan, the breakdown of local government revenue in FY2021 was 28.7% from taxation revenue, 29.0% from national and prefectural government disbursements, 13.2% from local allocation tax, 7.4% from local government bonds and so on. While taxation revenue accounts for a large portion of local government revenue in Australia and New Zealand, in Japan, national and prefectural government grants and local allocation tax revenues account for a large portion of local government revenue, and local government bonds also finance their revenue as well.

While, in Australia and New Zealand, the main source of taxation revenue for local governments is basically rates (property tax), in Japan, in addition to rates (property tax) levied on land, houses and buildings, and depreciable assets, there are local inhabitant taxes on residents, consisting of a flat rate plus 6% of personal income, and local inhabitant taxes on corporations, consisting of a flat rate plus 6% of the corporate tax amount.

In addition, since there is an imbalance in local tax revenues among the local governments, the local allocation tax is granted to adjust this imbalance and to guarantee financial resources to provide a certain level of administrative services to citizens living in any region. The local allocation tax is financed by a certain percentage of national income tax, corporate tax, liquor tax and consumption tax, as well as the full amount of local corporate tax. This local allocation tax is positioned as an intrinsic revenue source of local governments, with no restrictions on its use.

Local government bonds are loans taken out over a single financial year and in principle are used to cover a certain proportion of investment expenses (expenses related to construction projects).

These are the major differences in the local government revenue structure of Japan and Australia/New Zealand. We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss these differences between Japan and Australia/New Zealand with you.



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