

Report for Fiscal 2010

The Toyota Foundation



THE TOYOTA FOUNDATION

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This annual report was compiled on the basis of the Japanese-language reports of activities for fiscal 2010 (April 1, 2010, to March 31, 2011) and approved at the third meeting of the Board of Trustees held on June 27, 2011. Please refer to our website (<http://toyotafound.or.jp/english>) for a list of grant recipients for each of our programs. The website also allows you to search for grant recipients by selecting the program category and specific fiscal year, and contains detailed accounting data as well as the names of Toyota Foundation officers and trustees.

Report for Fiscal 2010

Foundation Activities

Overview

The Toyota Foundation in fiscal 2010 engaged in the key activities listed below to clarify its future direction in line with becoming a public interest incorporated foundation, while taking into consideration the rapid changes in the situation in Japan and overseas and the changes in the social structure, as well as the continuing deflationary period.

Main Activities

- A. Established a new vision to correspond to significant changes currently taking place, based on the Prospectus and in line with the Foundation's transformation into a public interest incorporated foundation.
- B. Reviewed the social outcomes and benefits of grant programs up to now, and proactively examined and reconsidered the future grant methods both in Japan and overseas.
- C. Implemented more efficient administration and established a more stable financial basis.

I. Establishing "Vision 2010"

The Foundation formulated "Vision 2010: Building a Better Future" in June 2010. The vision formulates a medium- to long-term plan that aims to contribute to the realization of greater safety and security by creating new "softer" ties in contemporary society, which today confronts a range of new issues, thereby building a better future.

II. Grant Program Implementation

- A. The Foundation has actively engaged in communication with grant recipients in the course of verifying the situation at project sites and holding symposiums and other events; this has enhanced activities in a way that has led to greater results.
- B. As a part of rethinking grant programs, and based on "Vision 2010: Building a Better Future," the Foundation has analyzed the grant applications for each program to clarify the tasks at hand.

1. Grant Program for Community Activities

(1) Grant Activities

- A. In its third year, the program has continued its fundamental philosophy and framework, accepting applications under the key theme of "Forming a Sustainable Framework Within the Locality: Toward a New Community of Self-Support and Symbiosis." Thanks to measures that included extending the application period and offering explanatory presentations, the number of applications received was 709, a 14.5% increase over the previous year.
- B. The Foundation aimed to enhance the understanding of local issues and raise the level of grant projects by ascertaining the status of symposiums, workshops, and project sites.
- C. Results of the Special Subject Remote Island Grants were compiled and symposiums were held.

(2) Reviewing and Rethinking the Grant Program for Community Activities

Fiscal 2011 Grant Program (application period scheduled to begin in September 2011) Theme: “Connecting People, Activating Localities: Creating Frameworks to Forge New Communities” Areas: Creating frameworks for self-support Creating frameworks for symbiosis Creating frameworks for nurturing people
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- A. The emphasis is on structures for bringing people together and on community design from the perspective of changing lifestyles to promote proactive participation in society.
- B. Efforts are being made to verify which areas and fields have not been adequately reflected in problem-resolution frameworks, and then to actively provide grants in those areas and fields.
- C. Based on a review of the status of applications for the period from fiscal 2008 to 2010, the Foundation is maintaining the same fundamental framework while responding to issues now facing Japan. (Review was conducted from the perspective of analyzing application numbers in terms of community characteristics, such as the scale of each municipality and its population density, and of analyzing the trends for application themes.)

2. Asian Neighbors Program

(1) Grant Activities

- A. In the second year since the program’s name was changed from “Asian Neighbors Network Program” to “Asian Neighbors Program,” the fundamental philosophy and framework have been maintained, with applications accepted under the basic theme of “Toward Community Formation Based on Mutual Reliance and Collaboration.” We received 354 applications from Asia, for an 11% increase over the previous year. However, while the applications were quite specific in terms of placing an emphasis on resolving issues, many of them were inadequate in terms of their ripple effect, and the number chosen to receive grants was therefore limited.
- B. We aimed to raise the level of grant projects by enhancing our efforts to verify the status of project implementation sites.

(2) Reviewing and Rethinking the Asian Neighbors Program

Fiscal 2011 Grant Program (applications opened in April 2011) Theme: “Shared Actions to Build Our Future Asia” Areas: Fostering mutual understanding and social actors Enhancing sustainable communities Forging social systems to address local issues

- A. The theme was established to seek projects that contribute to the realization of a safe and secure society in Asia.
- B. The grant framework was arranged in line with a review conducted of issues facing various communities in Asia, from the viewpoint of factors including the status of grant applications. (Review was conducted from the perspective of analyzing the grant application themes for each of the three areas: Southeast, South, and East Asia.)
- C. The framework was established to proactively support projects aimed at solving issues involving multiple countries or regions.

(3) Special Subject: Preservation, Utilization, and Transmission of Indigenous Documents in Asia
The Foundation has changed the framework of this grant to solicit applications for projects that

comprehensively engage in the preservation, utilization, and transmission needed to safeguard indigenous documents. We received 68 applications from Asia, which was 8% lower than the previous year's number. We will be suspending applications for fiscal 2011 in order to verify the results and ripple effect over the six years of this special subject grant—which was initiated in 2005 as a special subject for the Research Grant Program and in 2009 became a special subject of the Asian Neighbors Program—and to examine the future direction of this program category.

3. Research Grant Program

(1) Grant Activities

- A. The basic theme was “The Search for the Richness of Human Life and Activity,” and the three project areas were Society, Culture, and Nature. A total of 939 applications were submitted, for a 21% increase over the previous year. In terms of the selection process, projects that involved multiple project areas tended to be highly evaluated.
- B. We aimed to raise the level of grant projects by enhancing our effort to verify the status of project implementation sites.

(2) Reviewing and Rethinking the Research Grant Program

Fiscal 2011 Grant Program (applications opened in April 2011)
 Theme: “Exploring Knowledge to Build a Better Future”
 Areas: (Category A) Joint Research Grants
 1. Practical research that contributes to addressing challenges facing society
 2. Value-creation research aimed at forging a new society
 (Category B) Individual Research Grants

- A. Based on the results of the analysis of fiscal 2010 project applications, the Foundation established a framework emphasizing the process of research without specifying the specific area of research because there were many applications for projects spanning multiple areas. (Review was conducted from the perspective of analyzing the grant application themes for each of the three project areas [Society, Culture, and Nature] and verifying the relationships among them.)
- B. The Foundation strengthened those areas aimed at fostering individual research and young researchers.

4. Communication with Society Program

- A. The Foundation provided publication subsidies to release to the public the results of projects funded for the South Asian National Research Program during the 1999–2004 period.
- B. In order to uncover even more proactive projects in the upcoming fiscal year, the Foundation recalibrated the program's administration.

