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International House of Japan

Press Release

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The Fukutake Foundation
The International House of Japan, Inc.

Fukutake Foundation Establishes Partnership with the IHJ

Launch of the Asia Museum Founders Community to Connect Museum Founders Across the Asia-Pacific Region

The Fukutake Foundation and the International House of Japan (IHJ) have entered into a partnership to promote private diplomacy and international cultural exchange in the fields of visual arts, design, and architecture.
As a cornerstone of this partnership, the two organizations are establishing the Asia Museum Founders Community, a network connecting museum founders across the Asia-Pacific region to foster dialogue and exchange, with the goal of convening an inaugural meeting on the island of Naoshima in 2027.
Since its establishment in 1952, IHJ has been a pioneer in promoting private diplomacy and international cultural exchange. The Fukutake Foundation has been fostering new relationships between art and local communities for over 30 years through its activities on and around Naoshima. Together, the two organizations will explore expanded possibilities for intellectual dialogue that connects the Asia-Pacific region through art.



(From left)：James Kondo, Chairman, International House of Japan, Hideaki Fukutake, Chairman, Fukutake Foundation

The key areas of collaboration are as follows:

■Establishment of the Asia Museum Founders Community

The two foundations will work together to establish a network of Asian art museum founders and aim to hold the inaugural meeting of the Asia Museum Founders Community on Naoshima in 2027.
While Asia is home to many private art museums established by corporate groups, there has hitherto been no dedicated forum for dialogue among the founders of these museums. The Asia Museum Founders Community will provide an opportunity for founders to exchange views on specific challenges—such as how to pass on their legacy to the next generation and how to open their museums more fully to the public—and to build long-term, cross-generational relationships of trust in seeking to raise museum standards across Asia.

■Collaboration in Visual Arts, Design, and Architecture

The Fukutake Foundation and IHJ will cooperate in the planning and implementation of various projects and activities that advance cultural exchange and people-to-people diplomacy in the fields of visual arts, design, and architecture.

■Future Initiatives

In preparation for the inaugural meeting of the Asia Museum Founders Community, scheduled for 2027, the two foundations will begin by engaging in dialogue with the founders of art museums in Japan and neighboring Asian countries. Building from hubs in Tokyo and Naoshima, they will expand these conversations across Asia, fostering a new community to discuss wider issues connecting the region through art.

Comments from the signatories are as follows:

Hideaki Fukutake, Chairman, Fukutake Foundation
*"*The Fukutake Foundation has long worked hand in hand with local communities through a diverse range of art initiatives—including the establishment of art museums and the organization of art festivals—primarily on the Setouchi islands of Naoshima, Teshima, and Inujima for the past 40 years. Drawing on this experience, we hope to bring cultural value to society through collaboration with a wide range of partners. We have also been engaging with members of the Asian art community through art festivals and art fairs mainly in Europe and North America. Through this partnership with IHJ, we hope to build a community of individuals who have established internationally recognized art museums in Asia. We believe this initiative will bring new vitality to the Asian art scene and generate new forms of social value in the Setouchi region that will spread throughout Asia.*"*

James Kondo, Chairman, International House of Japan
*"*IHJ has connected political, business, and intellectual leaders across the Asia-Pacific region through its work in private diplomacy and think-tank activities. Asia is home to many private art museums established by corporate groups, and art serves as another vital channel for dialogue, fostering trust across borders and generations.
By combining our policy research and cultural exchange initiatives, we are committed to building a platform that supports mutual understanding across Asia. Together with the Fukutake Foundation, which has built a globally recognized model of community development on Naoshima, we look forward to opening new pathways to Asia's future through not only political and business dialogue but also greater engagement in the sphere of art and culture.*"*

About the Fukutake Foundation
The Fukutake Foundation, formerly the Naoshima Fukutake Art Museum Foundation, was established in 2004 in conjunction with the opening of the Chichu Art Museum. Since integrating two affiliated foundations in 2012, it has advanced its mission through museum operations centered on Naoshima, Teshima, and Inujima; grant programs supporting regional development through art and culture; and independent and collaborative initiatives, including the Setouchi Triennale. Through these activities, the Foundation seeks to realize the Benesse philosophy of well-being and to contribute to vibrant local communities.
https://fukutake-foundation.jp/

About the International House of Japan
The International House of Japan has been a pioneer in private diplomacy and international cultural exchange in Japan. Since its establishment in 1952, it has consistently contributed to the peace and prosperity of Japan and the Asia-Pacific region. Its mission is to “contribute to building a free, open, and sustainable future through intellectual dialogue, policy research, and cultural exchange with a diverse world,” and its vision is to “become a hub for intellectual exchange in the Asia-Pacific region.” The main building of the International House of Japan, a registered tangible cultural property, is a notable example of modernist architecture, while its garden, designed by Ogawa Jihei VII, is considered a masterpiece. The forthcoming West Wing, designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architects SANAA, will expand public-interest programs in the Think Tank and Art & Design departments.
https://ihj.global/en/

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