

# Kyoto University European Center Season's Greetings 2025

## Greetings from Our New Office

The year 2025 began by welcoming medical and pharmacy students from Kyoto to Germany for a study tour, underscoring our commitment to supporting young researchers and doctoral candidates. Other activities regarding this key initiative included sustaining the early career researchers (ECR) matching fund program with DAAD and hosting the L-INSIGHT Fellow

Workshop with young researchers in December.

The Osaka-Kansai Expo drew European researchers, prompting collaborative events. With the University of Vienna, we hosted an event at Kyoto University in May, while Kyoto researchers participated in University of Zurich activities at the Swiss Pavilion, with our support.

Regarding other events, the European Center contributed to the planning and operation of the EHESS × Heidelberg University × Kyoto University Trilateral Seminar on ag-

ing held at Heidelberg University in July, as well as the HeKKSaGOn Presidents' Meeting hosted by the University of Osaka in October. Additionally, we celebrated our 25th Nichi-Doku Joint Lecture, which we jointly organize with Heidelberg University Offices Kyoto since 2016.

2025 was also a year increased engagement with Nordic countries. The Kyoto University mathematician Masaki Kashiwara's Abel Prize in May led to a visit to Oslo University. We visited Karolinska Institute in June and participated in KTH Royal Institute of Technology's Japan Day in Stockholm in November. In December, our President visited KTH, and Kyoto University's Susumu Kitagawa received his Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

Last but not least, on October 13, we left our office in the Student Prison of the Heidelberg University and relocated to a new office with a view to Heidelberg Castle. Among those reading this Greeting, some may fondly recall our good old office. We very much hope to welcome you all to the new office and to weave the future time together.

Contact information  
and access to our new office



View at Heidelberg Castle  
from our new office

## Shaping Global Futures through Transdisciplinary Initiatives

The 10th HeKKSaGOn Presidents' Conference, held on October 30–31, 2025 at the University of Osaka, united leaders from six Japanese and German universities under the theme “Transdisciplinary Initiatives and Alliance Building for Global Futures.” Kyoto University's delegation included President Nagahiro Minato, Executive Vice-President Tetsuo Sawaragi, and European Center Director Mika Yokoyama.

The conference opened with remarks from University of Osaka, followed by addresses of representatives from Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the German Consulate, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and the German Research Foundation (DFG). After a keynote lecture, university presidents showcased interdiscipli-

nary projects, including Kyoto's 1st Kyoto Conference, which explored AI-era values through cross-sector dialogue.

Parallel sessions included research working group meetings for six HeKKSaGOn-funded projects and a student workshop where fifteen participants discussed “Designing Transdisciplinary Futures.” Two Kyoto students contributed, with outcomes shared in the plenary session. A key highlight was the signing of a Joint Statement, reaffirming commitments to joint research, young researcher support, responsible science, and societal collaboration. The 11th conference will convene in 2027 at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT).

Following the conference, the Heidelberg University Office Kyoto (HUOK), Kyoto University European Center's sister office and HeKKSaGOn liaison located on Kyoto University's campus, celebrated its 10th anniversary. Held at Kyoto University's Nitori Hall, the event featured keynotes by university leaders including Executive Vice-President Tetsuo Sawaragi, and panels on trans-cultural studies and biomedical cooperation. Alumni and students shared how the partnership shaped their careers.

Together, these events underscored HeKKSaGOn's and Kyoto University's role in fostering global academic partnerships, bridging disciplines and cultures to address future challenges.

Information about HeKKSaGOn, its partners, aims  
and missions



Presidents and other participants of the 10th HeKKSaGOn Presidents' Conference

# Travels and Visits in 2025

Kyoto University European Center works tirelessly to build networks and strengthen partnerships. Here are some visits from and to our partners as well as visits to us and Kyoto University within 2025.

## January

- ▼ JSPS Strasbourg Office

## February

- ◆ KU Leuven
- ◆ RIKEN Europe Office
- ◆ JST Paris Office
- Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris
- ◆ JSPS Strasbourg Office
- ◆ German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ)
- ◆ hei\_INNOVATION (Heidelberg University)
- ◆ Technical University of Munich
- ▼ Karlsruhe Institute for Technology (KIT)

## March

- ◆ University of Vienna
- ◆ Embassy of Japan in Austria
- ◆ JSPS London Office

## April

- ◆ German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Tokyo Office
- ◆ German Research Foundation (DFG) Japan Office
- ◆ German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ)
- ▼ University of Lausanne
- ◆ Network Aging Research (NAR, Heidelberg University)

## May

- ◆ DAAD
- ◆ DFG
- ◆ University of Oslo
- ◆ Mican Technologies
- ▼ Dojindo EU GmbH
- ▼ Eindhoven University of Technology
- ▼ University of Vienna

## June

- ▼ RIKEN Europe Office
- JSPS Stockholm
- ◆ Karolinska Institute
- Central Institute of Mental Health
- ◆ Japanese Consulate in Edinburgh
- ◆ Edinburgh University
- ◆ JSPS London Office
- ◆ University of Zurich
- ▼ JSPS Bonn

- Events
- ◆ Visits by Kyoto University European Center
- ▼ Visits to Kyoto University
- ▼ Visits to Kyoto University European Center



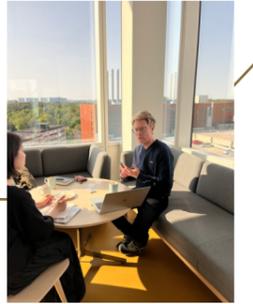
Visit to meet our student doing research stay at KU Leuven



Exchange with the director at JSPS London



Visit to University of Oslo with EVP



Visit to Karolinska Institute to meet ECR



Strategic Partnership Event with University of Vienna at Kyoto University



Visit to Leibniz Association to prepare for their visit to Kyoto University in October



