

## **Consul-General of Japan in Sydney's Newsletter**

### **No. 48 Forging a "Japan-Australia community"**

16 September 2021

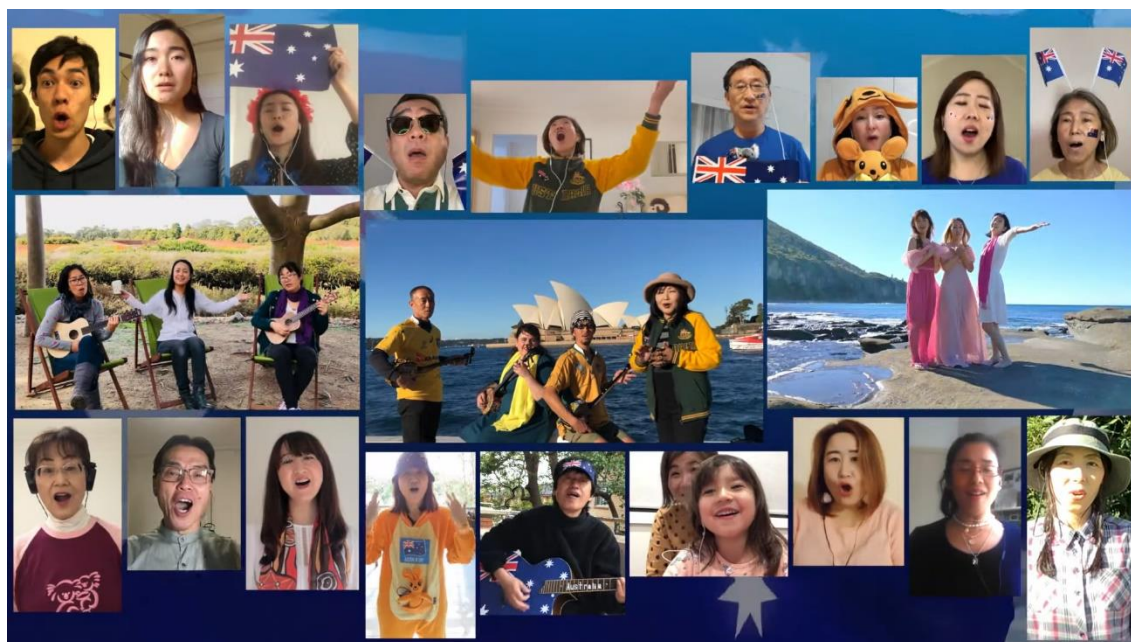
Spring has come! Dawn is breaking earlier with each day, and in just over two weeks on 3 October (Sunday), we will switch to summertime. The sun is inviting, and you just want to go outdoors.

Fortunately, we are closer to the lifting of stay-at-home orders (lockdown). Although the number of new COVID-19 cases in NSW continues to be over a thousand per day, the rate of first vaccination doses is ahead of other states and surpassed 80% yesterday. Last week, the NSW Government announced its roadmap to exit lockdown. From the Monday after the rate of second doses reaches 70%, people who are fully vaccinated will be permitted to visit other households and retail premises. This means that probably from mid-October, cafés and restaurants in Greater Sydney will open. Let's hang in there for a little longer!

Due to the lockdown, I have looked back on my work and life over the close to 2 years since I assumed this post and I have been able to think over what should be done going forward. As I have reflected, I have realised anew just how important the local activities are of both Japanese people who have been involved with Australia over many years and Australians who have been similarly involved with Japan. These people have deep mutual understanding of and affection for both countries – as it were, both Japan and Australia form their identity.

If we create a "Japan-Australia community" that connects such people in a tangible way, this could become an important player, a driving force, a source of knowledge and a catalyst to promote greater Japan-Australia cooperation. Drawing on this energy, both countries can materialise their respective strengths to stimulate the development of multiculturalism, to accelerate the promotion of innovation, and to lead the world in these areas.

In this issue of my newsletter, while introducing people active in various fields who have a deep understanding of and affection for both Japan and Australia, I would like to consider with you the importance of forging a "Japan-Australia community".



Voice Collage ["I Still Call Australia Home"](#)  
(Released on YouTube, 1 September 2021)

#### ● Japanese who call Australia their second home

There are more than 50 Japanese and Australian groups and businesses, mainly in Sydney, taking part in Japanaroo 2021 which is on now. Among the participants, there is one group that really conveyed to me a message about the bridge of friendship between Japan and Australia – Voice Collage's ["I Still Call Australia Home"](#).

