



# Kyoto University European Center



## Best wishes for a happy New Year!

### Greetings

All members of the Kyoto University European Center wish you a happy holidays and a prosperous New Year! As 2018 ends, we are pleased to send you this letter to show you some of our diverse activities in Europe.

In November, Kyoto University has announced the “Kyoto University Basic Concept for Internationalization – Bridging the World through Excellence”. As a world leading institution, Kyoto University will confront challenges in society and on a global scale. It is doing so by contributing excellent research and an academic perspective for well-informed decision-making. As equally important is the education of young people to enable them to create a brighter future.

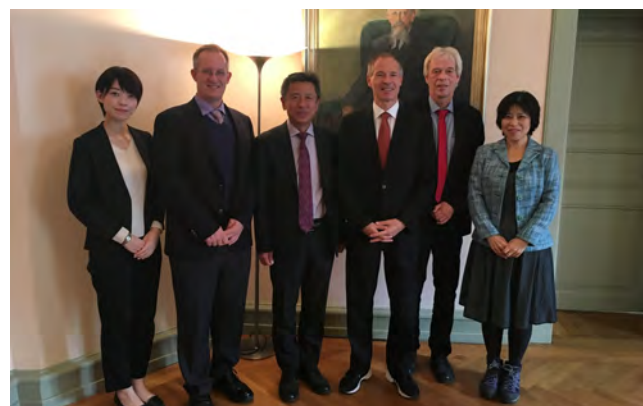
Since internationalization is a vital part in this undertaking, overseas centers are on the front line. Therefore, one of the main missions of the Kyoto University European Center is to build networks with European universities that share Kyoto University’s idea, that global problems can be solved better by joint efforts. In this newsletter, you will find some of our activities supporting this mission.

I myself have been conducting research in the ASEAN region and therefore experienced the benefits of international collaboration at first hand. Since I became the director of Kyoto University European Center in May, I learned to appreciate the value of academic exchange even more. Our Center, which will celebrate its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the coming year 2019, is determined to pursue activities that will foster harmonious coexistence within human and ecological communities through vibrant networks founded on multicultural understanding.

We appreciate your assistance and cooperation and wish you the best in the coming year.

Prof. Yasuyuki Kono

Director, Kyoto University European Center



Delegation led by Prof. Kono (middle) visiting Heidelberg University

### HeKKSaGON’s first phase completed

In 2018, HeKKSaGON reached an important milestone by completing its first phase of general meetings. This journey started in July 2010 in Heidelberg, went on to Kyoto in 2012, Göttingen in 2013, Sendai (Tohoku) in 2015, Karlsruhe in 2016 and finally finished in Osaka this year.



Participants of the 6<sup>th</sup> General Meeting in Osaka, April 2018

At the occasion of the 6<sup>th</sup> HeKKSaGON General Meeting in April, host university looked back at the joint activities and pre-

