

## The 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.

## Profiles of Jury Members

### **【Message from Director of Jury】**

#### **Prof. Yoshiaki Hongo**

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

(Visiting Professor at Tokyo Metropolitan University)

The Fourth Japan Tourism Awards have been expanded since last year, in a reflection of the fact that tourism in Japan is steadily expanding into more regions and into the realms of various industries. A total of 261 entries were submitted this year, surpassing last year’s number.

Worth particular mention is the Snow Country Tourist Area Association, winner of the Grand Prize. As a destination marketing organization (DMO) working to devise and develop the future of tourism in the snow country regions, the purpose of the initiative has been to continuously strive to change regional attitudes for the better. This initiative is highly appreciated.

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At the same time, as the number of entries involving socially important initiatives such as Eco Tourism, Universal Tourism, and Diversity increases, it is now clear that tourism also plays a key role in helping people everywhere to forge their dreams, while moving forward with social and economic development.

In addition, entries—designed to boost productivity and at the same time to boost customer satisfaction—using information and communication technology (ICT), which is also a Special Award category, are also significantly up. These enable us to witness the strength of Japanese tourism and its ongoing development.

### **【Jury Members】** (Total of 12)

**Mr. Adam Fulford** (CEO, Fulford Enterprises, Ltd. )

**Mr. Yoshiro Ishihara** (Director Editor-in-Chief, WING Aviation Press Co., LTD. )

**Mr. Yoshiyuki Oshita** (General Manager, Center for Arts Policy & Management, Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting Co., Ltd.)

**Mr. Shigeto Kubo** (President, Japan Travel and Tourism Association)

**Mr. Satoshi Seino** (President, Japan National Tourism Organization)

**Mr. Waichi Sekiguchi** (Senior Staff Writer, Nikkei Inc.)

**Mr. Yoshiyuki Takada** (General Manager, Regional Planning Department, Development Bank of Japan Inc.)

**Mr. Hiromi Tagawa** (Chairman, Japan Association of Travel Agents)

**Ms. Miyako Hamano** (Special Adviser Cool Japan Strategy,  
Secretariat of Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters Cabinet Office)

**Mr. Shinya Fujii** (Director-General, Service Industry Department, Japan External Trade Organization(JETRO))

**Ms. Masami Morishita** (Professor, Department of International Tourism Management  
Faculty of International Tourism Management, Toyo University)

**Mr. Shirou M. Wakui** (Professor, Landscape Architect (J.R.L.A.), Faculty of Environmental Studies, Tokyo City University)

## Grand Prize

**Organization name :** Snow Country Tourist Area Association (Snow Country Tourism Zone)

**Initiative :** Creating new brand with the Regional Cooperation DMO, 'Meet the wisdom hidden in the white world'

### Initiative Overview

The Snow Country Tourist Area Association (the Snow Country Tourism Zone) promotes the finding of new customers by visiting several cities, towns and villages with the regional unique snow cultures as their brand. By developing the arrival type tourist products which are rooted in the snow cultures, we achieved sales of 4,160,000 yen per year in the first year. After 2 years, in 2017, we achieved sales of 16,070,000 yen and expanded our market 4 times. As a pioneer of the Japanese ver. DMO, we have the opportunity to show our work in the media and we receive many groups of observers to our zone and the number of the visitors is increasing annually.

### Special Features

The Snow Country Tourist Area Association features the 7 cities and villages that link with each other and create new values rooted in their regional way of life and cultures. Setting up clear target of customers, we produced the travel products which customers can feel regional unique values. We built up quality management in order to obtain the customers' trust. In addition, we also work on pioneering projects for sustainable development as a DMO association by marketing research etc. These projects were introduced in the TV program of TV Tokyo, The Dawn of Gaia.

### Selection Comment

- As a pioneering destination marketing organization (DMO) in the Japanese market, this sustainable community development initiative is recognized for the results it has engendered, including creating a collaborative structure between three prefectures and seven municipalities with a view to forging a new “brand story” for the snow country.
- By creating new value—characterized by a lifestyle and culture firmly rooted in the community—this initiative sets clear visitor targets by applying marketing strategies, developing products to match customer needs, and implementing strict quality control.

### Award Winner Message

It is honored to receive such award this time. Snow area seems attractive to those who live in non-snow area. However, it seems "disadvantage" to the residents in heavy snow area.

We have continued our business in order to change the mind of local people. Since led by private business, the function of secretariat is not sufficient. But we believe that it is our strongest point that we work together with colleague committing to the work with mission, even they have their own job. It would be glad if this award could lead to the encouragement to our colleague and pride to those who live in snow area. Thank you very much.

## Awards for Excellence

**Organization name** : Hatagoya & Company

**Initiative** : Expanding the only & the first MOTEL chain in Japan 'Family lodge Hatagoya' throughout the nation proposes for infrastructure building in the car-oriented society and for the new trip style

### Initiative Overview

We opened our 1st motel in 1995. Since then, without using any publicity, our users, who were willing to stay in accommodations like ours, have been supporting us for over 23 years. We have 66 accommodations which are directly managed and more than 3.8 million people have stayed in our accommodations. In 2008, we opened our motels within the SAs (service areas) and the PAs (parking areas) on the highways, which was our long-time dream and there are currently 3 motels. And within this year, we are planning to open more motels in Hokkaido, Kyoto and Osaka and we succeeded in expanding our business almost throughout Japan. Our motels are small. So we can also open our motels in small regions which normally have less demand. Also, our business is focused on accommodation itself. So collecting customers can also appeal to the region. For instance, for eating and shopping, customers use the other facilities surrounding the motel. This means that our facility is essentially the fundamental facility to develop the regions. As a result, we received many offers from the local government to open other motels and we have already opened motels in some places following their requests.