It's a video by thirty-two Japanese living in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Newcastle, singing with love and gratitude for their second home, Australia. Their voices, humorous costumes and their smiling faces show their love for Australia. It is a short video of around 6 minutes, so [please do take a look](#).

For your reference, according to [the latest statistics \(as of October last year\)](#), there are approximately 100,000 Japanese nationals currently living in Australia, the third largest number after the United States and China. Among people living in Australia, there are approximately 30,000 Japanese nationals living in Greater Sydney, the 7<sup>th</sup> largest number after the cities of Los Angeles, Bangkok, New York, Shanghai, Singapore and London. Melbourne comes in 11<sup>th</sup> with 20,000. Many Japanese people living in Australia feel that life here is wonderful and have great affection for this country.



**[“Sake 101 - Taste and Learn”](#)** - Sakeshop by Chef's Armoury  
(8 September – 2 October 2021)

- **Australians with deep knowledge of Japan**

There are many Australians who know Japan far better than the average Japanese. One example is Mr Leigh Hudson who operates sake shops in Sydney and Melbourne. In addition to importing sake from different Japanese breweries, he also conducts various classes about sake.

With on-site events not possible for Japanaroo 2021, he devised an online tasting class aimed at beginners called [“Sake 101 - Taste and Learn”](#) which uses video together with four types of sake delivered to your door. I have already taken part in the class. I found it was extremely easy to understand – how to choose sake and match them with food was explained in a style to respond to the interests of and questions from ordinary Australians. The class runs until 2 October.

It's not only sake. There are many Australians taking part and exhibiting in Japanaroo who know much more than the average Japanese person does about Japanese tea and the tea ceremony, ikebana, Japanese art and so on. Such Australians play a significant role in making Japanese culture better understood in Australia. It is hoped that the Japanaroo initiative will create opportunities for such people to meet one another and encourage them in their activities.



**NSW-AJBCC-JETRO co-organised webinar:**  
**[NSW's expanding commitment to Japan](#) (15 September 2021)**

● **AJBCC-JETRO co-organised webinar series**

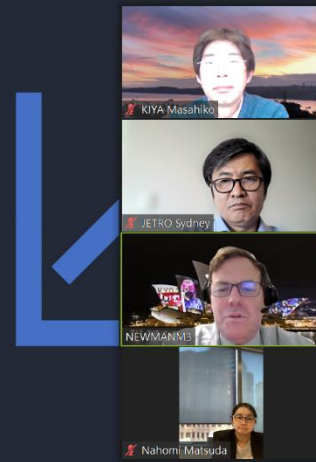
Turning to Japan-Australia business, as I introduced in my 45<sup>th</sup> newsletter "[Japan-Australia Business 3.0](#)" (issued July 2021), there are two committees established by the Japanese and Australian business communities: the Australia-Japan Business Co-operation Committee (AJBCC) and the Japan-Australia Business Co-operation Committee (JABCC) have held a joint conference annually since 1963, alternating between Japan and Australia.

The committee members and CEO of AJBCC all have many years' experience in Japan-Australia business. To capitalise on this knowledge and network, AJBCC and the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) have jointly launched a webinar series. The first webinar on 10 August was "[A NSW Panel Discussion on Australia – Japan Hydrogen Supply Chains](#)" and approximately 350 people participated. The supporting slides and video are available on the website.

On 15 September, the 2<sup>nd</sup> webinar in the series, "[NSW's expanding commitment to Japan](#)", was held, co-organised by AJBCC, JETRO and the NSW Government (Investment NSW), and approximately 150 people participated. On 5 October, the [Annual Joint Business Conference](#) will be held online and plans are being considered to hold a third webinar in the series before the end of the year. It is so pleasing to see Japanese and Australian businesspeople creating regular opportunities to meet face-to-face in this way.

