

Chapter 4 Proposal for SSEAYP (Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth Program)

Proposal by SSEAYP Conference for Considering its Role and Significance

1. Executive Summary

The proposal aims to introduce and summarize values, challenges and solutions, on how SSEAYP youths, both alumni and family, can contribute to foster friendship between Japan and 10 ASEAN member countries, along with their development in the future for better mutual-understanding as the mission of SSEAYP.

We identify the five valuable elements on the program including 1) Foster relations within and across continents; 2) Raising cross-cultural awareness; 3) Bridging topical relevance from Discussion Groups (DGs) to societal application; 4) Generating social impact to the community; and 5) Developing potential of youths and young adults.

There are several identified challenges in SSEAYP ranging from Recruitment and Pre-Departure Training, Onboard Activities, Country Program, and Post-Program Activities (PPAs), to Alumni Network, which we analyze and provide with various proposed solutions. In this proposal, Key Performance Indicator is also prepared in terms of being a general measurement or evaluation method for the proposed solutions.

2. Values of SSEAYP

The SSEAYP experience is unique to each Participating Youth (PY). It includes our outlook on international friendship and youth development, which was identified during the discussion. These are now classified in the following five values:

(1) Fostering closer relations within and across contingents

SSEAYP serves as a platform to raise awareness about Japan and ASEAN. It's also where we can talk about what matters in our region, and figure out, what we can do as part of the youth sector. It also links us with one another and serves as an enabler in career ventures and project collaborations. This is further strengthened through the active participation of PYs in PPAs in both their local and other contingents' PPAs overseas.

(2) Raising cross-cultural awareness

During this time, we also get to exchange cultural insights (discussion and other onboard activities, local and social exchanges with local youths), exhibit talents (national presentations), and experience them first-hand (homestay and field study). This allows us to know each other's culture. Indeed, this is a celebration of diversity that reminds us to be good stewards of our heritage.

(3) Bridging topical relevance from Discussion Groups (DGs) to societal application

Learnings from DGs can enlighten PYs theoretically and practically through case contextualization to resolve specific countries' issues. Relevant ideas developed from these sessions help strengthen PYs' PPAs. DGs also allow for cross-exchange of ideas or even brainstorming of new solutions, providing insights to innovations and knowledge which PYs may not be exposed to within their contingent. This not only broadens the ideation perspective but allows for peer learning within the PY community.

(4) Generating social impact to the community

Integrating the learnings from SSEAYP, PYs are empowered with the network resource and ideas on generating social impact (e.g., Empowering the next generation of Youth) to the community through their PPAs.

(5) Developing potential of youths and young adults

Various components within SSEAYP (e.g., Onboard Activities) allow PYs to grow in self-development and discipline, character building and growing their personal potential through leadership roles, and strengthening their leadership capabilities. SSEAYP also generates positive influence for local youths during the various interactions in the Country Programs, while sharing about the SSEAYP experience, potentially generating interest in future SSEAYP applications.

3. Challenges and Solutions

(1) Recruitment and Pre-Departure Training

Identified Challenges	Proposed Solutions
The number of applicants is limited and not diversified enough (urban vs. rural area) in some of ASEAN member countries.	- Improve promotional contents (interactive multimedia) with a diversity of applicants' target and optimization of popular or trending digital media to reach and engage the youth population all over the nation.
The recruitment or selection process of applicants in some countries is biased.	- The governments of participating countries could produce collaborative documents with the alumni as a guideline for the selection process and/or Pre-Departure Training (if required by those countries which don't have guidelines for those procedures). - Build a joint platform for Japan and ASEAN member countries to monitor the recruitment and selection process, then evaluate it for the next program.
Limited time of Pre-Departure Training, especially for the DGs preparation.	- Communication between Facilitators and the PYs in preparation should be developed either by conference call or virtual workshop. - Possibility of having a trial period in the chosen DG, to test PYs interest and comprehension on the topic.

(2) Onboard Activities: Discussion Program and PYs Seminars

Identified Challenges	Proposed Solutions
Some PYs found that DG sessions were not engaging, often got disconnected from the context, and sometimes no continuity of discussion after the program.	- Conduct discussions with more interactive formats and provide constructive feedback to Facilitators after each session. - Training for trainers needs to be provided for the Facilitators to propose on inducing active learning and more implemented methods. - Life-coaching sessions (youth leadership, time management, etc.) should be provided. - Propose DG's output as a "hackathon" project and/or actual project during and/or after the program. - PYs could give feedback or suggestions on discussion topics for the next batch of SSEAYP based on experience and evaluation. - One PPA for each Contingent and one PPA for each DG to sustain the communication and connection related to DG after the program.
Some topics in the PY Seminars are sensitive.	- Confirmed definition that the topics of seminar should be culturally friendly, fun and engaging, also provides hands-on experience.

