

# Japan Cultural Expo

## Fact sheet

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2020/01/15

Tentative

Agency for Cultural Affairs  
Japan Arts Council

## About Japan Cultural Expo

Introducing the arts of Japan to the world under the overarching theme “Humanity and Nature in Japan: Exploring the Arts from Antiquity to the Present,” the Japan Cultural Expo is a nationwide celebration of Japanese arts and culture, designed to appeal to a broad domestic and international audience through a diverse program of content, including exhibitions, performing arts productions, and arts festivals.

Led by the Agency for Cultural Affairs and the Japan Arts Council, it is a collaborative, inter-agency project drawing on the cooperation of numerous public- and private-sector partners. One of the Expo’s chief objectives is to attract international visitors to destinations beyond Japan’s main urban centers before, during, and after the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Initiatives nationwide leverage the distinctive cultural resources of communities and regions across Japan, including disaster-affected areas.

The Expo was launched in March 2019 and is currently scheduled to run until March 2021 showcasing Japan’s 10,000-year artistic and cultural heritage. Content is divided into eight categories spanning subjects such as fine art, cultural treasures, the performing arts, media arts, music, literary arts, food and nature, daily life, design, and fashion. This comprehensive initiative also explores the arts in the context of multiculturalism, the creation of an inclusive society, and recovery from natural disasters.

## Background

The Japan Cultural Expo concept grew from discussions held by the “Beauty of Japan” Comprehensive Project Advisory Council, founded in 2015 by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to consider strategies for the promotion and development of Japanese arts and culture, along with the building of international goodwill. In June 2018, under late then-chairman Mr. Tsugawa Masahiko, the council decided to pursue a nationwide “Japan Exposition” timed to coincide with the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and preparations were begun by the Ministry of Education, Sports, Science, and Technology and the Agency for Cultural Affairs.

In December 2018, chaired by Prime Minister Abe, the first meeting of the Japan Exposition Comprehensive Promotion Council defined the exposition—officially titled the Japan Cultural Expo—as a collaborative, interagency project to be implemented with the cooperation of a range of public- and private-sector partners. One chief objective is to attract international visitors to destinations beyond the main urban centers before, during, and after the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, through nationwide initiatives leveraging the cultural resources of various communities and regions, including disaster-affected areas.

## Project objectives

1. Expanding inbound tourism to Japan before, during and after the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games
2. Attracting more international visitors to various regions around the country, beyond the main urban centers
3. Articulating national branding through arts and culture
4. Building stronger foundation as “arts and culture hub” and leveraging economic growth

## Project overview

- **Developing major programs in each category from Jomon to now**  
Curating and developing big-scale programs covering from Jomon culture of various areas of the country to national treasures, ukiyo-e, UNESCO’s intangible heritage, manga/anime, fashion and lifestyle by focusing on how people of Japan’s has co-existed with nature and how those relationship reflects on artistic and cultural expression, and aiming to reach out to broader audience including international visitors
- **Focusing on international arts festivals in various regions**  
Supporting established and up-coming international arts festivals including Setouchi Triennale to bring more oversea tourism with longer staying period
- **Developing new interactive programs**  
Creating multi-lingual and interactive contents along to achieve high accessibility  
Ex) multi-lingual “Discover Series” production for Kabuki, Noh, Kyogen, Bunraku, Kumiodori with workshops in national theatres and bilingual curatorial talk tour at exhibitions
- **Creating momentum for regional culture including Ainu and Oinawa culture**  
Organizing programs nationwide to commemorate establishment of the new national museum for Ainu (Japan’s indigenous community) and 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Kumiodori (Okinawa’s traditional performing arts)
- **Organizing nationwide tour projects leveraging the cultural resources of regions and areas**  
Developing nationwide touring productions and exhibitions, collaborating folklife culture, crafts, food of that specific touring locations and create pilot interactive programs