# Need to create our Ecosystem

- **Liquidity drives liquidity**
- Need to build a hub that adds value
- Most hubs that claim they're global do nothing other than claim it
- **How?**
- Building better global businesses by matchmaking & collaboration on R&D
- Multilingual summaries w/ value added info
  - Key contacts
  - 1 page only – keep it simple
- Bringing Corporates into the ecosystem to give legitimacy
  - Corporate “finishing schools” in hubs with active programs who operate streams in core competencies.
- Be commercial
  - Investors far more likely to invest in businesses that collaborate and grow potential marketplaces



## Japan-Australia Innovation Roundtable (8 September 2021)

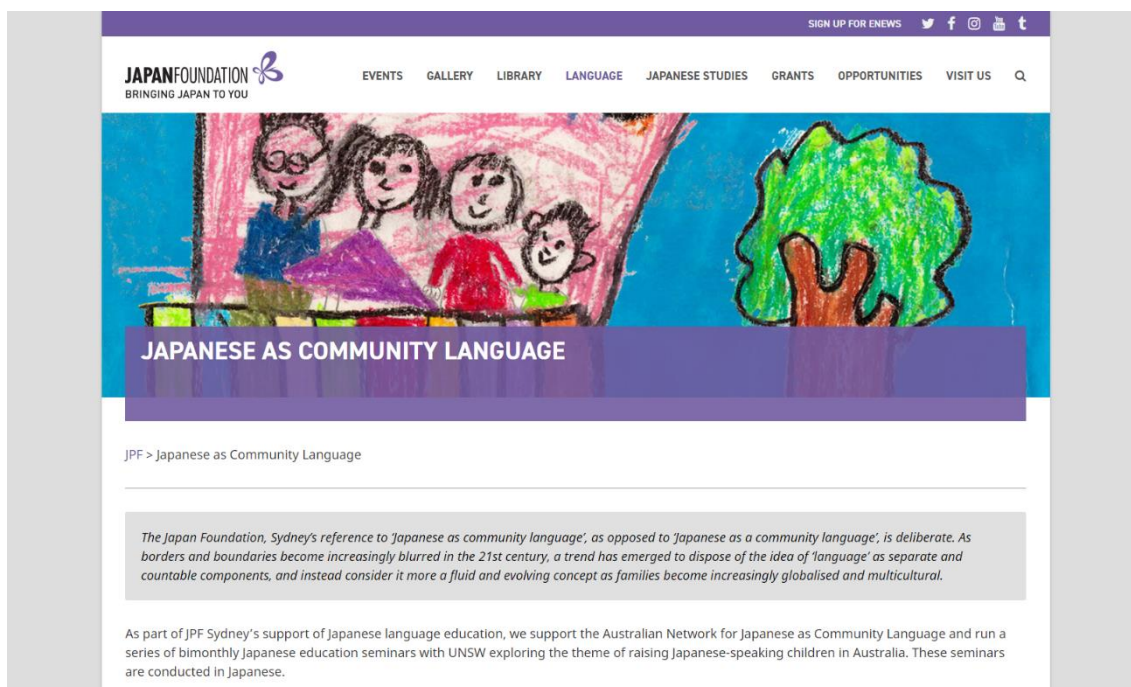
### • Japan-Australia Innovation Roundtable

In the area of startups and innovation, dialogue between Japanese and Australian stakeholders is also advancing here in Sydney. On 8 September, Investment NSW, JETRO and this consulate co-organised an online Japan-Australia innovation roundtable.

At the meeting, Mr Michael Newman, the NSW Government's Japan-based Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner, presented the idea of building a new ecosystem connecting Australian startups with large Japanese companies. Following this, three Japanese companies gave examples of cooperation with Australian startups and explained their business models. Opinions were exchanged towards the realisation of future cooperation frameworks.

Commissioner Newman has some 20 years of business experience in Japan and his extremely fluent Japanese means there are no difficulties during consultations. In addition, the NSW Government's [Sydney Startup Hub](#) already has a [startup community website](#) where a variety of information is automatically translated into Japanese. Going forward, I would like to continue to consider how a new framework for Japan-Australia cooperation in the field of startups and innovation can be created.





### The Japan Foundation Sydney's ["Japanese as community language" website](#)

#### ● Raising children using the Japanese language in Australia

Japanese and Japanese-Australians who have grown up in Australia since childhood possess identities in both Japan and Australia. Given that they will most likely continue to live in Australia in the future, why and how they should learn Japanese is a significant question for individual children and families.

In 2019, it was stipulated in law and as basic policy (Cabinet decision) that the Government of Japan shall firmly support the Japanese language education of such children. I discussed this topic in my 31<sup>st</sup> newsletter – ["Raising children using the Japanese language in Australia"](#) (issued December 2020). In that newsletter, I introduced the joint meeting between the Japanese language supplementary (community/Saturday) schools and the Japan Foundation Sydney, Japanese language education researchers and this consulate; this meeting has since been held on a half-yearly basis.