Visit to University of Bordeaux to explore further collaboration



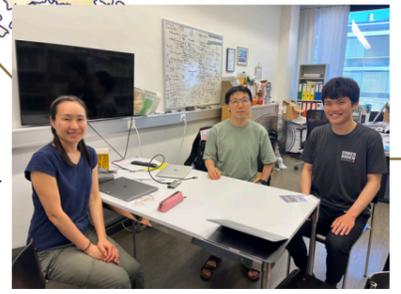
Visit from University of Groningen to update our collaboration



Participants of a symposium in Heidelberg



Welcoming delegation from Leibniz Association in Kyoto



Visit to University of Zurich to prepare for the coming symposium and alumni gathering

## July

- ▼ JSPS Headquarter
- ◆ Humboldt University of Berlin
- ◆ Embassy of Japan in Germany
- ◆ Charité – Berlin University Medicine
- ◆ Leibniz Association
- ◆ Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities
- ◆ University of Göttingen
- ◆ University of Bordeaux
- Augustinum Heidelberg
- ◆ heiTrack (Heidelberg University)
- ▼ University of Groningen
- ▼ Charles University

## August

- ◆ University of Zurich
- ▼ The University of Tokyo

## September

- ▼ Kobe University
- ▼ The University of Osaka

## October

- ▼ Leibniz Association
- ▼ Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Lyon
- ▼ PSL University
- ▼ Heidelberg University
- ▼ KIT
- ▼ University of Göttingen
- ◆ STINT (Sweden)
- ◆ Embassy of Germany in Japan
- ◆ Embassy of Switzerland in Japan
- ◆ Embassy of Belgium in Japan
- ◆ DAAD Tokyo Office
- ▼ University of Duisburg-Essen

## November

- ▼ Heidelberg University
- ◆ KTH Royal Institute of Technology
- ◆ Uppsala University
- ▼ University of Strasbourg
- ▼ Tokyo Metropolitan Government

## December

- ▼ JSPS Bonn
- ◆ JSPS Strasbourg
- KIT

## Aging in Plural Perspectives: A Trilateral Seminar to Explore Cross-Cultural and Interdisciplinary Insights

From July 17–18, 2025, Heidelberg University hosted the second “Mediating Plurality of Aging” seminar with École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) and Kyoto University, deepening cross-cultural dialogue on aging.

The event featured interdisciplinary panels and roundtables on various aspects of aging in care systems, digital health, migrant labor, and from cultural perspectives like Buddhist studies and art history. A care home visit alongside hands-on workshops with an aging simulation suit and VR dementia experiences organized by Heidelberg’s Network Aging Research (NAR) connected theory to real-world practice.



Participants of the seminar from all three universities

Development of young researchers being a central pillar of this project, a doctoral workshop fostered young researchers’ cross-cultural exchange which featured individual presentations followed by lively debates.

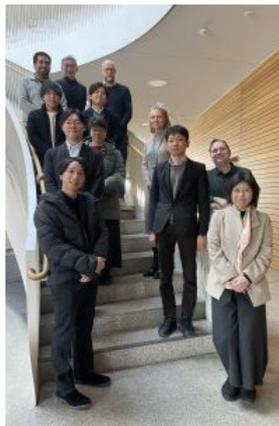
Following the 2024 Kyoto launch, this collaboration, next convening at EHESS in 2026, unites European and Asian expertise to develop innovative, equitable solutions for aging societies.

Program of the trilateral project seminar: “Mediating Plurality of Aging”, Vol. 2



## Exploring Germany’s Innovation Landscape

The Kyoto University European Center facilitated a week-long visit to Germany for four Medical Innovation Program (MIP) doctoral students under the Global Talent Expedition Program (GTEP). Accompanied by faculty, they explored Heidelberg and Munich among other places, engaging with institutions like hei\_INNOVATION, DKFZ, and TUM, alongside industry visits. Highlights included networking with a Kyoto graduate at EMBL, presentations by German startup founders, and discussions with researchers.



MIP participants at TranslatTUM

The trip, supported by JETRO Munich, provided firsthand insights into Germany’s research and innovation landscape, reinforcing Kyoto University’s commitment to global academic exchange.



ECR support by Kyoto University

## A Spark for International Ambitions: Study Abroad Info Session



Presentation by University of Göttingen representative

In October, Kyoto University hosted a study abroad information session featuring Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, University of Göttingen, and Heidelberg University—members of the HeKKSaGON Alliance. The event was held in the newly opened linkhub@ within the International Science Innovation Building.

University representatives introduced their institutions’ academic offerings and city life, followed by Kyoto University students sharing personal experiences from their time in Germany—both the rewards and challenges. The session sparked strong interest, with attendees lingering for one-on-one discussions at university booths, highlighting the growing appeal of international academic opportunities.



More detailed report about the study abroad session

## Editorial

“Kyoto University will generate world-class knowledge through freedom and autonomy in research that conforms with high ethical standards.” This being the Mission Statement of Kyoto University, we uphold “academic freedom” as its fundamental principal. And never since the establishment of Kyoto University European Center (KUEC) has this value wavered as much as this year in 2025, which made us uneasy.

At the same time, we have confirmed that we share with our European partners these core values—academic freedom and university autonomy—and we deeply realize the importance of continuing to safeguard these together.

In 2026, we aim to collaborate steadily with trusted partners.



Kyoto University European Center  
Fischmarkt 2 | 69117 Heidelberg  
Phone: +49 (0) 6221.54.30034 | Email: info\_eu@oc.kyoto-u.ac.jp  
Website: <https://www.oc.kyoto-u.ac.jp/overseas-centers/eu/en/>