## General information

<b>Organizing bodies</b>	Agency for Cultural Affairs Japan Arts Council	
<b>Partners</b>	National government agencies, local governments, private-sector organizations, arts and cultural institutions, etc.	
<b>Key dates</b>	March 3, 2019 – Japan Cultural Expo 2019 Opening Ceremony March 14, 2020 – Japan Cultural Expo 2020 Opening Ceremony	
<b>Venues</b>	Museums, galleries, theaters, public and private arts institutions, and outdoor venues nationwide	
<b>Theme</b>	Humanity and Nature in Japan: Exploring the Arts from Antiquity to the Present	
<b>Content categories</b>	Art and Cultural Treasures Performing Arts Media Arts Lifestyle Arts, Literary Arts, and Music Food Culture and Nature Design and Fashion Inclusive Society and Coexistence of Cultures Disaster Recovery	
<b>Budget</b>	FY2019	3.46 Billion JPY
	FY2020 plan	4.53 Billion JPY
<b>Current projects</b>	Presented and co-presented projects: 69 Grant-supported projects: 68 Participating projects: 232	

## Project framework

Japan Cultural Expo projects are grouped according to the following categories:

### Presented and co-presented projects

#### Cross-category projects

Ambitious, integrated core initiatives of the Japan Cultural Expo  
(Planned and implemented by government agencies in partnership with cultural institutions, private organizations, and other bodies)

Sample content:

- Arts from antiquity to the present
- Traditional performing arts and modern theater
- Media arts
- Projects integrating multiple aspects of Japan Cultural Expo categories, such as lifestyle arts, literature, and music

#### Category-specific projects

Exhibitions, performances, and other projects aligned with the Japan Cultural Expo concept and implemented on a wide geographic scale  
(Presented by organizations with a nationwide scope of activities and other bodies)

Sample content:

- Projects implemented for a set timespan by local governments, cultural organizations, and others

\*Partial funding provided. Exceptions may apply in cases including the following: initiatives presented in partnership with disaster-affected regions, initiatives falling under the category of Inclusive Society and Coexistence of Cultures, and initiatives incorporating innovative technology.

### Grant-supported projects

- **Innovation-oriented projects**
- **Rediscovering cultural resources**

Grants are available for local governments and organizations planning original projects closely aligned with the Japan Cultural Expo concept

Sample content:

- 1) New projects leveraging unique regional characteristics
- 2) Projects demonstrating exceptional novelty or creativity and produced by cultural organizations or other bodies

\*Partial funding provided. Exceptions may apply in cases including the following: initiatives presented in partnership with disaster-affected regions, initiatives falling under the category of Inclusive Society and Coexistence of Cultures, and initiatives incorporating innovative technology.

### Participating projects

Local communities and organizations planning appropriate initiatives may apply for Japan Cultural Expo project status

Sample content:

- 1) Projects showcasing Japanese cultural in keeping with the Japan Cultural Expo theme and concept
- 2) Projects with content that lends itself well to the domestic and international promotion efforts of the Japan Cultural Expo



## Some current and upcoming projects

### Presented and co-presented projects

**Appreciating Ainu Culture Project:  
The Ainu Together, Together with the Ainu**  
June 2019–March 2020

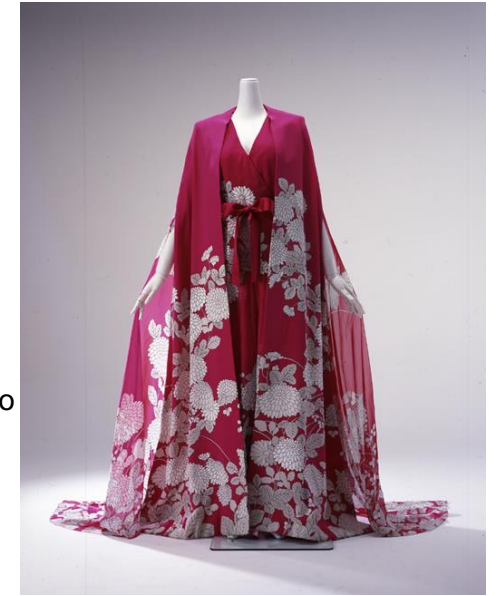


Content Category:  
Inclusive Society and Coexistence of Cultures  
Location: Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park,  
Hokkaido & multiple locations nationwide