Grant Results

		Number of grants	Budget (¥ million)	Value of grants (¥ million)
Communication with Society Program	Fiscal 2010	1 (1 from non-Japanese)	20.0	0.478
	Fiscal 2009	1 (0 from non-Japanese)	20.0	3.8

Communication with Society Program Grant

Publication of *Taboo and Reality: Rape in Present-Day Vietnam* by Nguyen Thi Thu Huong, a Vietnamese graduate student researching social science at the University of Amsterdam

5. Initiative Program

We provided support to the Asian Emporiums Course of the Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program (SEASREP), and in line with this carried out discussions with SEASREP about future directions for fostering young researchers in Asia.

Grant Results

			Number of grants	Budget (¥ million)	Value of grants (¥ million)
Initiative Program	Initiative Grant	Fiscal 2010	–	20.0	–
	SEASREP	Fiscal 2010	1 (1 from non-Japanese)	3.0	2.978

Initiative Program Grant

Covered costs for Maria Serena I. Diokno, a Filipino who is executive director of SEASREP, to participate in SEASREP's Asian Emporiums Course

III. Bolstering Our Organizational Framework

(1) Improved Efficiency of Organizational Framework

- A. We began accepting applications online at our website to enhance the efficiency of application management.
- B. We administered our grant programs in a way that provided funding efficiently without depleting the Foundation's principal endowment.

(2) Improved Public Relations

A. Toyota Foundation Website

To mark our transformation into a public interest incorporated foundation, we redesigned our website to more actively provide information to the public (redesign completed in July 2011).

B. Publicity Newsletter

As in the previous year, the Foundation's publicity newsletter *JOINT* was published three times in fiscal 2010. In August, a special feature on the transition to a public interest incorporated foundation was published as part of publicity efforts for the Foundation's vision.

	Theme	Featured topic
Issue 4 (September 2010)	"Building a Better Future"	Vision 2010
Issue 5 (December 2010)	"Aiming for an Asia of Trust and Cooperation"	Asian Neighbors Program
Issue 6 (March 2011)	"Pursuing Synergy Between Research and Society"	Research Grant Program

IV. Fiscal 2010 Grants

		Number of applications	Number of grants	Budget (¥ million)	Value of grants (¥ million)
Grant Program for Community Activities		709	37	120.0	119.98
Asian Neighbors Program	Main Program	354	19 (11 from non-Japanese)	120.0	62.01
	Indigenous Documents in Asia (Special Subject)	68	12 (7 from non-Japanese)	30.0	30.0
Research Grant Program		939	45 (12 from non-Japanese)	150.0	126.7
Communication with Society Program		–	1 (1 from non-Japanese)	20.0	0.478
Initiative Program	Initiative Grant	–	0	20.0	0.0
	SEASREP	–	1 (1 from non-Japanese)	3.0	2.978
Total		–	115	463.0	342.146

V. Meetings

(1) Board of Directors

First meeting of the Board of Directors (Wednesday, June 9, 2010)

- A. Approval of business report (draft) and financial statements (draft) for fiscal 2009 (April 1, 2009, to March 31, 2010)
- B. Classification of investment securities at time of the Toyota Foundation's establishment as a public interest incorporated foundation
- C. Plan of operation (draft) and budget for income and expenditures (draft) for fiscal 2010 (April 1, 2010, to March 31, 2011)
- D. Appointment of selection committee members
* Grant Program for Community Activities; Asian Neighbors Program and Special Subject; Research Grant Program
- E. Approval of various rules
- F. Vision (draft) for the Toyota Foundation as a public interest incorporated foundation
- G. Convening of the first meeting of the Board of Trustees

Reports:

- A. Status of applications for fiscal 2010 Asian Neighbors Program and Research Grant Program
- B. Results of the March 2010 inspection of the former Toyota Foundation conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

Second meeting of the Board of Directors (Friday, June 18, 2010)

- A. Appointment of directors and administrative directors
- B. Appointment of the chairman, president, and managing director
- C. Appointment of honorary chairman and honorary advisors
- D. Approval of fiscal 2010 compensation for directors

Third meeting of the Board of Directors (Thursday, September 16, 2010)

- A. Determination of fiscal 2010 Research Grant Program grant recipients
- B. Determination of fiscal 2010 Asian Neighbors Program Special Subject grant recipients

- C. Approval of various rules
- D. Compensation in fiscal 2010 for audits conducted
- E. Determination of fiscal 2010 Asian Neighbors Program grant recipients

Reports:

- A. Status of performance of duties by the chairman, president, and managing director
- B. Fiscal 2010 grant award ceremony

Fourth meeting of the Board of Directors (Thursday, January 20, 2011)

- A. Specifying the date, location, and purpose of the second meeting of the Board of Trustees

Fifth meeting of the Board of Directors (Friday, March 25, 2011)

- A. Determination of fiscal 2010 Grant Program for Community Activities grant recipients
- B. Determination of fiscal 2010 Initiative Program grant recipients
- C. Determination of fiscal 2010 Communication with Society Program grant recipients
- D. Change in classification of finances at time of transition to new corporate status
- E. Compensation of directors
- F. Plan of operation (draft), budget for income and expenditures (draft), and other documents for fiscal 2011 (April 1, 2011, to March 31, 2012)
- G. Choice of (additional) selection committee members
- H. Review of the employment rules

Reports:

- A. Status of performance of duties by the chairman, president, and managing director
- B. Grant award ceremony for Grant Program for Community Activities

(2) Board of Trustees

First meeting of the Board of Trustees (Friday, June 18, 2010)

- A. Approval of business report (draft) and financial statements (draft) for fiscal 2009 (April 1, 2009, to March 31, 2010)
- B. Classification of investment securities at time of the Toyota Foundation's establishment as a public interest incorporated foundation
- C. Approval of rules (draft) concerning compensation and expenses for directors and trustees
- D. Approval of rules for administration of Board of Trustees
- E. Vision (draft) for Toyota Foundation as a public interest incorporated foundation
- F. Selection of directors

Reports:

- A. Plan of operation (draft) and budget for income and expenditures (draft) for fiscal 2010 (April 1, 2010, to March 31, 2011)
- B. Status of applications for fiscal 2010 Asian Neighbors Program and Research Grant Program
- C. Results of the March 2010 inspection of the former Toyota Foundation conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

Second meeting of the Board of Trustees (Friday, March 25, 2011)

- A. Change in classification of finances at time of transition to new corporate status

Reports:

- A. Plan of operation (draft) and budget for income and expenditures (draft) for fiscal 2011 (April 1, 2011, to March 31, 2012)