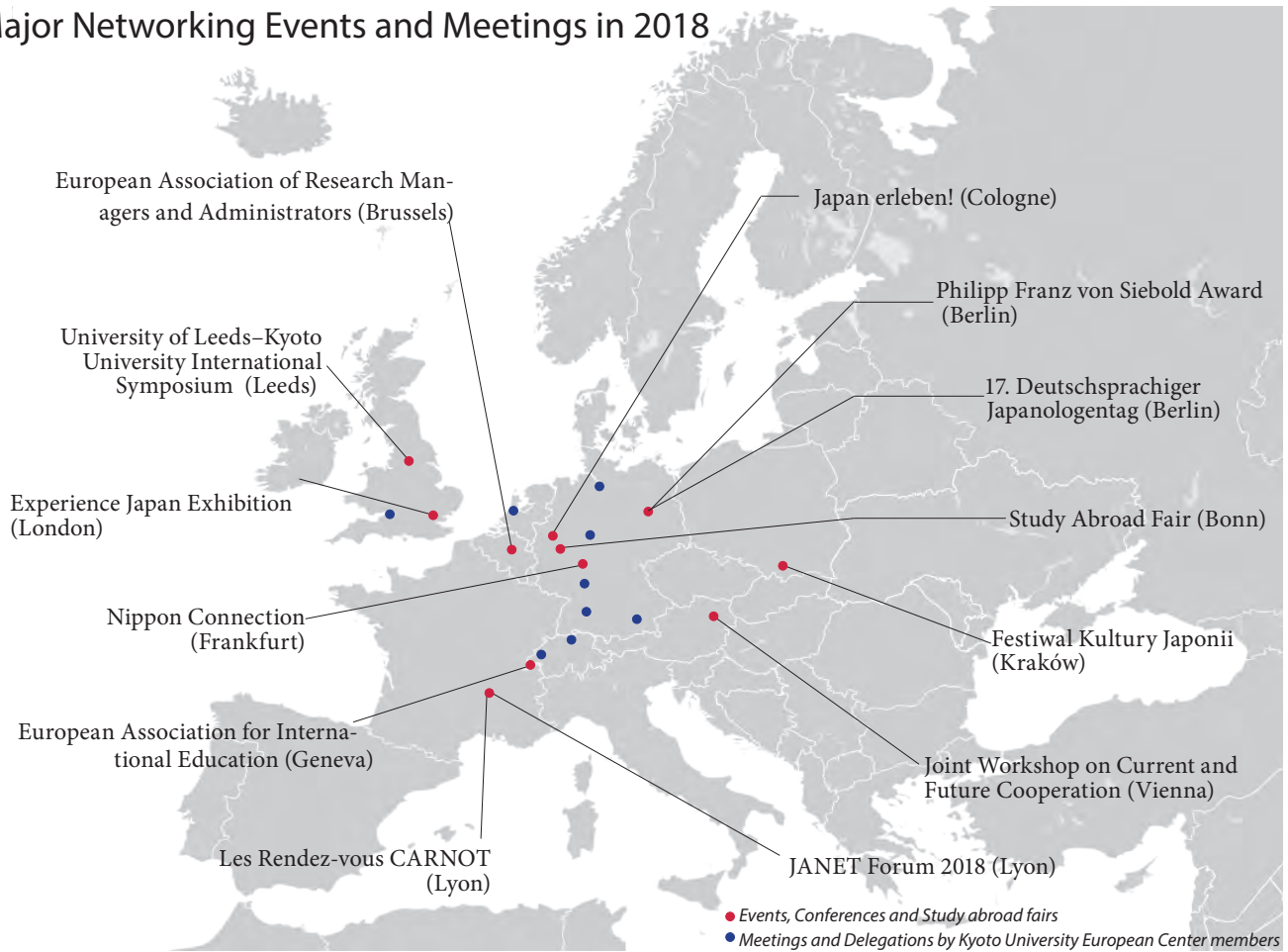
sented the results of this cooperation: 9 research groups, 25 joint research projects, 44 jointly organized conferences and symposia, 7 seasonal schools, 58 publications (one third in top ten journals) and non-less than 200 exchanges of students and researchers. Including not so visible accomplishment and still ongoing projects, it is striking what six universities achieved with something that started as an experiment 8 years ago. If it had not been for HeKKSaGON, our office might not have come into existence. As its liaison office we were able to develop our activities.

Not leaning back on accomplishments the journey goes on. The 2nd phase of HeKKSaGON has already started and preparations for the next general meeting in Heidelberg in September 2019 are already on their way. Not a network anymore, but a strong alliance, HeKKSaGON is seeking to further intensify its scientific cooperation amongst its German and Japanese institutions and to continue to be a top player in academic collaboration.

For more information, please scan the QR code or visit our webpage.



## Major Networking Events and Meetings in 2018



## Nobel Prize and Philipp Franz von Siebold Award Laureates

This year the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine and the Philipp Franz von Siebold Award were given to Kyoto University researchers.

The Nobel Prize laureate is Prof. Tasuku Honjo, distinguished professor and deputy director-general at the Kyoto University Institute for Advanced Study (KUIAS). Prof. Honjo and his research collaborator, Prof. James P. Allison (University of Texas), were awarded for their revolutionized research on immune checkpoint therapy. It is the first Nobel Prize awarded in the field of cancer therapy. After his graduation and experiences in several research institutes, Prof. Honjo has been serving Kyoto University for over 30 years and became Kyoto University's 10<sup>th</sup> Nobel laureate.



