

Remarks

**Presented by NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth
On the occasion of the UWA Japanese Studies Society Matsuri
On Wednesday 18 September, 2024**

Acknowledgements and Greetings

I wish to start by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet tonight, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, and pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

It is great to be back for this year's Matsuri organized by the UWA Japanese Studies Society. It is the eighth annual UWA Matsuri and we commend students and the Japanese Studies Society for their initiative in organizing such an amazing event showcasing Japanese culture.

Legacy of cooperation with Japan

The University of Western Australia has a rich history of cooperation with Japan and has been a pioneer of Japanese Studies, with the Japanese Studies department first offering a double major degree in Japanese economics and language in the 1970s. This has helped to produce expertise in the fields of business and education, uplifting the overall understanding of Japan in WA and supporting business interactions between our countries to this day. .

UWA's connections to Japan have continued to grow with strong Japanese language studies, partnerships with 19 Japanese universities in the fields of energy, agriculture, carbon capture and storage, astronomy and advanced technology, as well as the Perth USAsia Centre hosting the annual Japan Symposium.

Another example of UWA's connection to Japan can be found at the Japanese Courtyard of this campus, where there is a plaque saying how it was donated and opened by Mr Noboru Goto, then-President of Tokyu Corporation, with the aspiration of improving mutual understanding and goodwill between our two nations. Just last week, Tokyu celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Yanchep Two Rocks Project, with partners including the WA Premier and Deputy Premier. Tokyu's dream of developing the beautiful city of Yanchep is taking shape and has now been connected with the METRONET Rail Extension. With Yanchep now only a 50 minute train ride from the Perth CBD, this development will further improve the quality of life of so many young families in the region, as the project continues to work toward the vision of a "Clean Green Sustainable City".

If you are interested in Studying in Japan

The Consulate-General of Japan in Perth is only 10 minutes away from your campus and we are happy to support any of your Japanese activities. Applications are now open for the 2025 Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme, which is a fantastic opportunity for graduates interested in living and working in Japan. More than 550 people from WA have participated in the JET Programme, and this year, we sent 15 Assistant Language Teachers from WA who are now enjoying life as teachers and cultural ambassadors in Japan.

If you are looking to further your studies in Japan, you also have the opportunity to apply for different scholarships including the MEXT scholarship, New Colombo Plan Mobility Program and INPEX scholarship for graduate studies.

These programs are useful avenue for you to go to Japan, to learn and to have life changing experiences. It will open windows of opportunity for you, your global vision and your future careers.

Today we have Monica and Brittany from the Japanese Consulate who are have been to Japan on such exchange programs.(Please raise your hands). I am proud that all of the staff at the Japanese Consulate speak Japanese fluently and are experts on understanding Japan. If you have any questions, please ask them.

ANA Direct Flight

The resumption of the ANA Perth to Narita direct flight in October last year had a great impact on travel during its seven month stint, and although the flights experienced a temporary pause, the good news is flights will resume once again from October 14, offering an affordable, transit-free travel option with flights available three times a week.

With Japan becoming one of the most popular holiday destinations for Australians, these direct flights will make it easier for you travel across Japan and experience Japanese culture, from traditional matsuri, temples and shrines, to snowboarding, skiing, shopping and fashion.

Enjoy Matsuri

And today, let us enjoy the many aspects of Japan on display here at the UWA Matsuri. I will be joining the Bon Odori later and I welcome you all to join the circle, participate in the dancing and embrace the sense of togetherness. It is the essence of Japanese Matsuri.

Thank you for your attention.

End