### Selection Comment

- The motel is often misunderstood in Japan as a not-so-classy place where people stay no more than a few hours. This initiative is moving to change that.
- People have long been talking about the fact that younger people are not driving cars as much. However, when it comes to travel with children or the elderly, the car is an extremely convenient choice of transport. This initiative has gained recognition for its potential for opening up and expanding upon new markets by making it easy for travelers to stay at facilities with their vehicle.
- Because these facilities offer mainly accommodation, and as such travelers use local area facilities for dining, shopping, etc., this initiative also helps to energize local communities.

## Awards for Excellence

**Organization name** : Jinya Connect Co., Ltd.

**Initiative** : Challenge for revolution of Ryokan-inn by using the Jinya Connect

### Initiative Overview

Jinya Connect is a cloud mission-critical system, which we can use to improve the following

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management:

1. Visualizing information. Shifting from an individual possession to a whole sharing. We can share information whenever, with whoever and wherever we want, and from any device.
2. Speeding up a PDCA cycle (plan-do-check-act). Shifting from management per month to daily management.
3. Use information, not only have it. We use a historical record of customers' use in the past to improve our hospitality, as well as using it for the next sales opportunities. → Implementing the customer management system. Conveying the information through our website and SNS.
4. Streamlining tasks to increase contact and talk to customers. Reducing backyard tasks to increase the time of customer service. Shifting from analogue to digital and from manual to auto. Reducing inefficient meetings, morning and evening meetings.

### **Selection Comment**

This revolutionary program utilizes ICT to reform traditional Japanese inn (ryokan) operations, a typical example of a low productivity business. It has also achieved an increase in productivity, boosted customer satisfaction, and reformed the way employees work all at the same time. This methodology, which has been applied to other accommodation facilities, is recognized for its contribution to energizing the accommodation sector.

## **Awards for Excellence**

**Organization name** : JTB Corp.

**Initiative** : Honolulu Festival

### **Initiative Overview**

The Honolulu Festival has 3 themes of 'interactive cultures,' 'education' and 'environment' and holds various events and activities. Not only Japan and Hawaii, we also call various countries and regions to join us, so as to provide people with a place so that they can expand mutual communication beyond races or ages. In addition, we make a contribution to education with the 'Educational Program'. The program is one of the participants of the Honolulu Festival which provides people with culture and interaction. To protect our beautiful earth and convey to the next generations, we cooperate with the tree planting project of 'Koa trees'. The Koa trees have been a very important part of Hawaiian life and cultures from early times. We are working for the environmental preservation activities for the Koa trees.

### **Selection Comment**

This event has been held continuously for about a quarter century as a symbol of the special friendship and relationship between Japan and Hawaii. The program continues to develop, to move beyond the realm of corporate operations—and has now become an integral part of the regional community.

## Awards for Excellent Partner

**Organization name** : Tourism Authority of Thailand

**Initiative** : 12 Hidden Gems in Thailand

### **Initiative Overview**

We are striving to invite more visitors to the sightseeing spots which aren't main sightseeing spots like Bangkok, Phuket or Chiang Mai in Thailand. Under the concept of 'Local Experience: you can experience only in the local sites', we provide people with local community experiences. In this way, we aim to offer more value for the tourists' itineraries. We expand the area to the second sites in order to gain more tourist income as well as enhancing the regional society and the tourism cluster. We designed this project with our strategy in order to attract all the targeting groups: the generation Y (or Millennials), women tourists, the DINKS (dual incomes, no kids), and the high-disposable income groups including aging people. In 2015, we started producing and distributing our magazine '12 Hidden Gems' both in Thai and English. In 2016, we also started distributing the Japanese version.

### **Selection Comment**

This initiative features the “12 Hidden Gems,” a selection of new destinations for tourists visiting primarily Bangkok from Japan, 80% of whom are repeaters. The number of tourists is increasing, attracted by relatively unknown cultural and nature spots.

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Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives

Category Awards	
Field of Domestic and Inbound Travel	
Business Category	
Companies and Organizations Initiative	Aim of the Initiative
HUIS TEN BOSCH Co., Ltd. Project of the Smart Hotel by using ICT and IoT <<awarded for the second consecutive year>>	We aim to create a completely new type of hotels by changing the concept of conventional hotels dynamically. Traditional hotels have the image of hotels which provide excellent service by people. However, we consider that the hotel business can be run by using ICT, without decreasing the quality of the service. Our project is mainly to aim to build up the hotel for guests to experience a comfortable and stylish future.
Seabird Inc. CYCLOG is the IT and cycling event for the regional developments	The situation of the declining population is an unavoidable problem in modern times. The regions need to solve various problems in the near-to-mid term such as 'increasing populations and money from the outside of the region' and 'promoting people to move into the region'. With the view of the KPI (key performance indicator), we need 'to acquire moving populations', 'to increase the economic effectiveness towards the region', 'to acquire new topics' and 'to achieve these missions at a lower cost with fewer people'. To be more precise, the region needs to hold events to invite tourists with a new approach. The company gives the solutions through sports events for these common administrative problems in all the regions.
Itadakimasu Company Picnic in the Farm with a Field Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The company aims to develop the region with the attractions of Agriculture in the Tokachi region whose self-sufficiency rate in food is 100%. The company also aims to develop agriculture for their sightseeing resources.</li> <li>- The company also aims to create an opportunity for people to know how the farmers produce the food, which everyone eats daily.</li> <li>- The local people become guides, instead of farmers who are busy working in their farms. The local people guide tourists to see around the farms. In this way, we can provide tourists with a high qualified and sustainable service.</li> <li>- The former teachers of the schools and the former officers of the JA (Japan Agricultural Cooperatives) are trained to become the guides and they get paid as the regional human resources. The local people can obtain working opportunities as well as motivation.</li> </ul>
Fuji Tozan School GORIKI / GORIKI Co., Ltd. The high-value added Eco-tour with small groups in Mt. Fuji <<awarded for the second consecutive year>>	Mount Fuji and its area were designated as cultural world heritage sites. Throughout the year, we develop and organize pioneering and sustainable eco-tours with small group tours rather than the mass tours which were common tours to climb Mount Fuji in the past. We maintain our highly professional tour system with safety management and detailed guidance with care. We are also working to cooperate with the industry-government-academia researchers. In the Mount Fuji area, there are many problems and opportunities. We are striving to develop the region as well as becoming a business model for next-generation eco-tour operators.
Art Mix Japan Executive Committee Art Mix Japan 2019	We had a sense of crisis that 'our wonderful Japanese culture in the world is completely ignored in Japan at this time.' In these modern times, globalization is increasing and new emerging countries are rapidly developing. We started our project in order for Japanese to have a strong identity. Since the Edo era, Niigata prefecture has been an intersection of western cultures beyond the sea and the eastern cultures beyond the mountains. From Niigata, which is a typical Japanese hometown with scenery of rice fields, we convey the attractions of Japan in order for Japanese to raise our awareness. At the same time, we aim to obtain more attention for Japan from the entire world.
WAK JAPAN Co. Making a program of Origami (folding paper) as Japanese culture, and producing Origami products to support patients with incurable diseases	Since 1997, we have been introducing Origami which is folding paper art as our basic program for the cultural experience as well as the tea ceremony, Kimono, calligraphy and flower art to the world. Origami products are usually fragile and easy to be torn and Origami was supposed to be just a play activity. So we applied the special substances, which include preservatives and waterproof properties, onto the Origami paper. In this way, we succeeded in producing Origami products with durability. We obtained the utility model patent for these products. With the cooperation from the NPO which supports patients with incurable diseases, we developed the Origami product 'Kyoto Flower Lamp'.

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**Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives**

Kumano tour plan	We aim to solve regional problems in the Kumano Koto Iseji Route as below: 'Tourists walk only on mountain paths, but do not go into the town and do not communicate with the local people,' 'Tourists stay for a short time, just one-day trips or stopping by. There is not much regional economic effectiveness,' 'The Kumano Kodo Route is designated as a world heritage site in the wide area, however, the sightseeing business is divided by region. It's difficult for tourists to understand the program', 'There are a few young people who are working for the Kumano Kodo Route. The people who are working are aging and it's difficult to preserve the site in the future'.
Eco-tourism to connect and expand the Kumano Kodo Iseji Route <<awarded for the second consecutive year>>	
OKINAWA TOURIST SERVICE INCORPORATED	1. Our members of staff are qualified as the Tsuyaku Annaishi which are guide interpreters and learned the Sanshin Okinawan musical instrument. We provide customers, who are mainly from Chinese-speaking countries, with high quality local tours to introduce Okinawan cultures and songs in Chinese. 2. We provide individual travelers, who cannot use rent-a-car from China or who are not used to driving, or not confident about driving, with a second transportation as another choice of travelling in Okinawa. 3. The Chinese-speaking tourists are mostly from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan etc. They can share the experience by singing songs and playing games in the same bus. We aim to promote their mutual-understanding as well as the cultural interaction through these activities.
Okinawa Chinese music bus	
Hyokichiya, Ama Hut Hachimankamado	We had the first Ama divers' hut which opened to the public in Japan. We expect that tourists talk to the Ama divers and enjoy fresh seafood from the Ise Shima which Ama divers caught. Tourists can experience the unique Ama diver's culture beyond the regions, religions and culture. This service became a new business model. And we can provide motivation and working opportunities for the Ama divers. This helps to stimulate the economy in the area. We will continue to increase customer satisfaction and maintain the Ama diver's business. We also protect resources by releasing young shells and making a sustainable sightseeing site.
A project to develop sustainable regions, 'Calling tourists from the inside and outside of Japan by experience of the Ama diver hut'	
Akita Nairiku Jukan Tetsudo	We are located in the Nairiku (which means inland) of Akita Prefecture with beautiful nature and a good quality of water. In this project, we provide customers with gorgeous lunch boxes in the train. Customers can enjoy the ingredients and meals, with a great regional scenery in the train to enjoy with their 5 senses. This is an efficient PR way for all the attractions including people, food and the scenery. We aim to increase the number of fans towards the region, people and the Akita Nairiku line. These fans become repeaters and speakers who promote the regions. The regions are facing depopulation and aging problems. So we would like to increase the populations of visitors and develop the regions with local people.
Conveying attractions of regions with trains of surprising Tamatebako lunch boxes	
YUKKUREISM HOKKAIDO	With a theme of 'tasting, enjoying and feeling', we offer various eco-tours. We focus on the attractions of nature, food, culture and people in the area and prioritize feeling. We respect individual values and encourage tourists for the new discovery and experience. In addition, we provide tourists with activities so that tourists can feel diversity. We receive inbound tourists and have eco-tours abroad for their understanding of different values. We aim to link between regions, indicate new possibilities of further development. We also aim to create a sustainable society with a limited pressure of use.
Eco-tour to link the regions by tasting, enjoying and feeling <<awarded for the second consecutive year>>	
Hato Bus Co., Ltd.	The 'O Sola Mio are double-deck open buses and celebrated their 10-year anniversary in service. We created completely new Tokyo sightseeing routes with the buses. Recently, inbound tourists are increasing and these tourists demand a short-time course to fill up the time of their trip. Also, one-day trips to Tokyo from other regions became easier because there are many public transportations with good infrastructure. With Hato Bus hospitality, we would like to promote sightseeing the city of Tokyo more by actualizing various customers' needs.
Multifaceted tourism approach with the service of the double-deck open bus 'O Sola Mio	



