



JAPAN TOURISM AWARDS 2019

Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism's Award 2019

Hyakusenrenma Inc.

We established, as part of our efforts to build a business of "farm stays," Japan's first farm stay (nohaku) / private lodging (minpaku) reservation website "Stay Japan" (originally called "Tomarina") in 2013, and then in 2018 began providing "Shukiyaku Concierge," a service aimed at helping farm stay lodging providers to attract customers. Currently, more than half of users of Shukiyaku Concierge are foreigners, with half of those being visitors from western countries. One of our success stories is farm lodgings with recent monthly sales of as much as ¥500,000. Another is our use of a new business model of homeowners renting out their second homes to lodgers, thus reducing the burden of the monthly maintenance fees in addition to ensuring a stable profit. We believe it is important for sustainable regional activity to have reliable and firm business activities going on.



What's JAPAN TOURISM AWARDS

Tourism is considered a growth strategy for Japan, and expectations are high for increased volumes of tourism both within Japan and the world. The tourism industry in general encompasses a broad swath of sub-sectors including tourism promotion in Japan, between Japan and the world, and inbound tourism to Japan—which means it plays a significant role in the growth of the Japanese economy. The goal of these Awards, by way of a synergistic effect with Tourism EXPO Japan, is to contribute to the development and expansion of the tourism industry by recognizing superior sustainable initiatives by Japanese and overseas groups, organizations, and corporations. The Japan Tourism Awards also works to publicize these initiatives to render Japan a leading nation in the tourism industry, both in Japan and the world.

Because tourism is a broad-based industry, the perspective of not only tourism-related personnel but also personnel from a variety of sectors is required to ensure optimal screening. To garner the input of this broad range of personnel, the screening process included the following leading Japanese organizations and corporations. Dynamic discussions were held based on the screening criteria—each initiative's innovation and development, sustainability, and social relevance.

These awards represent a tremendous opportunity for conveying Japanese tourism to the world. Instead of relying on Japanese tourism organizations and companies alone to facilitate Japanese tourism promotion, we are aware that Japanese tourism can be bolstered by 1) bringing more dynamism to the nation's local regions—where the unique flavor of Japan can be found—along with 2) expanding on two-way tourism with other countries. Award recipients were determined based on a common-ground awareness of the relevance of these factors in future tourism development.

The points on which applications are judged are as follows.

Pioneering and Creativity

- Is a new market being created through an as-yet unrecognized initiative?
- Does it match the needs of the market?
- Is the initiative original?

Sustainability

- Is the initiative ongoing, is it yielding results, and are those results helping to broaden exchanges?
- Can the initiative be continued in the future while adjusting it in light of changes in the market environment?

Expandability

- Can the initiative be further developed or expanded as a best practice?
- Can the initiative be expected to develop further, for example through partnerships with other industries?

Contribution to societies

- Does the initiative seek to grow in tandem with the region, and contribute to problem solving and attracting tourism?
- Does the initiative contribute to realizing a sustainable society, such as through preserving historical and cultural inheritance, protecting the environment, human resource development, or implementing universal design and diversity?

Profiles of Jury Members



Director
Mr. Yoshiaki
Hongo

Chief, Regional
Support Office for
Asia and the Pacific,
UNWTO

【Message from Director of Jury】

This year, for the 5th Japan Tourism Awards, we received some 209 applications describing projects designed to create a brighter future from both within Japan and overseas, reflecting an upswing in the level of global tourism.

The recipient of the newly established “MLIT Award” was Hyakusenrenma, whose entry Regional Invigoration Service to Unite “Farm Stays” With “the World” truly connects a local tourism resource with the world. It received high praise for both its innovation and its future development potential.

Among the entries that were submitted, those that had a high degree of social value continued to stand out with motifs such as “universal tourism” and “ecotourism,” while this year saw an increase in initiatives that really built on local appeal with themes like “infratourism” and “night entertainment,” granting us a peek into the future of how tourism may be expanded both quantitatively and qualitatively going forward.

Lastly, I would like to point out that the efforts of the Palau Tourism Board to increase tourist satisfaction through environmental protection truly indicated the role tourism has to play in realizing the sustainable development goals (SDGs) laid out by the United Nations, in addition to deepening understanding. These factors led to that entry receiving the Japan Tourism Agency Commissioner’s Award, and we sincerely hope that, in the future, similar initiatives will be introduced both within Japan and around the world.