**Fashion in Japan 1945–2020**



Chiyo Tanaka Grand Fashion Show,  
Osaka, 1952, The National Art Center, Tokyo



Hanae Mori Hostess gown "chrysanthemum pyjama-dress", 1966  
Twill and silk chiffon jump suit and caftan, Iwami Art Museum

Content Category: Design and Fashion  
Location: National Art Center, Tokyo

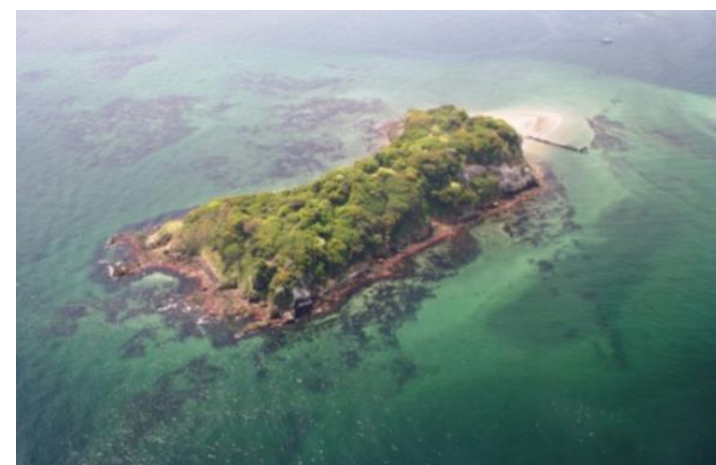
### Grant-supported initiatives Innovation-oriented projects

**Fantastic Iwate**  
June 2019–March 2020



Content Category: Disaster Recovery  
Location: Iwate Prefecture (multiple locations)

**Rediscovering cultural resources**  
**Culture and Art in Japan Heritage Naval Port:**  
**Yokosuka Days & Nights**  
April 2019–March 2020



Content Category: Art and Cultural Treasures  
Location: Yokosuka, Kanagawa Prefecture

### Participating projects

**Flame Pottery and Jomon Culture**  
June 2019–March 2020



Content Category: Art and Cultural Treasures  
Location: Niigata Prefecture (multiple locations)

**Noto Furusato Expo**  
April 2019–March 2020



Content Category: Food Culture and Nature  
Location: Noto Peninsula, Ishikawa Prefecture

## Programming in 2020

The Japan Cultural Expo will officially commence with an opening ceremony held in March, 2020.

Arts festivals and similar events will be held across Japan celebrating regional art, cultural properties, performing arts, and cuisine, as well as contemporary art and performances in scenic, natural surroundings. Programming will be held before, during, and after the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020. The Expo will also feature a number of hands-on events for visitors from abroad, offering enjoyable, firsthand experiences of Japanese culture.

During the Japan Cultural Expo, exhibitions will be held pairing ancient classics with contemporary masterpieces, such as exhibits of recognized masterworks passed down for centuries, including National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties, and exhibits that introduce conservation techniques used to protect and preserve cultural properties made of natural materials.

In the performing arts, programs will feature traditional drama and dance performances such as Kabuki, Noh, and Bunraku puppet theater with nature-related themes. Programs will also include new, contemporary operas and ballets portraying scenes involving humanity and nature.

In the textile arts, the iconic kimono has historically been decorated in patterns derived from nature and visitors can enjoy an exhibition of kimonos from the 12th century to today. An exhibition of fashion from the post-war period to the contemporary period will also be held.

An exhibition exploring the diverse natural ingredients and history of human ingenuity behind Japanese cuisine will be held. There will also be an exhibition of Japan's architectural masterpieces from the 6th century onwards.