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**Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives**

ICHINOYU Co., Ltd	We set up the Hakone Onsen (hot spring) as a fundamental resource for our project, cooperating with Ryokan inns designated as cultural properties and farmers and fishermen etc. We provide tourists with touristic experience packages combined with Hakone Onsen, cultural properties and agriculture. In this way, we aim to develop fundamental tourism in the Hakone area for foreigners who visit Japan. Putting Onsen Ryokan-inns in the area and regional tourism resources together, we provide foreign visitors with a new comprehensive accommodation plan. We believe that tourists will have great memories of their trip. We can increase tourists' satisfaction and attract more visitors.
Providing tourists with the touristic experience service combined with the Hakone Onsen and cultural properties and agriculture etc.	
Nippon Travel Agency Co., Ltd.	The regional economy decline is a serious problem and our country needs to promote 'Regional revival' to solve this problem. We aim to develop the regional economy by expanding populations with tourism and promoting regional revival. We have the concept of 'Regional revival based on the railways'. And we can achieve it only if we work with regional government and residents together. Although our budget is small, we use our knowledge to achieve our aim. We also believe that our activities can bring dreams and hope to the local railways in the regions throughout the nation.
Red balloon - Take a ride on the Sightseeing train, 'Nagamare Strait Train'	
Travelience Inc.	We aim to create a new travel style with our platform. We built up the platform in which foreign tourists can find private tours arranged by local tour guides. Tourists can make a reservation and a payment through the platform. At the same time, we offer tour guides with their working opportunities all over the nation, who have limited ways of finding their jobs. The local tour guides can obtain their new customers and work being professionals. Tourists can get highly satisfied by joining their customized tours consulting with tour guides.
TripleLights	
East Japan Railway Company	The Train Suite Shiki-shima set up 3 basic courses throughout the year, however, there is much more attractive nature and culture in each area. So through the Shiki-shima, we introduce various areas in the East Japan and convey the attractions of the seasons, in order to make a contribution to develop the regions. We established a course of 'Season of the East Japan' which focuses on the seasonal events such as flowers blooming and regional festivals etc. to provide a wonderful experience for guests.
Train Suite Shiki-shima, a course of 'Season of the East Japan' to enjoy the season <<awarded for the second consecutive year>>	
Umemori Honten Co., Ltd.	The Umemori Sushi School has started in the children cancer ward in the hospital, in which the president's daughter stayed who was suffering from leukemia. The special Sushi making experience is a universal designed welcoming business in the world to make people happy no matter what nations, races, diseases or difficulties people have. Through the experience of making the king of Japanese cuisine Sushi, the school aims to invite foreign tourists by conveying kindness and gratitude. In addition, the school is also the regional creation business to develop the regional economy and offer employment opportunities. The school creates impressive experience and fosters kind human resources, invites positively disabled as well as receiving people for working experience etc.
Inviting foreign tourists with a special Sushi-making experience and conveying universal designed way of welcoming guests to the world	
<b>Regional Category</b>	
Hamamatsu Film Commission Location Shooting	This project can increase the direct economic effectiveness (economic value) caused by the filming companies or groups. In addition, the project increases the social value for citizens and their pride because their locations were chosen for film shooting. This project can make a contribution to develop the regions.
The number of supporting films increased to approximately double in 3 years, the successive days of filming were more than 200 days per year in 3 years. The track of the Film Commission Promoting Bureau of the Hamamatsu City Hall	
Gobo Hidaka Expo (Onpaku), Executive Committee	With the catch-phrase 'The town we live in is very attractive', we aim to convey the attractions of the Gobo Hidaka area to the visitors of the area. First of all, the regional people need to discover the attractions of the regional touristic resources in the Gobo Hidaka region, develop them, as well as conveying them to visitors through interaction among participants.
Gobo Hidaka Expo <<awarded for the second consecutive year>>	

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### Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives

Nagomi Visit	<p>"Home visit to enjoy meals with travelers from the world" is a project for both travelers who have a strong interest in Japan and Japanese who do not have many opportunities to learn foreign cultures. Through the interaction of these people by 'eating the same food in the same pot', we aim to promote the individual's mutual-understanding towards different cultures and personal growth, as well as bringing diversity and peace to our society. The users can mutually build their valued relationship by being friends, instead of being 'guests and hosts' in a limited-period relationship.</p>
Home visit to enjoy meals with travelers from the world	
OTA OPEN FACTORY, executive committee	<p>Currently, there are approx. 3,500 factories in Ota-ku, Tokyo. These factories are mainly manufacturers specialized in fundamental technologies associated with processing machineries and metals by cutting and pressing etc. These factories gather their technologies and have networks which closely link with local people in the community.</p> <p>We aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) foster new creative industries,</li> <li>b) expand the foundation of Monozukuri (manufacturing),</li> <li>c) and regenerate attractive and creative spaces.</li> </ul> <p>To achieve this, we focus on the power of tourism and hold events to open all the factories to the public.</p>
OTA OPEN FACTORY <<awarded for the second consecutive year>>	
Kosei Yume Furusato Waiwai Club	<p>In 1999, we started walking events in four courses including visiting regional sightseeing spots for the regional exchange opportunities and eco-tourism purposes. There are wide-ranging participants from the young to the old for environmental preservation activities. Our bamboo forests have been very important for our traditional industries. In 2007, we started an eco-tour program which tourists can experience taking care of a bamboo forest, nature observation and food education with the theme of 'The New Tale of the Bamboo-Cutter'. In 2011, we cultivated the land and have been using the space for a food educational program. We are striving to develop the regions and convey the importance of environmental preservation.</p>
Taking care of nature in the Biwa Lake mountains, environmental preservation and holding an eco-tour by using the Lake as a sightseeing spot for regional development	
Tohoku Tourism Promotion Organization	<p>In the past, each prefecture carried out the system of welcoming inbound tourists in the Tohoku region. However, from the point of view of being 'a wide area and the whole Tohoku region', we need to foster human resources who will become specialists of tourism. We expect that these specialists obtain great skills in the designing and planning of tourism development and proceed according to their plans through our project. In FY2016, we started the Phoenix School and we have approx. 100 students who complete the school with a 3-year plan. We aim to foster the people who deepen their knowledge, link networks between public and private sectors and other business fields, as well as operating tourism plans in the Tohoku region.</p>
Phoenix school	
ONSEN & Gastronomy Tourism Association	<p>'Visiting, Eating, and Enjoying Onsen - We established tourism which tourists can enjoy experiencing food, nature, its history and culture in the hot spring area. We aim to increase the domestic and inbound visitors and to develop the hot spring area as a fundamental sightseeing spot for a long-term stay and experiencing type of tourism.</p>
To expand ONSEN & Gastronomy throughout Japan <<awarded for the second consecutive year>>	
OZ-group Kaito-yumin club	<p>We aim to make a sustainable contribution to regions by tourism. There are many unique Ama divers cultures and fishing villages in the isolated islands which directly link their lives and religions. They are usually hidden unless tourists experience it on their own. People have been maintaining the regional resources such as their cultural bond, customs, the Shinto ceremonies, and their spirits etc. which don't have any shapes. However, they are disappearing at this time. So we aim to protect people's efforts and wisdom by knowing them, and convey them to the future. In addition, we aim to make people join the touristic activities with new ideas and diverse ways so as to bring happiness to the people.</p>
Linking regions by eco-tourism and a project of sustainable tourism in the isolated islands and fishing villages	

