

1 Outline of Tokyo Program

In the morning of October 6 (Sun.) to 9 (Wed.), overseas participants joined in the discussion and institutional visits with Japanese participants based on three courses including Labor Society in Japan and Each Country, Disaster Management and National Identity & Multicultural Society Course for the International Youth Conference. On October 8 (Tue.) they took part in the Discussion Summary Presentation which compiled their three day activities.

2 International Youth Conference: Discussion Program (October 6-9)

Itinerary for International Youth Conference

Date	Time	Program	Venue
October 6 (Sun.)	9:30-11:30	Presentation of Outcome	Hotel Mystays Premier Narita
	12:30-17:30	Course Discussion	
October 7 (Mon.)	10:30-15:00	Institutional Visit by Course	Institutional Visit based on 3 Courses
	16:10-17:30	Reception	Hotel New Otani
October 8 (Tue.)	9:00-12:00	Course Discussion	Hotel Mystays Premier Narita
	13:00-16:00		
	16:10-17:30	Presentation of Course Discussion	
	19:00-21:00	Cultural Exchange Dinner	
October 9 (Wed.)	9:00-12:00	Orientation & Course Discussion	Hotel Mystays Premier Narita
	13:30-15:00	Summary Session	

Course Discussion Facilitators

Labor Society in Japan and Each Country

Disaster Management

National Identity & Multicultural Society

Outline of Labor society in Japan and the World Course

◆ Theme:

Issues of labor society in Japan and each country

◆ Course Goal:

This course aims to discuss issues of human resource development in labor societies in Japan and the world with some case studies that participants with diverse backgrounds, cultures, and ways of thinking bring in.

Given we are living in an information-driven/intensive/oriented society and there exists strong need of talent development fit for this age, we would like to start with questions such as “What is information?” “What information can be found valuable?” “How to make good use of information especially in business?” “What kind of skills to acquire even if you are not an expert in IT field?”

Hopefully our discussions can make everyone want to think about social contributions by the youth.

◆ Institutional Visit on October

◆ Course Staff:

Facilitator :

Staff :

Staff :

Staff :

Minamoto Takaki, Facilitator

I set information society or informatization as one of the discussion approaches to provide my students with a starting angle to discuss “working society” that can encompass a wide range of topics. In general, “Informatization” may not necessarily be included in the word group that comes first to one’s mind when one sees the word, “working society.” In particular, when Japanese cover “working society” in Japan and want to take on an international hue, for instance, the labor force from Southeast Asia may be a typical theme. I have heard that finding characteristics and problems or issues of the Japanese labor market from such an angle to compare with its counterparts and analyze them is a popular approach at university seminars. In fact, most of the youths who participated in my seminars agree with this common approach. Rather quite a few of them are very familiar with the theme.

However, that’s why I have avoided these keywords often given and highly associable when discussing these themes. And by pulling out the ambiguous word, “information” with multiple meanings and presenting it combined with something unfamiliar to the youths, I intended to let them experience discussing the themes internationally with some senses of freshness and confusion. Moreover, I was not afraid of going off the rails and preferred not always following the schedules. In non-traditional areas, discussions by young professional with new ideas rather than authoritative experts are all the more meaningful. In reality, they struggled a number of times, but proceeded with difficult discussions each time. For these reasons, I believe that the purpose of the course was fulfilled satisfactorily.

Regardless of the place, informatization reaches

an equal impact on the globe directly or indirectly today. Nevertheless, each country or region has a different definition of what an information society is, and youths have exchanged their ideas and thoughts.

And it was significant that we visited Code Chrysalis, a link between information and labor, to learn Silicon Valley values.



Japanese Participant, Philippines and Viet Nam Delegation

The first thing I felt was a sense of crisis that there is nothing I could do if I could not make myself understood in English. Although the venue was in Japan, Japanese is not the standard language, of course, and English is a global standard for communication with people from around the world; you cannot reach the start line if you cannot speak English. It was very scary that things were proceeding without my thoughts being communicated to the people around me. If the opinion different from yours becomes a group opinion as a result of making your opinion collide with somebody's, it is OK and it is completely different from the case where you did not express your own opinion at all. From the viewpoint of the overseas youth side, I felt that if you

do not say anything, you are not participating or not cooperating to solve the problem. They speak a lot, but they humbly listen to other people's opinions to deepen discussions based on a new perspective which was obtained by expressing their own opinion. It was a conference that I really felt I could change the flow of the discussion as much as I could by expressing my opinion and that there was not one way of thinking.

I realized that the world I'm seeing is very small, so in the future I would like to make a habit of thinking about things from various perspectives, and I will make myself such an active participant as the overseas youths if I have a chance to participate in such a place in the future.



Japanese Participant, Philippines and Viet Nam Delegation

The subject of our discussion was “Labor Society” and we had discussions with the youths from 6 countries with diverse backgrounds. In particular, we considered the future labor society from the perspective of how much impact IT will have on the labor society and what kind of skills we should acquire in that society.

We came to a conclusion that, though it seems that the skills to operate computers such as programming may be regarded as important in the recent labor market in rapidly digitalized society, soft skills such as communication skills, teamwork, and collaboration skill are much more important.