(3) Commission on the Foundation's Vision

Fifth meeting of the Commission on the Foundation's Vision (Monday, May 10, 2010)

Participants: President Atsuko Toyama, Director Setsuho Ikehata, Director Hiromitsu Ishi, Director Akira Suehiro, Director Masayuki Yamauchi, Managing Director Hiroki Kato

Sixth meeting of the Commission on the Foundation's Vision (Tuesday, May 25, 2010)

Participants: President Atsuko Toyama, Director Setsuho Ikehata, Director Hiromitsu Ishi, Director Akira Suehiro, Director Makoto Nagao, Director Masayuki Yamauchi, Trustee Shotaro Yachi, Managing Director Hiroki Kato

(4) Grant Program for Community Activities Selection Committee Meetings

Preliminary evaluation meeting (Friday, December 17, 2010)

Selection committee meeting (Monday, January 17, 2010)

(5) Asian Neighbors Program Selection Committee Meetings

Main program preliminary evaluation meeting (Tuesday, June 15, 2010)

Main program selection committee meeting (Tuesday, July 27, 2010)

Special Subject "Preservation, Utilization, and Transmission of Indigenous Documents in Asia" preliminary evaluation meeting (Wednesday, June 2, 2010)

Special Subject "Preservation, Utilization, and Transmission of Indigenous Documents in Asia" selection committee meeting (Saturday, July 10, 2010)

(6) Research Grant Program Selection Committee Meetings

Preliminary evaluation meeting (Thursday, June 10, 2010)

Selection committee meeting (Thursday, July 22, 2010)

(7) Grant Presentation Ceremonies

Grant Program for Community Activities (Saturday, April 17, 2010, at Amlux Tokyo)

Asian Neighbors Program and Research Grant Program (Wednesday, October 13, 2010, at Amlux Tokyo)

(8) Program Meetings

First program meeting (Tuesday, April 27, 2010)

Second program meeting (Wednesday, May 26, 2010)

Third program meeting (Tuesday, June 29, 2010)

Fourth program meeting (Thursday, July 29, 2010)

Fifth program meeting (Tuesday, August 31, 2010)

Sixth program meeting (Wednesday, September 29, 2010)

Seventh program meeting (Wednesday, October 27, 2010)

Eighth program meeting (Thursday, November 25, 2010)

Ninth program meeting (Thursday, January 6, 2011)

10th program meeting (Wednesday, January 26, 2011)

11th program meeting (Wednesday, March 30, 2011)

Expenditures for Grants

Upper rows: Grant amounts (¥ million)
 Lower rows: No. of grants awarded
 As of March 31, 2011

	1975–2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
Grant Program for Community Activities	189.5 176	100.0 90	118.2 48	106.6 36	120.0 37	634.3 387
Asian Neighbors Program	158.6 47	120.0 39	109.3 14	138.5 34	92.0 31	618.5 165
Research Grant Program	6,825.2 2,189	205.0 70	180.0 39	145.0 44	126.7 45	7,481.8 2,387
Communication with Society Program	—	—	4.0 1	3.8 1	0.5 1	8.3 3
Initiative Program	—	—	27.8 20	11.9 2	3.0 1	42.7 23
Citizen-activities-related grants*	1,050.4 606	—	—	—	—	1,050.4 606
Southeast Asia-related grants**	4,085.5 2,917	25.9 24	—	—	—	4,111.4 2,941
Other grant programs***	2,030.4 835	33.6 16	—	—	—	2,064.0 851
Total	14,339.6 6,770	484.5 239	439.3 122	405.8 117	342.1 115	16,011.4 7,363

Notes: Because the figures above are rounded to the nearest decimal point, they may not add up precisely to the totals.

* Grants for Citizen Activities, Projects on Civil Society, and Citizen Research Contest

** International Grants, SEANRP, Young Indonesian Researchers Program, “Know Our Neighbors” Translation-Publication Programs, and SEASREP

*** Fellowship Program, Foundation Initiative Grant Program, and Research Report Grant Program

I. Grant Program for Community Activities

Overview and Grant Results

Program Overview

Basic theme	Forming a Sustainable Framework Within the Locality: Toward a New Community of Self-Support and Symbiosis
Project areas	A. Creating frameworks for self-support B. Creating frameworks for symbiosis C. Creating frameworks for nurturing people
Grant amounts	Around ¥3 million per project per year
Total amount of grants	¥120 million
Period of grants	One or two years, beginning on April 1, 2011
Application period	September 8 to November 8, 2010

Grant Results

	Number of applications	Number of grants	Budget (¥ million)	Value of grants (¥ million)
Fiscal 2010	709	37	120.0	119.98
Fiscal 2009	619	36	120.0	106.56

Workshops Held for Grant Applicants

Date	Location	Theme
April 18	Tokyo	Searching for the Ideal Image of a Social Community: The Path to Take in the Next Decade and Half-Century
May 15	Yamagata	
June 19	Kurayoshi	
March 6	Amakusa	The Wisdom of Learning from Islands for Community Building: From Ideas to Action in Amakusa (Special Subject Remote Island Grants)

Symposiums

Date	Location	Theme
May 16	Kochi	A Community Forged by Human Ties: The Power of Kochi to Support Women
March 7	Amakusa	The Wisdom of Learning from Islands for Community Building: From Ideas to Action in Amakusa (Special Subject Remote Island Grants)

Comments by Selection Committee Chair Yasuhide Nakamura

1. Creating Sustainable Frameworks Rooted in the Community

Local communities form the basic environments in which people live their lives, supported and nurtured by those around them. For some time there has been a widely acknowledged need for restructuring and revitalizing local communities throughout the country. Amid the turbulent changes caused by globalization and the twin problems of an aging population and dwindling birthrate, communities in many regions are threatened with exhaustion and decline. Nevertheless, there are numerous examples of successful attempts to create thriving, energetic communities.

The basic theme of the Toyota Foundation's Grant Program for Community Activities in fiscal 2010, as in the previous year, was "Forming a Sustainable Framework Within the Locality: Toward a New Community of Self-Support and Symbiosis." The considered projects had as their aim the establishment of frameworks to contribute in a practical and sustained manner to finding solutions for issues in local communities. Projects were in three priority areas: "self-support" (frameworks to provide nourishment for people's lives and greater self-sufficiency for communities), "symbiosis" (frameworks aimed at creating local communities in which groups of people with different standpoints and from different backgrounds can live together), and "nurturing" (frameworks to raise the cross-generational human resources—from children and youth to the elderly—who will sustain the present and future of communities).

We chose to support practical projects that promised to find solutions to important issues in local communities by forming sustainable frameworks within them. By supporting projects with well-defined timetables and clearly laid-out aims and methodologies, we hoped to not merely supplement bureaucrat-led activities but also provide meaningful support for the restructuring and revitalization of local communities.