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### Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives

Fukushima Tourism & Product Exchange Association	Fukushima Prefecture suffered from the Great East Japan Earthquake and the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in 2011. Since then, the regional industries have been hugely damaged. Also, the agricultural industry in Fukushima is still suffering from the rumors, because people are worried about the safety. In this project, we offer new educational tours in Fukushima. The educational materials are the new experience in Fukushima which is the only place in which people experienced the natural disaster and nuclear disaster at the same time. We aim to increase the number of visitors in the region for the Fukushima's recovery.
'Fukushima Hope Tourism' to learn in Fukushima	
Okinawa Prefecture / General incorporated foundation, Okinawa Convention & Visitors Bureau (OCVB)	In the Okinawa Prefecture, people need an urgent solution to enhance the system of receiving a large amount of foreign tourists who have been increasing each year. Okinawa Prefecture appeals to Okinawan people's hospitality as the 1st priority domestically and abroad. And they promote the Okinawan brand with the project of 'Be.Okinawa'. Okinawa Prefecture and the Okinawa Convention & Visitors Bureau (OCVB) set the slogan of 'Be Welcome-nchu' in FY2014. In this project, they aim to raise each Okinawan person's hospitality, mutual-understandings and interest towards the tourism industry.
System enhances business to receive foreign visitors 'Promotion to become a Welcome-nchu to receive foreigners'	
Maimai Kyoto Executive Committee	Maimai means wandering around in Kyoto dialect. In the Maimai Kyoto, people from Kyoto become guides of the mini-tour for visitors to convey the attractions of Kyoto. The residents can re-discover the attractions of Kyoto as well as entertaining tourists and that can promote tourists to re-visit Kyoto too. By meeting new people and exchanging experiences, the Maimai mini-tour can promote the regional development as well as Kyoto as a town for walkers.
Kyoto residents guide a Kyoto mini-tour 'Maimai Kyoto'	
Minami Sanriku-cho Regional Tourism Recovery Association	After the Great East Japan Earthquake, Minami Sanriku-cho has been recovering and the stores and business offices restarted opening throughout the town. 'Minami Sanriku Tenten Map' was born to welcome visitors and to encourage visitors to hop stores around the town (Tenten), as well as connecting these reopened stores and business offices. Minami Sanriku-cho raised an important regional aim to increase and expand people and visitors based on tourism. Minami Sanriku-cho continuously issues maps to create the development of the town and the region annually.
To recover and create a regional economy by using 'Minami Sanriku Tenten Map'	
Star Village ACHI Tourism Promoting Association	Achi Village is a little village with approx. 6,500 people surrounded with flourishing nature in the South Shinshu region. In the past, there were many tourists mainly for the hot springs in the village. However, due to aging and the excessively declining population and without having a massive industry in the village, the village has been suffering with the decline in the whole region. Since 2012, with a theme of the starry sky, the village has been promoting their tourism as well as developing the building up of the sustainable regional brand.
Star Village ACHI, the best starry village in Japan	
<<awarded for the fourth consecutive year>>	
Lake Biwa Canal Promotion Council	Kyoto declined once in the Meiji era. At that time, to recover Kyoto, the ancient people worked on their pioneering projects to build up the Lake Biwa canal as well as building the first water plant in Japan, which became the fundamental development of today. In 1890, the Lake Biwa canal was completed and brought development to the industry by using water plants and freight by boat etc. However, in 1951, due to the development of truck transportation, transportation by boat has disappeared. Over 150 years later after the historical event of the Meiji Restoration, and 67 years later after the boat disappeared, the boat was finally reborn as a tour cruise. We aim to develop the attractions of the water canal area with the tour cruise, as well as new tourism resources to make a contribution to the region.
Business to resume boat operation after 67 years in the Lake Biwa canal, as well as business in association with promoting tourism along the canal.	
Kafuu Resort Fuchaku CONDO, HOTEL	To be at the same level of the worldwide top resorts, we aim to create a resort area for LGBT to visit comfortably, by deeply understanding about LGBT, which is not well-known in Japan. In addition, we create the better working environment for the workers in the tourism industry, and to solve the problem of a shortage of the human resources in the area as well as branding the area.
Creating the community where LGBTs can have a good life and work well	