The Japan Cultural Expo will also provide the chance for visitors to taste traditional foods, including local specialties, and to visit temples and residences that have been preserved and maintained amidst daunting natural challenges.

In addition to the programming presented here, a new roster of programs to be held across Japan will be released in April 2020.



### Opening Ceremony

Special Performance, Celebrating the Natural Beauties of Japan – Music, Song and Dance

Mar. 14, 2020 at the courtyard, Tokyo National Museum \*related programs to be performed at Ueno Park

### Japan's masterpieces at a glance, and learning restoration techniques using natural materials

Special Exhibition:

"Passing on Cultural Heritage: Buddhist Murals and Sculptures of Horyuji"

Mar. 13 to May 10, 2020 at Tokyo National Museum

Special Exhibition:

"Kannon Worship: The Thirty-three Pilgrimage Sites of Western Japan"

Apr. 11 to May 31, 2020 at Kyoto National Museum

Special Exhibition:

"National Treasure in Kyoto – Japanese Treasures to Protect and Convey" (tentative name)

Apr. 28 to Jun. 21, 2020 at Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art

The Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art Inaugural Exhibition:

"250 Years of Kyoto Art Masterpieces"

Mar. 21 to Dec. 6, 2020 at Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art

The Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art Inaugural Exhibition:

"HIROSHI SUGIMOTO – POST VITAM"

Mar. 21 to Jun. 14, 2020 at Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art

"Timeless Conversations 2020: Voices from Japanese Art of the Past and Present"

Mar. 11 to Jun. 1, 2020 at National Art Center, Tokyo

Special Exhibition:

"National Treasure: Frolicking Animals"

Jul. 14 to Aug. 30, 2020 at Tokyo National Museum

"Craftwork 2020: Japanese Crafts and Nature Exhibition and Crafts and Food Program"

Oct. 6 to Nov. 29, 2020 at Tokyo National Museum

"A selection of 200 Japanese calligraphers"

Apr. 25 to May 10, 2020 at National Art Center, Tokyo

### Dialogue with nature

"KIMONO: Fashioning Identities"

Apr. 14 to Jun. 7, 2020 at Tokyo National Museum

"Fashion in Japan 1945-2020"

Jun. 3 to Aug. 24, 2020 at National Art Center, Tokyo

Special Exhibition: "Washoku: Nature and Culture in Japanese Cuisine"

Mar. 14 to Jun. 14, 2020 at National Museum of Nature and Science

"The Architecture of Japan: Wisdom of Incorporating Natural Materials into Traditional Techniques"

End of Dec. 2020 to Feb.

at Tokyo National Museum, National Museum of Nature and Science and National Archives of Modern Architecture

"Tange Kenzo 1938-1970"

Jul. 11 to Sept. 22, 2020 at National Archives of Modern Architecture

"Kuma Kengo Exhibition" (tentative name)

Jul. 17 to Oct. 25, 2020 at National Museum of Modern Art

### Explore the traditional performing arts and contemporary plays related to nature

Special Exhibition:

"Experiencing Japan's Traditional Performing Arts: The World of Kabuki, Bunraku, Noh, Gagaku, and Kumiodori"

Mar. 15 to Apr. 27, 2020 at Tokyo National Museum

"Discover" series: Noh, Bunraku, and Kumiodori

Mar. to Oct., 2020

at National Theater, National Noh Theatre, National Bunraku Theatre, and National Theatre Okinawa

"Gifu local Kabuki performances 2020"

Jan. to Jul., 2020 in Gifu City

"Super Angels – opera by children and androids"

Aug. 22 to 23, 2020 at New National Theatre, Tokyo

Japanese Fairy Tale Ballet for all the Family: "RYUUGUU - The Turtle Princess"

Jul. 25 - 28, 2020 at New National Theatre, Tokyo

### Enjoy culture in nature

Special Exhibition: "National Parks" (tentative name) Aug. to Dec., 2020 (TBD) at National Museum of Nature and Science