Particular consideration was given to projects that were partly self-funded or had an independent source of support and that included measures to ensure sus-

tainable, ongoing framework creation and a ripple effect on society at large. We were also eager to ensure an appropriately wide range in terms of geographic coverage and the ages of the team members.

2. Toward a New Community of Self-Support and Symbiosis

Explanatory presentations, including individual consultations, were held in the cities of Gifu, Akita, Yamaguchi, Kobe, Kanazawa, Saga, Tokyo, and Utsunomiya during the application period, which ran from September 8 to November 8, 2010. Grant-funding seminars led by Toyota Foundation program officers were also hosted by intermediary support organizations in seven cities, at venues such as citizen activity support centers. A total of 709 applications were received, an increase of 14.5% from fiscal 2009. We received numerous applications involving ambitious projects that positioned local residents as the main actors and aimed to create frameworks by providing concrete solutions and also contributing to community restructuring and revitalization.

Starting in this fiscal year, in addition to the option of submitting an application by postal mail, we began providing the option to apply via the Toyota Foundation website. In total, 679 application forms were downloaded from the website (95.8% of all application forms distributed), and 406 (57.3%) of the total applications received were submitted online. The strong response, despite this being the first time to accept applications via the website for the Grant Program for Community Activities, attests to how well-versed many applicants are regarding procedures for submitting a form electronically.

A selection committee of four members gave careful consideration to the applications received. Somewhat surprisingly, all of the committee members' recommendations—made according to which projects each of them thought most attractive and realistic—corresponded very closely. Several projects that received particularly high praise from the selection committee are introduced below.

Opening a Candy Store in Kunitachi as a Hangout for Kids and Place for Different Generations to Meet (D10-L-1107)

Taeko Yoshimura, Candy Store “Kunichan” Hangout for Kids

The “Kunichan” candy store in the city of Kunitachi, located in the west of Tokyo, has been open for five years. On Saturdays it is bustling, with over a hundred children visiting it. Kunitachi is home to many elderly living alone, as well as many foreign residents. Providing this sort of hangout that can bring together isolated individuals contributes to building a community where people can feel more at home. We look forward to a range of volunteers working at the store, including retired elementary school teachers, foreign homemakers, university students, women with experience living abroad, and others who embody the distinctive aspects of Kunitachi.

A major key to creating sustainable frameworks rooted in the community is bringing together people across generational lines. Many of the applications received this fiscal year have been for projects to create “community cafés” as places for people to gather. It seems likely that the personal ties cultivated at these hangouts where people can feel at home will take deeper root over time.

Bringing Our Smiles Together for the Sake of Children: The “Dads’ Group” Business to Support a School and the Local Community (D10-L-1130)

Michihide Shinoda, Tsuru-ni Dads’ Group

The project takes place at Tsurukawa Daini Elementary School, located in the city of Machida in Tokyo. The “Dads’ Group,” created under the leadership of the school’s principal, has been carrying out activities for the past six years. Based on the results of these activities, the group has prepared educational materials to provide support to the school and has launched an initiative to use a local currency as a way of bolstering the community. The creation of a sense of community in new residential areas is an important task. The existence of a public elementary school with deep ties to the community also makes it easier for local shopkeepers to get involved. We want to encourage the fathers

who have gotten involved in Dads’ Group activities.

A school is the ideal place for people to create personal networks, because every year new students and their parents arrive on the scene. We have received other applications for projects aiming to create appealing frameworks centered on schools, including one that sought to make use of an abandoned school building located in a hilly area.

New Social Welfare Fostered by Everyone Together (D10-L-1183)

Koichi Sugahara, Support Club for Physically Disabled Workers in Kobe

Salaries among physically disabled workers tend to be surprisingly low. The starting point for this project was the keen desire to create more work opportunities for the disabled. The aim is to forge a new model of employment centered on the theme of food safety by bringing together those at welfare facilities, restaurants and bars, farmers, and other members of the community. One particularly appealing aspect of the project is that it involves the participation of cooks and pastry chefs who are plying their skills at local hotels.

Those in minority groups, such as the disabled or foreign residents, face greater challenges these days when it comes to creating sustainable frameworks rooted in their local communities. We hope that those involved in this project, by proactively implementing their plans, will come up with a framework that can involve the entire community.

Establishment of Lifestyles Utilizing the Resources of the Hilly/Mountainous Areas Through Cooperation Between Community and University: A Challenge of the Nuta Community in Otoyo Town, Kochi Prefecture (D10-L-1464)

Manabu Ujihara, Nutata Bounty Team

The town of Otoyo, located in a hilly area of Kochi Prefecture, is a community with a graying and dwindling population. People who originally hailed from the community and are now moving back link up with university professors, students, and people in the town’s Nuta community. This community has become a forum for university education with a practical out-

look through the creation of an environment in which children grow while learning how to cultivate the natural bounty of the mountainous area, via activities like burning fields, sawing wood from thinned forests, and organically growing rice on terraced paddies. We expect this cooperation between the community and university to serve as a model for invigorating communities that can be transmitted elsewhere.

This year there were few applications for projects in which universities play an active role within the local community. Since institutions of learning are full of curious and energetic students, when they can link practical research to local communities—rather than just carrying out research for its own sake—it becomes possible to share knowledge locally in a way that lives up to a university's true mission.

In addition to the projects introduced above, many other attractive proposals were received from all areas of the country. These ambitious and energetic projects established networks to unite diverse groups of people living inside and outside the region, and made use of the unique local resources to restructure and revitalize communities. There were also large numbers of applications from modest, long-term projects, and many designed to share and pass on to future generations the accumulation of local experience and wisdom.

Following extensive deliberations by the selection committee on January 17, 2011, involving careful re-examination of the grant proposals selected and their funding plans, the decision was made to recommend grants for 37 applications under the Grant Program for Community Activities (for a total of ¥119,980,000); of these, 28 applications are for two-year projects and 9 are for one-year projects.

3. Toward Further Development of the Grant Program for Community Activities

In the course of the selection process there were lively discussions on the issues that need to be addressed in regard to the Grant Program for Community Activities and its future outlook. As in previous years, there was vigorous debate regarding the relationship between the people in a local community and nonresidents who support their efforts, and regarding the question of the relationship between individual projects and the

Toyota Foundation's Grant Program for Community Activities.

Since December 2008, the Foundation has been actively holding symposiums on this program as forums for a diverse range of organizations and individuals involved in community activities to interact with each other. In March 2011, the latest gathering in this series was held in the city of Amakusa, Kumamoto Prefecture, drawing on previous seminars held in the cities of Fukuoka, Morioka, Hiroshima, Nagano, and Kochi, which had drawn together many community activists. For this year's symposium, we also benefited from the cooperation of such intermediary support organizations as citizen activity support centers and volunteer networks.