(3) Country Program: Japan and ASEAN Member Countries (Field Study and Homestay)

Identified Challenges	Proposed Solutions
In some countries, Field Study was limited to the format of just sitting in a closed space.	- Conduct various and more interactive activity formats beyond discussion in Field Study; could include gamification, presentation, study tour, and other methods to engage more with the participants.
In some of ASEAN member countries, Field Study was sometimes not related to the main topic or major content of the DG.	- To build a significant connection between Field Study and DG, a list of institutions to be visited during the program has to be adjusted. Provided with early communication with Facilitators for relevance.
Homestay period is considered too short, both in Japan's prefectures and in destination countries.	- Lengthen homestay duration to four days three nights for better engagement and connection, considering that it takes a longer time for some PYs to arrive at their destination / host family's house from the homestay matching's location.

(4) Post-Program Activities (PPAs)

Identified Challenges	Proposed Solutions
No sustainability, tangible result, and/or tools for impact measurement of the program; no structure for monitoring and evaluation.	- Need to provide a set of indicators for impact assessment / project requirement / follow-up mechanism for the PPAs. - Previous PPAs should be made available to be continued by the next batch if they're proved impactful and feasible to be conducted.
Insufficient commitment from the ex-PYs and small visibility or exposure of the program across countries.	- Involve influential ex-PYs / stakeholders to enhance the exposure of the project initiative with good quality documentation. - Mass media should be involved to promote more significant publicity of the PPAs; in line with the media partnership's plan. - Urge for more collaborations between younger batches and older batches in PPAs to enhance commitment.
The necessity of support and involvement from the national / local government.	- Governments and SSEAYP Alumni Associations (AAs) should ensure full assistance and support to PPAs through financial, administrative, logistics support. - Government ensures that every PPA has a significant impact and provides for a sustainability factor.

(5) Alumni Network and Post-Program Relations

Identified Challenges	Proposed Solutions
Some of the AAs' websites or social media are considered inactive. Many SSEAYP alumni are only active in / around the capital city area.	- Creation of PYs professional database in every country collected and engaged into one digital platform e.g. LinkedIn. - Alumni interactions need to be continued through the regular event (SSEAYP International General Assembly and Reunion Onboard) and/or a new concept of annual gathering involving suburban and rural areas. - Engage international ex-PYs living in each country into the national SSEAYP networks or the country's AA.
The slow pace of regeneration on the AA's organizational structure or composition was observed in several AAs.	- There should be a requirement of having a balanced number of different generations or batches in the AA. - The organization's structure in every country's AA should be clearly stated and updated every year.

4. Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

The KPI functions as a follow-up and evaluation mechanism to objectively measure the continuity and development of Alumni Network and Post-Program Relations in general. This includes indicator involving every AA.

SSEAYP Component	Determining Variable	2022-2025	2026-2029	2030-2033
Post-SSEAYP Activities: Number of activities or projects initiated by AA per year (per country and/or cross-country collaboration) and number of participants' involvement.	P/Y: Project per Year C/Y: Cross-Country Collaboration per Year TP: Minimum Total Participants	3 P/Y (min. 1 C/Y) with 150 TP	4 P/Y (min. 2 C/Y) with 300 TP	5 P/Y (min. 3 C/Y) with 500 TP

5. Conclusion

We are grateful for the presence of SSEAYP, a sign and evidence of sustainable cooperation of Japan and 10 ASEAN member countries; to promote friendship and mutual understanding among youths. The values of SSEAYP are reinforced along with long-period activities and group life onboard the ship, and we hope that the program will be further improved to add more value to SSEAYP. We are here now as an effort to continue the precious legacy and goodwill that have been established by the SSEAYP alumni.

Our commitment, our connectivity, and our collaboration, despite the challenges in the current situation, will be vital to the success of the program. Improvement

in our promotional content, joint-digital platform as a pre- and post-program facility, in integrated cooperation with the multilateral governments, are examples of concrete measures that we could approach for SSEAYP.

Now, more than 13,000 people (including National Leaders) are part of the SSEAYP Family; reunion and regeneration are essential to this growing organization. While the reunions enable us to bring heart-warming moments with the people who we met through the SSEAYP journey, the regenerations let us breathe new air into the SSEAYP AA. We believe that SSEAYP is a "once-in-a-lifetime journey", and we hope that SSEAYP will develop further in the future through this proposal.