Prof. Honjo talking to the press ahead of the Nobel Prize Ceremony in Stockholm

The Siebold Award receiver is Prof. Kanako Takayama from the Graduate School of Law, who was being honored for her dedication in fostering German-Japanese relations in the field of legal studies as well as inspiring and mobilizing young scholars. This research award is presented annually to Japanese researchers or academics in recognition of outstanding contributions to improving mutual understanding of each other's cultures and societies. We were kindly invited to the reception lunch held at the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Berlin after the awarding ceremony.



Prof. Takayama (2<sup>nd</sup> from right) at the Embassy for Japan (Berlin)

We are proud of being able to work with these distinguished researchers and consider it our duty to develop further the research environment in which such excellence can thrive.



If you want to explore what other prizes Kyoto University's researchers received, check out the QR code.



## The 10<sup>th</sup> Nichi-Doku Joint Lecture

In July 2018, we celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> Nichi-Doku Joint Lecture by inviting Prof. Hiroshi Abe from the Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies, Kyoto University. In 2017 he received the Siebold Award for his work on environmental ethics combining European and Asian philosophy. The Heidelberg University Vice-President for International Affairs Prof. Dieter Heermann greeted scholars and students from all over Europe with opening remarks in Heidelberg University's historical "Alte Aula". Prof. Abe's lecture on "The Study of Man as Ethics? Tetsuro Watsuji's Ethics Revisited" sought to explain the basic idea of Watsuji's universal ethics by utilising Japanese, German and Indian thoughts. This was rounded off by the commentary given by Prof. Jens Heise and followed by a lively exchange between the presenters and the audience.



Siebold Award recipient Prof. Hiroshi Abe lecturing at Heidelberg University's "Alte Aula"

In the Nichi-Doku Joint Lectures, leading scholars from Heidelberg and Kyoto University introduce their latest research from any

## DAAD–Kyoto University researcher exchange program launched

After its successful take-off, AI DA (Ambitious Intelligence Dynamic Acceleration) is going into its next round by broadening its scope to German researchers. In 2018, the Kyoto University started the "DAAD-Kyoto University Partnership Programme towards SDGs 2019-2020" in cooperation with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

Its aim is to build long-lasting partnerships and networks between German universities and Kyoto University by supporting joint research projects, which are contributing to any of the United Nations Development Goals (SDGs) like quality education, gender equality, good health or well-being. In order to facilitate future international cooperation, the "DAAD-Kyoto University Partnership Programme" is designed to support mobility especially for early career researchers from every field.

To receive the funding, early career researchers from any German university or research institutes can apply for an exchange



Prof. Hiroshi Abe and Prof. Jens Heise

field. Young students, faculty members and staff as well as accomplished researchers and the wider scientific community are invited to visit these lectures and are welcome to engage in multi-tiered and comprehensive dialogue.

Finding a solid foundation for building continuous academic exchange, the Kyoto University European Center and the Heidelberg University Office, Kyoto have been jointly organizing the Nichi-Doku Joint Lecture Series since 2016. In 2018 alone, three lectures were held in Heidelberg and three in Kyoto.

We are eager to provide this and other cross-educational events in 2019 not only to promote academic exchange amongst researchers, but also to give students an opportunity to get insight into current developments in research from a global perspective and encourage them to study abroad.



For a list of all Nichi-Doku Joint lectures and reports on these events please scan the QR code to the right.

within existing or prospective projects at Kyoto University — even without a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Student Exchange Agreement (SEA). The same applies for Kyoto University researchers with German partner projects. As a common contact, the Kyoto University Research Administration Office (KURA) serves as an advisor for both partners, while also taking care of administrative matters in Japan. The mobility of German partners is funded by the DAAD, the Kyoto University researchers by their university.

By making mobility funding available as easy as possible the "DAAD-Kyoto University Partnership Programme" wants to encourage early career researchers from Germany and Kyoto University alike to jointly conduct research and build personal networks with fellow academics to build a common ground for future collaborations.