The symposium allowed participants to learn from each other's successes and setbacks in community building and helped to forge a new network among them. People are looking to the Toyota Foundation to act as a catalyst to horizontally link people involved in various activities at the community level. For us as well, it has been most instructive to learn more about what is going on in relevant areas of activity through these symposiums. We hope that these forums will help spur even further development of our Grant Program for Community Activities.

4. Combining Things to Create Something New

In October 2010, I chaired a panel discussion for the tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Nagoya. The four panelists at the event were the chair of a nonprofit organization involved in biodiversity initiatives, the president of a corporation actively involved in "cause related marketing," the head of a zoo in Japan that seeks to assist Borneo in gratitude for past kindness received, and a representative from the Malaysian government agency in charge of protecting wildlife. All four were experts in their given fields, and each had different views to share. Through their frank exchange of opinions it became vividly apparent that various approaches to the preservation of biodiversity are needed and that there is no simple solution to the problem. More than a hundred people attended the event, and the panelists' lively discussion was interspersed with a wide variety of questions from the audience. However,

even amid the clash of differing ideas, there was an almost uncanny desire shared by the panelists and audience to arrive at some sort of solution.

Tasks facing local communities involve governments, the private sector, and civic life, and span a broad range of areas—including politics and economics; social structure; the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industries; the environment; and education and healthcare. Moreover, addressing these tasks requires a multifaceted and multilayered approach. The Grant Program for Community Activities has attracted many projects operated by a diverse array of members who span generational lines, including those from within and outside local communities. In many cases, bringing together people from different backgrounds to interact with each other has made it possible to obtain new ideas and suggestions. For example, coming up with solutions for issues related to pediatric care is a task that would likely require the input of not only doctors and nurses but also children’s parents. Also, when trying to identify the valuable resources that exist within a community, it is often necessary to have the fresh perspective of outsiders, rather than only relying on community residents. Furthermore, in order to enrich community activities, it is effective to seek out the advice of those who have encountered different cultures overseas.

The issues facing local communities are diverse and complex. This makes it necessary for each community to carefully hone its resources and allow for a long period of ripening, rather than looking to the outside world to wave some sort of magic wand to solve problems. What is most exhilarating and enjoyable in this process is having people from different backgrounds come together in a place where they can exchange ideas. Our hope is that something new will emerge from bringing all sorts of people together in this way.

Note: A list of the grants is available on the “Search Projects” page of the Toyota Foundation website (<http://toyotafound.or.jp/english>).

II. Asian Neighbors Program

Overview and Grant Results

1. Asian Neighbors Program

Program Overview

Basic theme	Toward Community Formation Based on Mutual Reliance and Collaboration
Project areas	A. Relationships with nature B. Relationships with people: culture C. Relationships with people: social systems
Grant amounts	Up to ¥2 million per small-scale project ¥2 million to ¥8 million per regular project
Total amount of grants	¥120 million
Period of grants	Two years, beginning on November 1, 2010
Application period	March 16 to May 7, 2010, for online applications (until May 12 for mailed applications)

Grant Results

	Number of applications	Number of grants	Budget (¥ million)	Value of grants (¥ million)
Fiscal 2010	354	19 (11 from non-Japanese)	120.0	62.01
Fiscal 2009	313	23 (11 from non-Japanese)	120.0	108.5

2. Asian Neighbors Program Special Subject “Preservation, Utilization, and Transmission of Indigenous Documents in Asia”

Program Overview

Amount of grants	¥5 million per project
Program budget	¥30 million
Period of grants	One or two years, beginning on November 1, 2010
Application period	March 16 to May 7, 2010, for online applications (until May 12 for mailed applications)

Grant Results

	Number of applications	Number of grants	Budget (¥ million)	Value of grants (¥ million)
Fiscal 2010	68	12 (7 from non-Japanese)	30.0	30.0
Fiscal 2009	73	11 (6 from non-Japanese)	30.0	30.0

Comments by Selection Committee Chair Takashi Shiraishi

The Asian Neighbors Program followed essentially the same outline this fiscal year as last, inviting applications under the theme “Toward Community Formation Based on Mutual Reliance and Collaboration” and establishing three project areas: “relationships with nature,” “relationships with people: culture,” and “relationships with people: social systems.”

We received 354 applications this fiscal year. This marked a slight increase from the 313 applications received the previous year, and represented the largest number of applications ever received for this program. Last year, non-Japanese applicants outnumbered Japanese applicants for the first time. This trend continued this fiscal year, with applications from overseas making up some 70% of the total application pool. This increase in the number of applications reflects ongoing efforts to publicize the program, including explanatory presentations held in Japan and overseas. We also introduced a new system for accepting applications online this year, which was presumably one factor behind the increase in international applications.

After a rigorous evaluation process, the selection committee recommended a total of 19 projects (10 regular and 9 small-scale) for grants to the Board of Directors. Of these, 11 were applications from overseas.

During the selection process, comprehensive evaluations focused on the sound structure of the proposals and innovativeness of each project. One characteristic of the application pool this fiscal year was that the “relationships with nature” project area received the largest number of applications. In particular, there were a striking number of applications from projects aiming to find solutions to community problems brought about by climate change. Many proposals suggested innovative ways of resolving issues differing from the methods and frameworks seen in the past, including attempts at “social enterprises.”

Despite the increase in applications for concrete, soundly structured projects whose ambitions accorded with the aims of the program, the selection committee felt that there were fewer applications for projects showing true innovation or unexpected approaches to their subjects. Allowing for a degree of flexibility

while continuing to ensure that the aims of the program are shared throughout the different regions of Asia will be a major challenge for the future if the program is to succeed in attracting applications from projects that are both innovative and soundly structured.

Having established relationships with nature and people as the focus of our three project areas, this program necessarily deals with society in the context of human relationships. We must manage the program with a future-oriented sense of direction, rather than becoming fixated on conventional approaches to problems or focusing exclusively on present-day issues. In this we must give thought to the contexts in which human relationships might exist in 10 or 20 years’ time, and to whether the assumptions we make about “people” and “nature” today will continue to be valid in the future.

Below are introductions to a project selected for a grant this fiscal year from each of the project areas.

1. Relationships with Nature

Building a Sustainable and Self-Sufficient Farming Community for Coffee Production Areas in East Timor, Sharing Experiences of Farmers in the Philippines (Regular grant, ¥4.5 million, 2 years)

Naoe Akiyama

This project addresses the coffee-dependent monoculture of East Timor, aiming to create a self-sufficient farming community through integrated farming that will no longer depend solely on coffee for its livelihood.