First held in October 2020, there have already been five [webinars organised by the Japan Foundation Sydney and the University of NSW \(UNSW\)](#), and all webinars are available in the online archive. The related [Facebook group](#) has grown to more than 500 members.

The [next webinar](#) is scheduled for Saturday, 25 September. Prof. Chihiro Kinoshita Thomson (UNSW) is the guest lecturer, and the seminar will present the results from the national survey of such learners of Japanese in Australia as described above and discuss the learning of Japanese characters (*kanji*). Anyone interested in this topic is encouraged to join the seminar (conducted in Japanese).

A collage of images promoting the JET Programme. It includes a large central graphic with the text 'JET PROGRAMME' and 'THE JAPAN EXCHANGE & TEACHING PROGRAMME' over a background of cherry blossoms and Mount Fuji. To the right are smaller images of the Tokyo Tower at sunset, a bowl of ramen, and a path lined with cherry blossom trees. Below the main graphic is a blue banner with 'APPLY NOW!' and a 'DEADLINE: 5PM FRI 12 NOV 2021' with Australian flags on either side. To the right of the deadline is an image of a teacher in a classroom and a blue box with the text 'LIVE & WORK IN JAPAN!' and a link icon.

**JET Programme applications open  
(8 September – 12 November 2021)**

#### • JET Programme applications open

The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme, which dispatches young people to work as Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) and Coordinators for International Relations (CIRs) all around Japan, has had great success over many years, expanding the circle of Australians with deep ties to Japan. I wrote about JET in my 29<sup>th</sup> newsletter – [“JET Programme: For experiences in Japan with a life-long impact”](#) (issued November 2020) where you can find further details.

Last week, [applications opened for the 2022 JET Programme](#). Applications close on 12 November 2021. This consulate has already planned [the first of several online information sessions](#) for this Friday, 17 September.

The [JET Alumni Association of NSW \(JETAANSW\)](#) is making a major contribution to the running of the current Japanaroo 2021 project. Furthermore, former JET participants are also working at Japanese government organisations located in Sydney, including JNTO, CLAIR, the Japan Foundation Sydney and this consulate.

From now on, as Japan-Australia relations deepen further, I think that Australians who have spent part of their youth in Japanese society and organisations will become even more valuable. I hope this year's call for JET Programme participants will receive many applications from highly motivated young Australians.



**Dawn over Sydney Harbour  
(4 September 2021)**

● **Forging a “Japan-Australia community”**

There are many Japanese who are deeply involved with Australia and Australians who are deeply involved with Japan, including those I have introduced above. They are active in a wide range of fields such as culture, cuisine, business, tourism, education and local exchange. In each field, there are many challenges and possibilities, and everyone is giving their all to the activities now before them. If these Japanese and Australian people can cross over into other fields to meet and cooperate with each other, I feel their impact will be even greater than it currently is.

In addition, here in Sydney there are many Japan-related organisations, Japan-Australia exchange organisations, Japan-Australia business groups, and companies



involved in Japan-Australia business. Each has great strength. Some are led by Japanese and others by Australians. I believe new possibilities will be created if the people in these organisations and companies meet and cooperate beyond existing frameworks in a sustainable place – in other words, if such a “Japan-Australia community” is born.

By meeting others beyond their normal areas of activity, and in the process, deepening mutual trust, Japanese and Australians may discover shared objectives and goals, and while leveraging their respective strengths, promote concrete cooperation. Through this, tangible results may be achieved. Today, through Japanaroo and through the efforts of Japan-Australia business in this place, I can see steady progress.

The “Japan-Australia community” is centred on people who have a deep understanding of and affection for Japan and Australia – people who identify with both countries. For these people, developing and deepening Japan-Australia cooperation is in a sense directly connected to their own happiness and their families’ happiness. And it is surely for this very reason that they will become the important players, driving forces, sources of knowledge and catalysts in future Japan-Australia exchange.

This consulate would like to take a broad view and support the creation and development of the “Japan-Australia community”, while addressing daily issues one by one. I would appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we all work to forge the “Japan-Australia community”.

Kiya Masahiko, Consul-General of Japan in Sydney

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