【Jury Members】 (Total of 14)

- Mr. Adam Fulford (CEO, Fulford Enterprises, Ltd.)
- Mr. Yoshiro Ishihara (Director Editor-in-Chief, WING Aviation Press Co., LTD.)
- Mr. Yoshiyuki Oshita (Director, Independent Administrative Institution National Museum Of Art)
- Mr. Susumu Kato (Deputy Director General, Japan Tourism Agency, Minister of Land, Infra-structure, Transport and Tourism)
- Mr. Shigeto Kubo (President, Japan Travel and Tourism Association)
- Mr. Satoshi Seino (President, Japan National Tourism Organization)
- Mr. Waichi Sekiguchi (President, MM Research Institute, Ltd.)
- Mr. Hiromi Tagawa (Chairperson, Japan Association of Travel Agents)
- Mr. Naoyoshi Noguchi (Executive Vice President, Japan External Trade Organization(JETRO))
- Ms. Miyako Hamano (Special Adviser Cool Japan Strategy, Secretariat of Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters Cabinet Office)
- Ms. Masami Morishita (Professor, Department of International Tourism Management
Faculty of International Tourism Management, Toyo University)
- Mr. Kensuke Yabata (General Manager, Regional Planning Department, Development Bank of Japan Inc.)
- Mr. Masayuki Wakui (Professor, Landscape Architect (J.R.L.A.), Faculty of Environmental Studies, Tokyo City University)

AWARDS

Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism's Award

Regional Invigoration Service to Unite "Farm Stays" with "the World"/Hyakusenrenma Inc.

Japan Tourism Agency Commissioner's Awards (3 selects)

1. Toward Phase 5 in Making the Ureshino Hot Springs Barrier-Free: Coordinating With Private Ambulance Services /Saga Ureshino Barrier Free Tour Center
(*This initiative has been also awarded the Special Awards for DMO Promotion.)
2. An Attempt at a Modern Sightseeing Model in the Hallowed Grounds of Kumano/Tanabe City Kumano Tourism Bureau
(*This initiative has been also awarded The Japan Tourism Awards for Responsible Tourism in collaboration with UNWTO.)
3. Creating the Palau Pledge: The World's First Environmental Protection Pledge/Palau Tourism Board

Awards for Excellent Partner

Toward a Sustainable Development of Tourism and Revival of the Island of Boracay/Philippines Department of Tourism

Japan Tourism Awards elected by students

Let's Expand the Potential of Children's Future!/H.I.S. Co., Ltd.

Special Awards for DMO Promotion (2 selects)

A New Type of Winter Resort: Using the Resources of Nature and the City for "Urban Snow Resort" Efforts/Taisetsu Kamui Mintara DMO

Special Awards Digital Utilization (3 selects)

1. "Shiro Okoshi Project" Using a GPS-Based Castle Touring App/UM.Succeed, Inc.
2. Efforts to Realize a Society of Sound Universal Design/SoundUD Consortium
3. Activities and Dynamic Analysis by "Japan 2 Go!"—an Event-Coordinated Multilingual Sightseeing Cloud Service/SoftBank Corp.

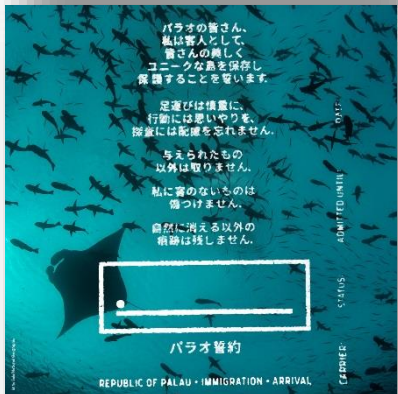
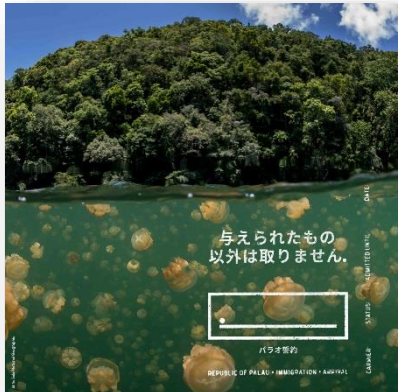
The Japan Tourism Award for Responsible Tourism in collaboration with UNWTO (2 selects)

Promoting Ecotourism in Yakushima/Yakushima Nature Activity Center Inc.

AWARDS(Field of Outbound Travel)

Japan Tourism Agency Commissioner's Awards

Creating the Palau Pledge: The World's First Environmental Protection Pledge/Palau Tourism Board



For the first time anywhere in the world, visitors must have their passports stamped, on the way into the country, with an environmental protection pledge, obliging them to engage in "responsible and sustainable tourism." We also require them to sign a next-generation environmental and cultural protection pledge. This obliges all visitors to Palau to sign, before entering the country, a pledge that says they will protect the environment of Palau for the children of Palau. This initiative makes Palau the first country in the world to change its visitor entry laws and procedures for the benefit of future generations, with the goal of protecting Palau's precious unique culture and beautiful natural environment. This ideal is incorporated into children's education under Palau's Ministry of Education, to inculcate understanding of the important role played by Palau's children in protecting the archipelago's future.