The grant recipient and other project members from Japan will build a sustainable “model farming village” by providing learning opportunities including reciprocal visits and experience-sharing workshops to participating farmers from East Timor and the Philippines, allowing them to share and learn from each other’s experiences. The model community will then serve as a foundation for regional autonomy and self-sufficiency. The project has a good chance of achieving its aims, and the process of putting together the model community should provide a useful example for other regions to follow.

2. Social Systems

Mainstreaming Traditional Modes of Dispute Resolution: Traditional Justice Systems as a Recognized Component of the Philippine Legal System
(Small-scale grant, ¥1.8 million, 2 years)

Judith Pamela Pasimio

Members of many minority groups in the Philippines, who have traditionally held strong ties to nature, have been forced by the processes of urbanization and modernization to migrate away from their traditional homelands. Today many live in harsh conditions and struggle to survive. Focusing on the traditional forms of social harmony and dispute resolution practiced by these minority groups, this project aims to encourage reexamination of the legal system and a revision of current laws through activities that include awareness-raising by documentary videos and legal and legislative policy advocacy.

The issues this project addresses are extremely important, and long-term efforts will be necessary. We are hopeful that the project will involve a diverse range of stakeholders and will develop into a prudent but energetic effort, so that concrete results are achieved when it is completed.

3. Culture

Project for Revival of the Khmer Traditional Music and Succession of Khmer Traditional Musicians in Landmine-Contaminated Areas in Cambodia
(Small-scale grant, ¥2 million, 2 years)

Tai Ezumi

This project is an attempt to revive traditional music that was oppressed during the Pol Pot era and is today in danger of being lost forever. Members of farming communities will form traditional music groups, practice together, and eventually perform in public. As well as increasing the villagers' income, the project aims to revive traditional music and to train a new generation of performers. Music and other forms of traditional culture are in danger of extinction in Cambodia. As well as invigorating local communities, it is hoped that the project will bring enjoyment of traditional culture

to the people of these communities and encourage them to hand it down to future generations.

Finally, I would like to make a few remarks regarding efforts to be made to steer the program in the right direction in the future.

(1) Message to Program Officers

I would like the officers in charge of running the program to form close ties with as many grant recipients as possible, including but not limited to those in this year's pool. Officers should make teamwork with grant recipients a priority. In administering the program, I would like program officers to go beyond simply ascertaining the progress of projects. They should be aware of the environment surrounding a project and follow each project within the context of a diverse network of relationships. My hope is that by possessing a flexible and well-balanced point of view and a proactive attitude, the program officers can act as bridges linking a broad range of diverse projects and grant recipients.

(2) Opinion on Program Management

My impression is that the main priority for program officers is on the selection process and the call for applications that precedes it. Since fiscal 2003, this program has given grants to approximately 20 projects a year throughout Asia. Today, the results of these projects are gradually starting to bear fruit. To achieve synergistic results, I would like program officers to focus on holding workshops and other events to disseminate project results, and to divide their efforts evenly across the course of the program, from the selection process to the publication of results. In disseminating project results, program managers and officers should be aware of opportunities for gaining new knowledge and forging new contacts that will be of use in managing the program over the longer term, as well as for building networks between grant recipients.

Note: A list of the grants is available on the "Search Projects" page of the Toyota Foundation website (<http://toyotafound.or.jp/english>).

Special Subject: “Preservation, Utilization, and Transmission of Indigenous Documents in Asia”

Comments by Selection Committee Chair Masatake Matsubara

The Toyota Foundation received 68 applications in fiscal 2010 for grants under its Asian Neighbors Program Special Subject, “Preservation, Utilization, and Transmission of Indigenous Documents in Asia.” For this fiscal year, we did away with the portion of the program dedicated to projects specializing in document preservation, instead seeking applications for projects that pursue all the aspects of their preservation, utilization, and transmission. This year we received 6 fewer applications than the 74 submitted in fiscal 2009, but the fields of focus and geographical range are both broader this year. The more extensive fields of focus of this year’s applications included oral histories and visual resources. One factor behind this increased breadth is the heightened urgency of the need to preserve and make use of these indigenous documents amid the drastic social change seen today in Asia.

Breaking down the applications by region, we received 12 from China (including 1 from Inner Mongolia, 1 from Tibet, and 1 from Hong Kong), 8 from Indonesia, 7 from India, 6 from Thailand, 5 from Vietnam, 4 from Pakistan, 4 from Bangladesh, 3 from Cambodia, 3 from the Philippines, 2 from Malaysia, 2 from Myanmar, 2 from Nepal, 2 from South Korea, 2 from Japan, 1 from Yemen, 1 from Iraq, 1 from Iran, 1 from Uzbekistan, 1 from Australia, and 1 from Mongolia. This represents a geographical expansion from the previous year’s applications to include Central Asia and Australia.

Before the selection committee convened on July 27, 2010, its members looked over all the applications received, preparing evaluations of and comments on the proposed projects. The evaluations at this stage were based on four criteria: (1) propriety of the proposed subject, (2) propriety of the proposed methodology, (3) anticipated results and ripple effects, and (4) future prospectives.

At the selection committee meeting, we referred to the results of hearings carried out by the Toyota Foundation as we evaluated each application. The decisions on whether to approve or reject applications were based on close reexaminations of them by all the

committee members from perspectives including the suitability of the proposals, the organization of the research teams involved, the viability of the proposed budgets, and the potential of the projects to produce results of value to the wider public. In the end, the committee gave consideration to geographical balance of the approved projects as a whole in agreeing unanimously to select the 12 projects described below for grants. At the same time, the selection committee carried out budget allocations for the selected projects.

(1) Ratanaporn Sethakul

This project aims to preserve, utilize, and hand down the historical and cultural documents of the Dai-Lue people in Xishuangbanna, in China’s Yunnan Province. The work will be carried out jointly by Thai and Chinese researchers.

(2) Goyu Sato

This project seeks to preserve, utilize, and transmit documents pertaining to the Chod tradition of Buddhist and Bon rituals carried out by folk-religion believers in the Tibetan cultural sphere. The basic survey has already been completed.

(3) Sa Siqin

This project seeks to preserve, utilize, and transmit the oral traditions of Oirad Mongols living in Mongolia’s Altai mountainous region and the western part of Inner Mongolia in China. It is significant for its concrete presentation of oral histories.

(4) Kazuhiro Arai

The aim of this project is to use and transmit indigenous documents from the Hadramawt area of southern Arabia. This year is expected to see publication of facsimiles of the documents.

(5) Kazuya Maekawa

Through collaborative work with local researchers, the project leader will catalog and create a 3D digital archive of cuneiform tablets held by the National Mu-

seum of Iran. This is a significant undertaking both for the importance of the materials being studied and for the creation of a digital archive.