I visited a programming school called Code Chrysalis, and it was very impressive that such kinds of soft skills were considered most important. We reaffirmed that in order to coexist with technology, it is becoming more important to acquire human skills than ever before.

Through the discussions with overseas youths, I was able to learn the importance of expressing my opinions as well as deepening mutual understanding across countries by respecting the diverse ideas of people in each country.



Overseas Participant, Lithuania Delegation

Coming from the field of biomedical science I had never encountered the term ‘Labor Society’ before coming to participate in the International Youth Conference. The course summary emphasized the importance of information as a resource in business and IT skills as an important direction for human resource development. It asked questions such as “how can we get more people interested in IT?”, “how do we raise information literacy?” and “how do we effectively use information in business?”. I became interested because in biotechnology there is an increasing demand for bioinformatics specialists capable of working with big data.

The first course discussion session started with fun icebreakers that got everyone talking and working in mixed teams even though there were a lot of people with different backgrounds who met for the first time. We read some texts that showed how information can be used to your advantage. After discussing in groups we presented the ideas we got from these examples. We were continuously given freedom of discussion and presentation topics by our facilitator Minamoto-san who encouraged autonomous

work and as a result it was interesting to see how many different ideas we covered and presented in total.

On the second day of our course discussion we had an institutional visit to Code Chrysalis – a coding school based in Roppongi established by an international team of specialists. We had many activities there which taught us a lot about the importance of cooperation, communication and effective planning when working towards a common goal in a team. We heard about agile vs waterfall development methodologies, minimum viable product, retrospective and soft skills. It was interesting to hear about product development strategies and methods that can be applied in many different areas, not only software engineering. In-between the learning activities we had a chance to enjoy lunch at a famous restaurant Gonpachi.

The third day of our course discussion was the most intense. We were given a single goal – to have a presentation ready to share with all the conference members by the end of the day and complete freedom to choose the topic and organize our work.

The importance of soft skills which we learned about at Code Chrysalis left an impression on many of us and we chose it as our presentation topic. It was a little difficult to get the work going at first, but as more and more people joined in planning and directing the workflow everyone relaxed and were ready to step up and speak up if they had an idea. In our presentation we suggested renaming the so called 'soft' skills into 'key' skills to emphasize the importance of communication, creativity, critical thinking, empathy and collaboration in business and society in general. As a closing remark we pointed out that even the presentation itself was a product of these 'soft' skills everyone exhibited while working in such a diverse group.

The final day of the conference was for reflecting on what we learned and exchanging our experiences in the Labor Society group with participants from other discussion courses. We found that the 'soft' skills we talked about were also the basis for

creating an ideal multicultural society and having effective disaster management, as discussed with the respective courses' participants. Even regarding our own Labor Society topics of IT literacy, we found that while technical skills are important it is the 'soft' skills that make us apply them efficiently.

We had some very busy and memorable days at the International Youth Conference and I think we all learned a lot about cooperation, accepting others and working together towards a common goal. In addition to that we all had fun during breaks, learned about different cultures, different ways of doing things and formed lasting friendships. On behalf of the Labor Society discussion course participants I would like to thank the Cabinet Office, Government of Japan and all the organizers of the International Youth Conference for providing us with this opportunity to learn and grow as individuals and as professionals in our respective fields.



Overseas Participant, Austrian Delegation

First of all one of the most delightful things about the Youth Conference Discussion Program was that you could interact and get to know so many different personalities from very diverse backgrounds. In my opinion this helped a lot to further our appreciation of differences between us all.

While the discussions on the topic of issues of labor society were nice the thing that was really interesting to me was the differences in discussion culture. With young, ambitious people from 7 different countries it was an amazing experience from a socio-cultural point of view. I think all of us could learn a lot from observing the way the others presented and spoke up during our numerous discussions.

During our discussions it became clear to me that even though we all live in completely different countries and situations we share a lot of the same values and hopes for us and our communities. We want to have a stable job and also try to influence the world that we live in for the better. Even though it is not easy I found it very refreshing to see so much motivation and eagerness in all participants.

We also had the great opportunity to visit “Code Chrysalis“ a coding boot camp where you can learn the necessary skills to become a programmer in only 3 months of fulltime study. The founder as well as all employees of Code Chrysalis welcomed us very warmly and explained to us what social key skills are missing in the programming sector.

Internationally, but also especially in Japan the demand of social skills is rising in a world which is more and more influenced by machines and programs.

For me the highlight of the discussion program was the last day of our labor society course where we had a whole day to prepare a presentation about the things we learned in our course. The interesting part was that the facilitators left us complete freedom on how to achieve that goal. So we had to structure the whole discussion day by ourselves. From energizers to discussions in small and big groups to the break times we had free reign over our day. In my opinion this was the best way to simulate what it means to be a part of a labor society. Even when there is one single goal there are innumerable possibilities and opinions on how to reach that goal. There were some intense moments when we all felt drained and exhausted but we powered through and had a nice presentation in the afternoon.

All in all I want to say that the INDEX program was an unbelievable experience. We had the opportunity to share our views and opinions on a lot of different topics as well as make a lot of friends in the process. The moments we shared will stay with us for a very long time and I will try to stay in contact with as many people as possible.

Thanks to everyone who helped to make the INDEX 2019 program what it was and I hope I will get the chance to see a lot of you again in the future.

