



As the Torch Relay traverses Japan ahead of the Tokyo Olympics Games, the Australian Olympic Connect Tomodachi 2021 is promoting ties between youth in Australia and Japan, fostering a safe cultural learning environment and providing a unique insight into each country's customs, lifestyle and activities.

Based on the highly successful Tomodachi 2020 pilot program which connected more than 1,500 students at 40 schools in Japan and Australia (24 August and 31 October 2020), the Australian Olympic Committee decided to increase the number of participating schools in the main program ten-fold and is aiming to include 400 schools (200 Japanese schools and 200 Australian schools).

Using various online tools, individual schools will engage in a variety of exchange activities while receiving advice from the AOC.

The success of the pilot program bodes well for the main program. After reviewing the responses to questionnaires answered by all schools and students that took part in the pilot program, the organisers were surprised by just how positive the feedback was – all schools that took part in the Tomodachi 2020 pilot program wanted to take part in the main Tomodachi 2021 program!

The main program begins in April and runs until 23 July, the day the Tokyo Olympics begin. Visit the AOC website to learn more.

[www.olympics.com.au/community-and-schools/australian-olympic-connect-2020/](http://www.olympics.com.au/community-and-schools/australian-olympic-connect-2020/)



One of the world's longest running and most successful exchange programs is the Government of Japan's Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme.

JET began back in 1987, and going through the archives, we found the cover article about the very first group of JET participants leaving from NSW to take up their positions as Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) or as Coordinators for International Relations (CIRs).

JET continues to promote internationalisation at the local level in Japan and to contribute to language education—and it's overcoming the difficulties of COVID-19 to send more young Australians to take up this unique opportunity.

Want to learn more about living and working in Japan?

[www.jetprogramme.org/en/](http://www.jetprogramme.org/en/)