## The 4<sup>th</sup> JAPAN TOURISM AWARDS Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives

Osatsu Ama Cultural Management Association	The Osatsu DMO association (which is the Osatsu Ama Cultural Management Association) mainly specializes in the Ama diver culture. The Osatsu town has the biggest number of Ama divers in Japan. The association is promoting the area of the Shinmei Shrine known as Ishigami-san as the center in which Ama divers pray for safety and a good catch there. The association aims to register as a world intangible cultural asset of the Ama culture by branding and PR of the Ama divers in Osatsu. In addition, they are promoting to increase guests of the accommodations which is the fundamental regional industry in the region, as well as having businesses to increase the economic effectiveness.
Creating the sustainable community mainly with the Ama diver culture.	
JTB Tourism Research & Consulting Co.	This is a competition for the new plan for tourism development in the town by university students throughout Japan. Through the competition, we aim to educate students in a practical way and to discover regional resources and to promote regional business.
University Students Tourism Regional Development Competition	
<b>Media Category</b>	
LIVE JAPAN	LIVE JAPAN aims to make a contribution for Japan to become a developed country in tourism to achieve 40 million foreign visitors in 2020. For the achievement, we provide foreign visitors with tourist guide services called the LIVE JAPAN PERFECT GUIDE TOKYO and one-stop service with necessary information for Japanese culture, sightseeing spots and cuisine etc. We also organize events for tourists.
LIVE JAPAN PERFECT GUIDE <<awarded for the second consecutive year>>	
All Nippon Airways Co., Ltd.	The Dou in Japanese literally means a way and a tangible manner, which also means a way of life to pursue an essence of things by specializing in one field. In the Budou, which are martial arts, people aim not only to have an objective of learning skills of the martial arts, but also to express the way of life by continuously training their bodies and minds in order to form humans. In the 'Geidou', which means the performing/fine arts, not only do people learn forms and performance of arts, but also express the way of life by pursuing a perfect beauty without any goal. We aim to convey these essences of high-context and deeply meaningful Japanese culture to the world.
IS JAPAN COOL? DOU (THE TANGIBLE MANNER)	
JTB Publishing, Inc.	This is a solution business by using a brand 'Rurubu' which is a travel information magazine which has been continuing for 34 years since 1984. We have know-how regarding traveling as a JTB group, and have strong editing skills and trust, being professionals of traveling. We provide our clients, who are mainly corporations or local governments, with an original free paper which conveys attractive sightseeing and leisure information etc.
The solution business by using the brand 'Rurubu' Editing the 'Rurubu special edit ver.'	
The Yomiuri Shimbun	The Quotable lines in literature, films, plays, or songs, or quotable lines which important people wrote. With the theme of words of wisdom in old and modern times, our expert editors introduce the background of how the words were born, the cultures and histories in the lands on the 2 pages including the front page of the online newspaper. We provide readers with the good things to read on the holiday, together with the traveling information with beautiful photos and detailed illustration maps as a guide. We aim to stimulate the readers' desires to go on a journey of knowledge.
The Yomiuri Shimbun Sunday 'Meigen Junrei - Words of wisdom journey'	
TBS VISION, Inc.	This project is mainly aimed at improving the brand power of Japanese heritages as tourism resources, and secondly is aimed at educating about the regional histories and to enhance our economy. This is the first comprehensive business to visualize the story of Japanese heritages. The Agency for Cultural Affairs and the Japan Tourism Agency highly expect the project's success. We have a core business of creating useful movies and creating a place for tourism public relations. We also expect to attract foreign visitors by having 4k (4k resolution) standard in all the movies.
TBS VISION, Inc. Japanese heritage project / Movie creation business to enhance the brand power of Japanese heritages	

The 4<sup>th</sup> JAPAN TOURISM AWARDS  
Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives

Field of Outbound Travel	
Business Category	
Tour Wave Co., Ltd.	The regional airports normally do not have international regular routes or very few. We aim to raise the convenience for the regional airports and develop the regions by running international charter flights from the regional airports. In addition, we sell inbound/outbound flights in both directions in order to promote 2-way tourism, so as to invite new flight routes.
Project for International charter flights from regional airports	
JTB Corp. Leisure Business Dept. Overseas Purchasing & Products Management Business Div. USA/Oceania Sec.	We aim to propose the way of spending time in the local sites to individual travelers for their needs by analyzing a huge amount of their questionnaires: 'I want to live like locals', 'I want to walk around the city like locals', 'I want to collect information which is not written in the guidebook' etc. We aim to make their needs possible with guide-tours held by local people who live there. Our customers can enjoy the cultural interaction with the opportunities to communicate with local people in abroad.
'- A 9-year-old project with customers' voice - The series of 'Cultural interaction!', 'Good morning', 'Welcome' and 'Good evening.' Walking around the city with local advisers on your trip	
H.I.S. Co., Ltd.	Muslims go on an Islamic pilgrimage called Hajj to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia on the Islamic calendar from 8th to 12th December. In the past, Muslims who live in Japan normally needed to go back their home once to obtain the pilgrimage visas for their pilgrimages. To solve this inconvenience, the HIS, which is a travel agency, obtained the license to provide the service of the pilgrimage visa. The HIS can provide Muslims with the pilgrimage tours departing from Japan, also with a good deal.
Challenge for the absolutely new market of the Hajj (pilgrimage) & the Umrah (the non-mandatory lesser pilgrimage)	
Miki Tourist Co., Ltd. FIT Planning and Promoting Department	In the market of traveling abroad, a type of traveling rapidly shifted from mass tourism to individual tourism, and the needs of travelers become more multifaceted. In order for the travel industry to keep on developing, we started land packages of local tours in Europe. These package tours enable travelers to attend popular sightseeing tours in the local sites (which means that the package doesn't include the tour from Japan and its flight ticket). For individual travelers, it is not easy to make a reservation to go to the local sightseeing spots on their own. Or there are not many public transportations such as trains or buses. Individual travelers can solve these problems by joining our local package tours. For travel agencies, they can reduce their risk of having a lack of tourists in order to hold big group tours. Travel agencies can also reduce the time and their tasks, instead of holding small group tours just for individuals.
The Myu Petit Tour: a short trip starting from 1 night 2 days, flight to/from the Europe, to meet demands of individual tourists 'I want such a trip'	
Regional Category	
Brand USA	The Brand USA, with a slogan of 'Beyond the gateway', promotes various activities in order to obtain tourists who travel not only to the cities which have direct flights from Japan, but also to the final destinations in the U.S.A. With this opportunity, the Brand USA opened the new online tool for travel agencies to aim to produce various USA tour products in a wide range. On the site, travel agencies can download copyright-free images and videos, as well as useful sample schedules so as to produce their travel products.
Projects to create various tour products to the USA	
Embassy of Sweden	We aim to raise Japanese people's interest in Sweden and increase the demands of Japanese travelers to Sweden. By making a contribution to develop the tourism industry, we increase the mutual-understanding between countries and that will keep expanding the exchanging of people in various fields. Through the activities of localization, people can look at the Japanese market once again. We aim to have regular routes of flights between the countries, as well as re-opening the Japan office of the Swedish government, the tourism department. When we set up the project, the number of Japanese travelers was -13.4% compared with the previous year. After starting the project, the number of travelers steadily increased. As a result, the number of travelers increased to +7.9% in 2016 and increased +3.5% in 2017.
Tourism Project of Sweden Travel and Culture Center	

**The 4<sup>th</sup> JAPAN TOURISM AWARDS**  
**Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives**

Ministry of Tourism, Republic of Indonesia	'The movie of 'The Man from the Sea' is a Japanese-Indonesian movie and its story is about the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami in Aceh, Indonesia. Through creation and publishing support, we promote mutual understanding between affected countries. In addition, we promote tourism through the event 'Jakarta Marathon' which has been continuing since 2013. In these events, Japanese visitors to Indonesia increase each year and at the same time, Indonesian visitors to Japan are increasing too. The mutual exchange between Indonesia and Japan has been expanding.
Creation support for the Japanese-Indonesian movie 'The Man from the Sea' and a successive promotion by holding 'Jakarta Marathon'	
<b>Media Category</b>	
NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation)	'People want to go traveling abroad but some thoughts might stop people traveling - 'I am bored of a typical tour', 'I want to go traveling but I can't go for some reasons' or 'I am a bit anxious to go abroad' etc... The TV program is to convey the greatness of traveling to those people. In the program, we visit famous sightseeing spots all over the world. The program has the concept of 'eating, shopping and visiting', which are normally what tourists want to do. We provide people with new and useful information which is not written in guidebooks, transportation or good deals in shopping etc. Through the program, people can simulate experience as if they are really traveling there.
The 2nd trip series - Traveling abroad a little deeper -	

## Special Awards for DMO Promotion

**Organization name** : Chichibu Omotenashi Tourism Organization

**Initiative** : Japanese ver. Regional Cooperation DMO (Destination Management Organization)

<<awarded for the second consecutive year>>

**Aim of the Project:** The Chichibu area in Saitama Prefecture includes 1 City and 4 towns and is considered as one living area. With the Chichibu self-support settlement region framework, we have a cooperative agreement in various fields. In these fields, there are 4 tourism cooperative agreements as our mission: 'promoting living-type tourism', 'increasing foreign tourists', 'establishing the regional brand and sales promotion' and 'promotion of the Chichibu Geopark'. With the mission, we established the organization and we are working on the project.

## Special Awards for DMO Promotion

**Organization name** : Yatsugatake Tourism Management

**Initiative** : Developing tourism regions beyond the Japanese ver. DMO (Destination Management Organization)

**Aim of the Project:** To aim to create an affluent and active region which we can be proud of, residents in the region need to work on enlightening awareness for the regional resources, history and customs. This will be a framework to develop the region in both living and visiting. We believe that if the regional residents continuously work on their awareness and agreements, we can manage to develop the regions. To achieve this, we established a platform of tourism regional development, which is a pioneering organization of the Japanese ver. DMO (destination management organization). With this platform, we are able to manage the wide regional cooperative business for public and private sectors smoothly.

## Special Awards for ICT Utilization

**Organization name** : Japan Airlines Co., Ltd.

**Initiative** : 'Dokokani Mairu - Go somewhere

**Aim of the Project**

Looking for a next travel destination is always fascinating. However, we have too much information and we often get tired of looking for it in these modern times. JAL considered that people need new discovery tours which happen by chance, or an easy tour service with which tourists can go traveling without any stress, rather than fixed tours. With these ideas, we aim to create diverse values for

## The 4<sup>th</sup> JAPAN TOURISM AWARDS Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives

service by promoting regions and the demand for domestic tours, not just to fill up vacancies of seats on flights.

### Special Awards for ICT Utilization

**Organization name** : Fujisankei Communications Group

**Initiative** : GaijinPot Travel

#### Aim of the Project

Our website's purpose is to promote Japan's unknown destinations to foreigners and connect tourists to local traditions and culture. A tourist may not know "Tohoku," but they may love anime and manga, so they can browse according to their interests to discover what's most fascinating about Japan based on their unique tastes. We shine a light on the lesser known regions of Japan by commissioning travel content from foreign writers local to and connected in that region who know what appeals to foreign travelers.