*KURA*

**DAAD**

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst  
German Academic Exchange Service

Please follow the QR code for the programs guidelines.



## Internationalization of research by breaking through the seclusion of knowledge

Before returning to Japan after spending 3 months at Heidelberg University, we met Prof. Tatsushi Fujihara (Associate Professor at the Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University) to talk about his experience while staying and lecturing in Heidelberg.

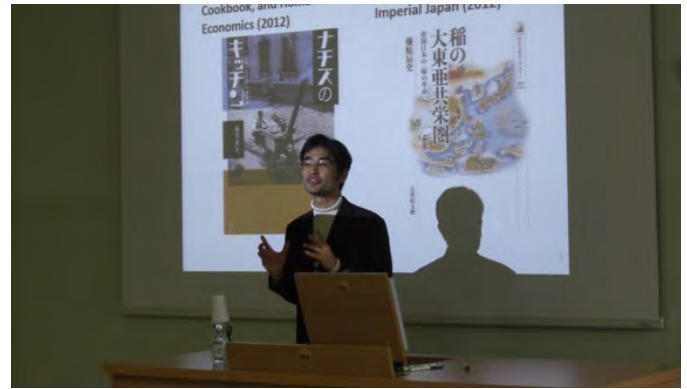
Our meeting took place at the famous Café Rossi, bustling at tea time. Prof. Fujihara began our conversation by talking about the “difficult, but enjoyable” seminars. For him it seemed difficult to prepare the lessons for students coming from diverse backgrounds and explain Japanese food culture and terminology of modern Japanese history in English. But the lectures were fun, because the exchange was at times so lively, that they were not caring about the professor being there at all. The students were actively sharing their ideas while asking other students for their opinion.



Prof. Fujihara talking about his experience in Germany

Prof. Fujihara agrees that in this kind of exchange, language is an important factor, but he also clearly states that “enthusiasm and respect are more important.” Giving seminars and lectures in Heidelberg, the Catholic University of Leuven and the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland, about the global history of tractors, the history of *tsukemono* (Japanese pickled vegetables) and the nu-

trition situation in Germany in the First World War he was able to exchange ideas with different audiences. The reason he could have a good discussions with the audience was, that there was an “enthusiasm” between the speaker who wants to tell and the audience that wants to listen, and a mutual “respect” to each other. With a smile on his face Prof. Fujihara said: “While usually only maniacs say that the history of tractors is very interesting, here the audience listened with enthusiasm. Against my own expectations, I was treated very kindly and amiable.”



Prof. Fujihara lecturing at Jagiellonian University

“I want to view my field of research from a much broader point of view. Isn’t my desire to not become secluded a natural sign of internationalization?” These words left a deep impression. Internationalization not just as an aim, but a mean. A result. “The students told me the motto of Heidelberg University and I totally like it. It’s ‘Semper Apertus’ and means ‘always open’. Internationalization has to start with breaking through the seclusion of knowledge.” He also said that the existence of the Kyoto University European Center has given him great psychological support. What we need on our side is also “enthusiasm and respect” toward research and researchers. The meeting with Prof. Fujihara reaffirmed this sense of confidence and responsibility .



You can read this and other articles in full, by following the QR code or by going to our website and look for "Reports by Exchange Students and Researchers" under "Internationalization".

## Editorial

After having visited new places, meeting new people and facing new challenges, the year 2018 is about to close. When looking back at our activities, our word for the year would be “Mobility”. There was the HeKKSaGOn conference in Osaka, a symposium with the University of Hamburg in Kyoto. Our staff members too, have been traveling a lot. Many people have visited our office, talking vividly and with a feeling about new sceneries crossing border between countries, scientific fields and organizations. We had many discussions with our partners on how we can increase such opportunities. Here in Europe, mobility is and will be a big issue for years to come facing challenges including Brexit. But we believe in the many chances it provides and in the benefits that arise when people meet by creating new opportunities and successful outcomes. The European Center will continue its activities by valuing and fostering mobility.

*Kei Ayukawa, Tomoko Imai, Chiyoko Kanno, Bernd Kirchner, Tomoko Mori, Taro Sonobe, Tamaki Suzuki, Ayaka Yamashita*

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