"Echigo-Tsumari Snow Fireworks / Gift for Frozen Village 2020"

Feb. 29, 2020 in Tokamachi City

"Introduction to Jomon Culture and Cuisine"

From June 2020 in Tokamachi City

### Meet Nature in media art

"MANGA⇄TOKYO"

Jul. to Sept. 2020 (TBD) at National Art Center, Tokyo

"Media Ambition Tokyo 2020 (MAT2020)"

Venues in Tokyo

### Inclusive Society and Coexistence of Cultures

Appreciating Ainu Culture Project: "The Ainu Together, Together with the Ainu"

From 2019 in Hokkaido

Culture and art festival by handicapped on the occasion of Tokyo 2020 Games: "2020 Grand Opening"

From Feb. 7, 2020



## Opening Ceremony in 2020

The Japan Cultural Expo will celebrate the beginning of the year 2020 with an opening ceremony.

The ceremony consists of two parts. Coming after Part 1, commemoration ceremony, will be a performance prepared by Japan Arts Council: Special Performance, Celebrating the Natural Beauties of Japan – Music, Song and Dance

There will be a number of performing arts, kabuki, noh, bunraku, gagaku, Ryukyu culture and arts, choir, and more, gathering on special stage built in the front Honkan courtyard of Tokyo National Museum for one-night only performance.

In the space designed by Tanigawa Junji, with imaging technology and projection mapping by visual design studio WOW, and a symbol tulip tree in the yard decorated by Komatsu Kosei, you will see different forms of arts and culture, all refined by the nature of Japan, at once.

The performance will be streamed to a screen set in Ueno Park, where Media Ambition Tokyo 2020 will be held on the same day..

Please join us and enjoy the beauty of Japan.

<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	Saturday, March 14, 2020 From 6pm
<b>Venues</b>	Courtyard, Honkan, Tokyo National Museum* Grand Fountain, Ueno Park *open until 9pm
<b>Organized by</b>	Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan Japan Arts Council

### Notable performers and staff

#### Part 1:

Ainu Ancient Ceremonial Dance Performance by The Foundation for Ainu Culture  
Touken Ranbu : The Musical by Token Danshi [Higekiri / Hizamaru]