(6) Choiraljav

This project involves the preservation, explication, and utilization of civilian land contracts found in western Inner Mongolia. This year publication of the first volume is expected.

(7) Qing Ge Li

This project will preserve, make use of, and transmit old documents in the possession of a family descended from the clan of Genghis Khan. If the materials are made available to the public as expected, it should be possible to put them to a wide variety of uses.

(8) Thanh Phan

The Cham people of south central Vietnam have handed down texts written in their language and the Kr'uun; this project seeks to preserve, utilize, and transmit these. The Cham are classified as an Islamic people.

(9) Masahiro Tomita

This project aims to preserve, utilize, and transmit the old documents that are discovered in the process of preserving China's traditional architecture. These documents have high value as historical material and the proposal is well defined.

(10) Ly Vanna

This project seeks to preserve, make use of, and hand down some 60 Khmer texts on traditional forms of medicine in Cambodia. The proposal is notable for its specificity.

(11) Nobuo Fujikawa

The aim of this project is to publish a Chinese translation of the Bai Le Shu, sacred texts of the Yi people in China's Yunnan Province. In 2008 these texts were designated as important cultural assets by the Chinese government.

(12) Arlo Griffiths

This project involves the compilation, preservation,

utilization, and transmission of ancient Campa inscriptions. This is another well-defined proposal.

Among the 12 projects selected this year, that led by Sa Siqin is notable for focusing on the preservation, use, and transmission of oral histories. This is the first project to address oral histories ever selected for a grant under this program. In the future, as this program expands the scope of the "indigenous documents" within its purview to include such texts as oral histories, it seems certain to shed greater light on humankind's intellectual heritage.

As detailed below, there was some debate among members of the selection committee on issues facing the program and the approach that should be taken in the future.

Project Follow-Ups

The program officers in the Toyota Foundation will need to follow up the projects selected to receive grants in fiscal 2010. We hope this will lead to a deeper grasp of the ways in which each project is addressing the issues, and that the comments gathered from grant recipients in the process of this review will provide hints toward the better management of this program in the future.

Sharing Project Results

One future task for the Toyota Foundation will be to actively share the results of all the projects it has supported to date with the broader public. This information-sharing cannot take place only in Japan, of course; ideally it will be directed to a global audience. The creation of a digital archive is one possible form for this broadcasting to take. We believe that it is important to begin with what can be done right away toward the eventual sharing of all project results with the world.

Note: A list of the grants is available on the "Search Projects" page of the Toyota Foundation website (<http://toyotafound.or.jp/english>).

III. Research Grant Program

Overview and Grant Results

Grant Overview

Basic theme	The Search for the Richness of Human Life and Activity
Project areas	A. Transmission and formation of culture B. Society's frameworks C. Human ties with nature
Grant amounts	Up to ¥2 million per individual research project Up to ¥8 million per joint research project
Total amount of grants	¥150 million
Period of grants	One or two years, beginning on November 1, 2010
Application period	March 16 to May 7, 2010, for online applications (until May 12 for mailed applications)

Grant Results

	Number of applications	Number of grants	Budget (¥ million)	Value of grants (¥ million)
Fiscal 2010	939	45 (12 from non-Japanese)	150.0	126.7
Fiscal 2009	734	44 (12 from non-Japanese)	150.0	145.0

Comments by Selection Committee Chair Hirotsugu Aida

The selection committee for the fiscal 2010 Research Grant Program reviewed 939 applications under the same basic theme as in the previous fiscal year, “The Search for the Richness of Human Life and Activity,” awarding grants to 45 of those proposed projects, for a selection rate of 4.8%. Twenty-nine of the selected projects were joint research projects, while the remaining 16 involved individual research. Twelve of the projects receiving grants were led by non-Japanese researchers, representing around one-fourth of the total (27%), which is roughly on par with the level of the previous year.

The characteristics of this year’s selection (explained in more detail below) can be summed up under the following three points: (1) we saw a significant increase in the number of applications thanks to measures that included actively soliciting applicants, introducing online applications, and revising the project areas; (2) those same measures brought about a major rise in the number of overseas applications; and (3) many project proposals garnered several recommendations from selection committee members. Underlying (3) in particular seems to have been the significant rise in the amount of outstanding project proposals resulting from the major increase in the overall number of applications. As a result, the selection process was highly competitive, with the selection rate decreasing considerably from the 6% rate of the previous fiscal year.

The Application Situation

In fiscal 2010, the selection process took place according to the basic theme of “The Search for the Richness of Human Life and Activity,” while the subtheme (“Revitalizing Local Communities Under Globalization” in the previous fiscal year) was eliminated. The decision to drop the subtheme was part of what the Foundation secretariat called a “comprehensive revision of the program.” In line with the changes, the four project areas of the previous year, namely, (1) Transmission and Formation of Culture (Culture), (2) Soci-

ety’s Frameworks (Society), (3) Individual and Interpersonal Development (People), and (4) Other, were reduced to three areas by maintaining the first two project areas and replacing the third and fourth with a new area called “Human Ties with Nature (Nature).”

The grants totaled ¥150 million, with an upper limit of ¥8 million per joint research project and ¥2 million per individual research project. The overall figure was the same as in the previous fiscal year, but we removed the lower limits (¥2 million per joint research project and ¥1 million per individual research project). Even though the program is funded by an endowment, the Toyota Foundation has also had to deal with the worldwide recession following the collapse of Lehman Brothers and the temporary adversity facing its parent corporate body in the United States. I would therefore like to convey my gratitude—as chairman of the selection committee and on behalf of the applicants—for the fact that the total grant amount was maintained at the same overall level.

As I noted at the outset, thanks to our active effort to solicit applications and the introduction of online applications for the first time, the number of applications rose this fiscal year to 939—a significant 28% increase compared to the 734 applications in the previous fiscal year and a more than two-fold (115%) jump over the 437 applications in fiscal 2008. Meanwhile, the proposed monetary figures for project applications this fiscal year totaled ¥4.01957 billion, for only a 7.5% increase over the ¥3.73992 billion of the previous fiscal year. The average proposed expenditure was ¥6.19 million per joint research project (fiscal 2009: ¥6.75 million) and ¥1.84 million per individual research project (fiscal 2009: ¥2.27 million). These figures likely reflect the current socioeconomic situation as well as the overall trend toward spending cuts. My hope is that this curtailment does not correspond to a narrowing of the scope of thinking.

The Foundation secretariat held explanatory presentations in five overseas locations (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand) in order to attract applicants. As a result, there were 439

non-Japanese applicants this fiscal year, constituting around 46% of the total number of applications. This increase over the 41% rate in the previous fiscal year seems to have resulted from a more convenient application process now that applications can be submitted online. Around 40% of all applications were made online. According to the secretariat's analysis, the increase was also due to the impact of efforts that included a rethinking of the program's content.