### Special Awards for ICT Utilization

**Organization name** : Keikyu Corporation

**Initiative** : Enhancing the hospitality for foreign customers with multi-functional translation app 'Station Concierge'

#### Aim of the Project

We aim to provide foreign tourists with a hospitality beyond language barriers by using the latest ICT (Information and communication technology). We started a collaborative research with research institutions and related-corporations, which hold various technologies. We succeeded in developing a multilingual voice translation app, 'Station Concierge'. The app includes various functions for the needs of station staff, when the station staff need to guide in a multilingual context in the stations in their daily work. We implemented the app in all the stations of the Keikyu line. With this app, we can enhance our hospitality to welcome foreign tourists who are increasing.

## The Japan Tourism Awards for Responsible Tourism in collaboration with UNWTO

**Organization name** : Saga Ureshino barrier free tour center

**Initiative** : Project of barrier free tourism to welcome all the people including elderly people, disabled and foreigners etc. <<awarded for the second consecutive year>>

#### Aim of the Project



## The 4<sup>th</sup> JAPAN TOURISM AWARDS Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives

1. In order for disabled people and foreigners to enjoy the Ureshino hot springs which are known as one of the best hot springs for the beautiful skin in Japan, we aim to remove all possible barriers for them in the facilities including system and language aspects. We expect that disabled people, elderly people and foreigners can experience the Ureshino hot spring.
2. We offer the services to receive elderly people and disabled people, who often give up traveling themselves, as well as conveying the needs of traveling with their families or companies, to stop the decline of the domestic tour market as much as possible.
3. We encourage Japanese to not give up traveling in Japan, no matter how old they are or whether they are disabled or not.

### **The Japan Tourism Awards for Responsible Tourism in collaboration with UNWTO**

**Organization name** : Roots & Fruits "Fujisan Nature Tours"

**Initiative** : Nature tour to meet the unknown attractions of Mt. Fuji 'Fuji Gezan (Go down from Mt.Fuji)'

#### **Aim of the Project**

Our activity is for tourists to experience the unknown attractions of Mount Fuji. Our tour is different from the common Mount Fuji tour which was mainly climbing Mount Fuji. We aim to convey its wonderful nature, its history and culture, as well as maintaining them to next generations. After registering Mount Fuji as a world heritage site, the media spoke about the negative factors such as over use or risks in the area. And we found out that there was not much positive information about its attractions, various kinds of nature, and how to enjoy Mount Fuji. In this situation, we realized that we needed to change our awareness for the Mount Fuji as users. Otherwise, we cannot protect Mount Fuji in the future. This is the background to start this project.

### **The Japan Tourism Awards for Responsible Tourism in collaboration with UNWTO**

**Organization name** : Kumamoto Office, JTB Corp.

**Initiative** : Conveying an educational program (Kumamoto)

#### **Aim of the Project**

The 2016 Kumamoto earthquakes struck Kumamoto prefecture twice including a magnitude 7.0 on 14th and 16th April 2016. People's lives and sightseeing spots, as well as the scenery of the regions were hugely damaged and changed. We are working on exchange programs business as a travel agency. We have considered the way of attracting tourists to visit us many times after the disaster, cooperating with the local government. The Kumamoto prefectural governor set up the recovery policy with the words of 'creative recovery'. We set up this program with the aim of making this creative

The 4<sup>th</sup> JAPAN TOURISM AWARDS  
Overview of Award-Winning Initiatives

recovery possible in concrete ways, in order to invite tourists from all over the nation to Kumamoto.

## The Japan Tourism Awards for Responsible Tourism in collaboration with UNWTO

**Organization name** : Club Tourism International Inc.

**Initiative** : The Club Tourism's travel supporter system

### **Aim of the Project**

Travel supporters are supportive staff members who support and accompany the disabled or old people depending on their demands. The most important features in this project are that travel supporters also pay some part of the travel cost and enjoy tours and events while supporting or helping other people. In other words, they become friends to travel together. Through the project, we aim to work on the following matters:

1. We do not want people to give up traveling because of being disabled or aging.
2. We expand demands for the revision of the Law to Eliminate Discrimination against People with Disabilities after 2019.
3. We expect that supporter demands will increase in 2020, so we prepare the human resources of the supporters.

## The Japan Tourism Awards for Responsible Tourism in collaboration with UNWTO

**Organization name** : Universal Tourism Desk, H.I.S. Co., Ltd.

**Initiative** : [Trip to go with wheel chairs and sticks] Challenge yourself together! Barrier-free Honolulu Marathon & 10 km run & walk for 6 days

### **Aim of the Project**

We started this project to support disabled people who are using wheel chairs, who are having mobility difficulties in their daily life due to the after effects of disease. In this project, we provide them with motivation or rehabilitation objectives, as well as a sense of achievement they often do not feel in their lives. We promote that, although they are wheel chair users, they can challenge themselves for the full marathon. This is a new proposal for them to have new motivation with objectives. Hawaii is an ideal traveling destination for wheel chair users and it is easy to travel with wheel chairs. This creates more opportunities for disabled people to travel abroad.

## The Japan Tourism Awards for Responsible Tourism in collaboration with UNWTO

**Organization name** : Picchio

**Initiative** : Eco Tourism for Environmental Preservation in Karuizawa

<<awarded for the second consecutive year>>

### **Aim of the Project**

Picchio is an expert group of eco-tourism situated in Karuizawa. Our activities are researching and preserving wild animals and plants, as well as having eco-tours to reveal mysterious nature and environmental educations. We have a thought 'If we can evaluate how the forest is valuable to the economy, we can maintain our forest for the future' and this is the fundamental thought for our business. To convey the forest's attractions, mystery and fragility to people, we increase the economic value of the forest and keep the forest as it is for the future.