Selection Comment

This initiative is groundbreaking in its encouragement of foreign travelers to make a pledge to preserve nature, intended by the Palau government to protect the natural environment of these islands that are registered as a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site. The initiative was evaluated as having a high degree of development potential and social value in its connection to sustainable development and its implementation of environmental protection.

Awards for Excellent Partner

Toward a Sustainable Development of Tourism and Revival of the Island of Boracay/Philippines Department of Tourism



Awarded as one of the world's best islands, Boracay is visited by tourists from around the globe reaching the all-time high of more than 2 million visitors in 2017. As the environmental impact brought about human activities took its toll in the 10-km island, the government decided to close Boracay in 2018 for an environmental rehabilitation. During the 6-month closure, sustainability of tourism facilities has been assessed, the carrying capacity of the island has been determined and regulations protecting the environment has been put in place. The Department of Tourism (DOT) also facilitated training of thousands of tourism frontline workers. Together with other government agencies and the tourism stakeholders, the DOT will thrive to ensure balance between business opportunities and social responsibility towards a more sustainable tourism development- an endeavor that started in Boracay Island and is now continuing to other major tourist destinations in the country.

Selection Comment

The revitalization of the natural scenery of Boracay through a half-year suspension of tourist intake has created a brilliant example of tourism working within the sustainable development of society. It received high praise as an initiative with an extremely high level of social value and innovation, as an excellent example of a solution for overtourism issues.

AWARDS(Field of Outbound Travel)

Japan Tourism Awards elected by students

Let's Expand the Potential of Children's Future!

Extracurricular Classes for Cambodian Primary School Students! Travel That Encourages Mutual Education With Local Children/H.I.S. Co., Ltd.



We worked with the non-profit organization HERO to establish a primary school in the spring of 2017. Since then, we've been arranging tours in the student tourism seasons of spring and summer, continuously visiting the school. Most Cambodian schools don't have the opportunity for PE, music, science experiments or the like, so by working together with the tour participants we organize extracurricular classes for the kids. By inculcating teamwork with a sports festival or granting new and strange experiences to the kids with science experiments, we can provide the kids with a new inquisitiveness and enthusiasm for learning. In 2018 and then again in March of 2019, we brought Japanese fireworks experts in to organize a fireworks festival as well. The multicolored fireworks lit up the night sky. For young children who had never experienced something like this before, they cried out with excitement and joy, smiles wide on their faces. That moment was truly an indication of the expansion of the children's potential.



Selection Comment

Not just building a school and supporting education in Cambodia, this project allows Japanese tourists to travel to Cambodia and interact with the children who will inherit this world, by providing a portion of the travel expenses and the like. This kind of activity was recognized as having tremendous social value in contributing to an international society.

Category Awards



Inviting KIX-GUM regular flights by Jeju Air/JTB Corp.

Amidst scares from the launching of North Korean ballistic missiles to the withdrawal of flights to and from Guam, a charter flight from Kansai Airport was arranged, leading to the establishment of regular flights by Jeju Air. By achieving a win-win for customers and destinations, this initiative was recognized as having a high degree of development potential for the travel company.



Bulgaria Rose Festival/Eurasia Travel Co., Ltd.

This tour program is themed around Bulgaria's national flower, the rose. In addition to long-standing visits to the Rose Festival, the project was designed to be a participatory tour that incorporates interaction with local residents and various hands-on activities. Its 10-year résumé showed it to have sustainability that the judges recognized.



Uluru and Sydney: Six days down under with a cane and a wheelchair/Sakura Star Travel

This initiative has made it possible for people with disabilities to make thorough preparations for places they otherwise probably could not travel to, and enjoy the same scenery regardless of their disadvantages. It was thus recognized as having an extremely high level of social value. Designed from a perspective of empathy with wheelchair-bound persons, this initiative really makes dreams come true.



Tabi MUSE: An overseas travel online magazine collaboratively developed by 300 Millennial Women who are real travel connoisseurs/Valise Inc.

This initiative was evaluated as contributing significantly to demand for outbound travel among Japanese, with a system whereby the information provision is not one-way but involves readers sharing their knowledge with each other, thus expanding readership. As a digital media initiative specializing in overseas travel that conveys travel experiences over the web, written by the women themselves who love to travel, it is also highly creative.



#hkshingoart: Creating tourism resources through Street Art/Hong Kong Tourism Board

By displaying this mural by the famous Japanese tarento Shingo Katori on the streets of Hong Kong, it can both be enjoyed by Japanese tourists and encourage locals to come and visit Japan. This effort towards mutual exchange was recognized as being extremely innovative.