The distribution of applications across the three project areas was as follows: Culture, 292 (31%); Society, 399 (42%); and Nature, 248 (26%). The level of applications for the Culture area was roughly on par with the previous fiscal year, and that for Society rose significantly from the 31% of the previous fiscal year, although the increase was probably due in part to the fact that the elimination of the Individual and Interpersonal Development area of the previous fiscal year caused more applications to be directed to the Society category instead.

As for the breakdown of the main types of applicants, we received 452 applications (48%) from university researchers, 208 (22%) from postdoctoral fellows and graduate students, and 107 (11%) from nongovernmental and nonprofit organizations.

The Foundation secretariat, upon receiving the 939 applications, presented them to the selection committee comprised of five experts. The committee examined all of the applications, including those that had not passed the secretariat's preliminary screening, and requested the addition of a few projects to those that passed the screening.

Selection Process

After receiving the applications from the secretariat, the selection committee members first examined applications on their own. This was followed by additional hearings with the applicants and inquiries regarding unclear issues, arranged via the Foundation secretariat. After those two steps, the selection committee convened meetings to engage in discussion. The selection of projects was made according to the following criteria: (1) methodological soundness (schedule, methods, composition of members, budget, etc.); (2) the probability of tangible results and ripple effects

(areas that applicants are requested to explain in the application); and (3) innovativeness (inherent interest of the subject matter, originality, etc.).

As chairman of the selection committee, I indicated at the preparatory gathering held one month prior to the convening of our meetings that the Toyota Foundation up to now has built its strong reputation on the basis of steadily supporting not only the sort of research that captures the public attention but also less glamorous research activities. I called on my fellow members to adopt a long-term perspective so that the projects selected this fiscal year would be as meaningful as in previous years.

Here I will not enter into the details of the selection committee discussions. I will simply note that this fiscal year more projects than expected were recommended by more than one selection committee member, but despite this, the length of our discussions ended up also exceeding expectations, as even some projects receiving multiple recommendations were subject to intense criticism from other committee members.

Following careful deliberation we selected 45 projects to receive grants. The projects were selected through unanimous decisions by the selection committee members. As noted earlier, the selection rate among the total applications was 4.8%, which was even more competitive than the 6% rate of the previous fiscal year.

The breakdown by project area for the selected projects is as follows: Culture, 16 (36%), Society, 25 (56%), and Nature, 4 (9%). Joint research accounted for 29 projects and individual research for 16. There were many selected projects in the Society area, for a significant increase over the 43% level of the previous fiscal year. The increase was due in part to the revision of the project areas, but the number of Society projects selected was even quite large when compared to the 42% of applications received in that area. The following two factors may be said to underlie the increase: First, there were numerous applications involving outstanding research in the field of social systems, and second, the selection committee members also placed an emphasis on society-related projects. The predominance of selected projects in the Society area may also reflect the continued political and economic instability

in Japan and worldwide. Even if the outcome of this fiscal year's selection was a matter of chance, we still hope that the applicants will not hesitate when it comes to submitting applications for research in the project areas of Culture and Nature. Indeed, the mainstay of a good society is a robust culture, which in turn depends in part upon "human ties with nature."

As was done in the previous fiscal year's report, in order to foster a better understanding of some of the trends for this year's applications and selected projects I have listed an example of a joint project and an individual project which were both highly evaluated, having received multiple recommendations by the selection committee members when they were examined prior to the deliberations of the committee.

[Joint Research Project]

New Perspectives on Asakusa's Cultural Assets and Transmission via Radio: Modifying Cultural Communication for a Foreign Audience (¥5 million, 2 years)
Soichiro Itoda (Professor, School of Arts and Letters, Meiji University)

This project involves the creation of an Internet radio program in English dealing with the Asakusa district of Tokyo for non-Japanese listeners, as well as research on the effective transmission of information on Japanese culture and its reception. In addition to unearthing the latent cultural assets of Asakusa, the project evokes an enthusiasm for aiming to create a comprehensive field of study connected to the district through efforts including an attempt to team up with a number of European universities to pay close attention to the cultural environment of the program listeners. It is hoped that the project will generate new suggestions on how to transmit information on Japanese culture around the world by drawing on the effective aspects of radio programs created thus far that have already had a big impact on listeners, including the program that featured an interview with the geisha Norie.

[Individual Research Project]

The Colors of Historical Townscapes in the Seto Inland Sea Region: Traditional Color Schemes and Materials (¥1.5 million, 2 years)

Eiko Sowa (Part-time Lecturer, Graduate School of Arts and Design, Kobe Design University)

This project records the colors of the scenery of the Inland Sea area that are interwoven in the materials of the traditional townscape, with the aim being to clarify the fundamental principles of the traditional Japanese aesthetics of color. Traditional townscapes in Japan, unlike those in the West, hardly use any artificial colors, relying instead on the hues of the building materials themselves. Even though these townscapes have almost no added coloration, the interplay of the texture of the materials with their natural colors evokes a rich atmosphere. The project analyzes the composition of these colors in the context of the light and seasons of the local area and the changes in climatic conditions.

Future Tasks to Address

1. The introduction of online applications greatly increased the number of applications received, but the number of projects selected was 45, so the selection rate fell to 4.8%, representing a competition ratio of 20 to 1. The fact that the rate has dropped below 5% might create the impression that it is exceedingly difficult to receive a grant. It may thus be necessary to consider ways to address this issue in the future.
2. There was an increase in the ratio of projects selected in the Society area. It is only natural to approve grants for projects on the basis of their merits, regardless of their respective project areas, but the outcome seems to show that the meaning of the project areas that we went to the trouble of creating has either been lost or diluted. There may be a need to carefully examine this point.
3. There is a lack of balance between the number of applications received from non-Japanese candidates and their rate of selection. Because each proposed project is evaluated on the basis of its own merits, it seems best to avoid setting up a quota for overseas applications. Factors contributing to the low selection rate among overseas applicants may have included (1) the still low number of outstanding proposals from outside Japan and (2) caution in choosing overseas projects because of the relatively limited amount of additional information on them

III. Research Grant Program

available to selection committee members as compared to Japanese projects. Certainly, when it comes to applications for projects in Japan, it is possible for the committee members to pick up on the social and cultural context just from the information written on the application. I would like for us to seek ways to gradually eliminate the current imbalance, while relying on the Foundation secretariat to make a meticulous effort to collect more information on the content of overseas proposed projects.

Note: A list of the grants is available on the “Search Projects” page of the Toyota Foundation website (<http://toyotafound.or.jp/english>).