#### Part 2:

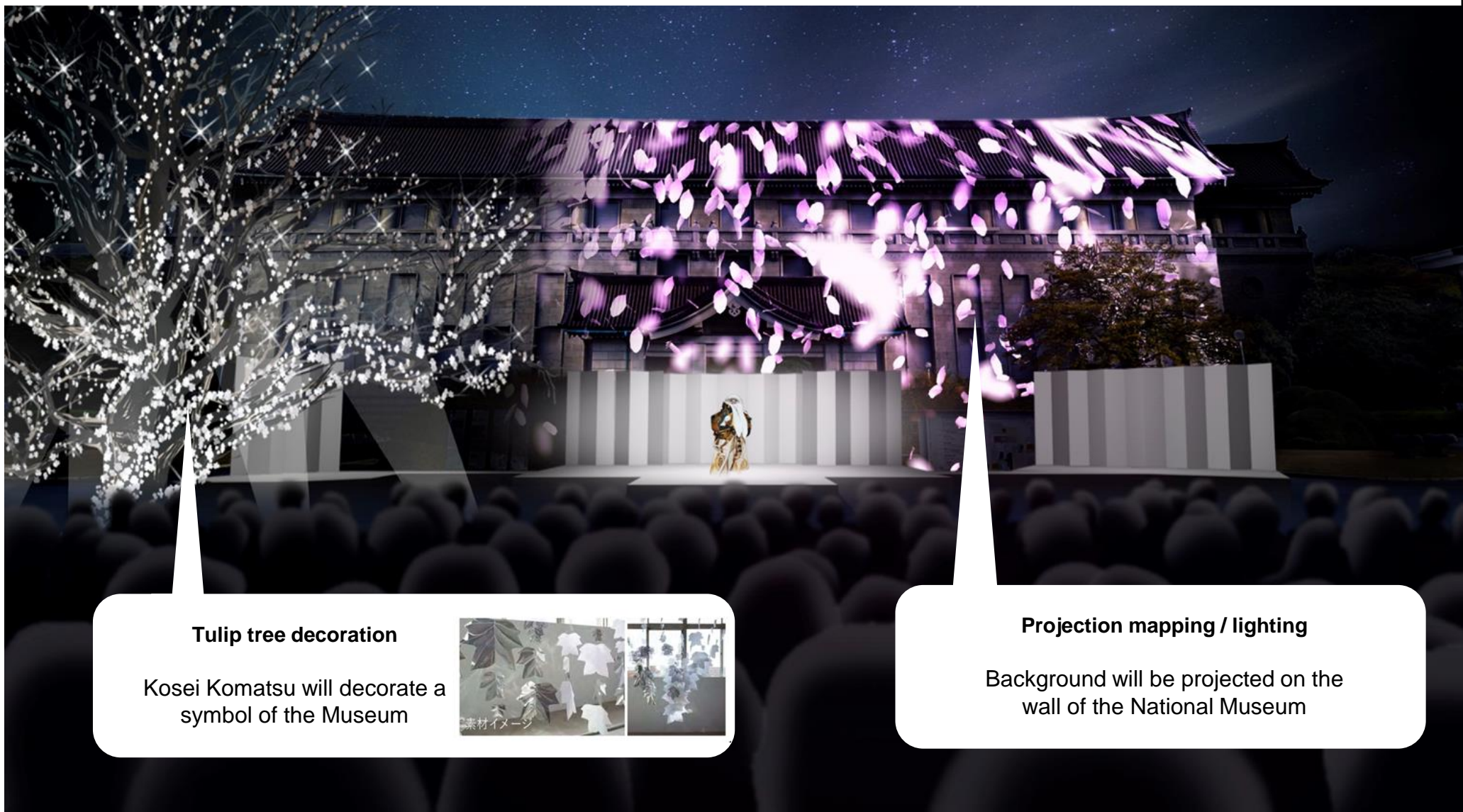
Miyata Mayumi (Sho)  
Onoe Yukari (Traditional Japanese dance)  
Kawase Roshu (Kokyu)  
Tendai Shomyo Shichiseikai (Shomyo/ Japanese Buddhist Chant)  
Kanze Kiyokazu (Noh)  
John Kaizan Neptune (Shakuhachi)  
Toyotake Rodayu, Tsuruzawa Seisuke, Kiritake Kanjuro (Bunraku)  
Arakaki Toshimichi (Sanshin music)  
Misawa Hirofumi, New National Theatre Chorus (Chorus)  
Onoe Kikunosuke (Kabuki)





## Traditional performances x Digital technologies

New perspectives and performances refine Japanese tradition and aim to attract new fan base.





## Review and evaluation criteria (FY2019)

The following points will be considered in evaluating initiatives for selection as presented, co-presented, or grant-supported projects of the Japan Cultural Expo.

### **Initiative demonstrates cultural/artistic excellence and incorporates a narrative designed to promote the arts of Japan to domestic and international audiences**

1. Initiative content is closely aligned with the overall theme of the Japan Cultural Expo, “Humanity and Nature in Japan.”
2. Initiative is a noteworthy example of culture and art in Japan or in the relevant cultural/artistic category, or represents a noteworthy and original cultural and artistic project within the region where it is being held, while also lending itself well to domestic and international promotion efforts.
3. Initiative demonstrates clear uniqueness and excellence in the relevant category, as well as exceptional novelty or creativity. Preference is given to projects which, for example, span aspects of more than one of the given categories (Art and Cultural Treasures; Performing Arts; Media Arts; Lifestyle Arts, Literary Arts, and Music; Food Culture and Nature; Design and Fashion; Inclusive Society and Coexistence of Cultures; and Disaster Recovery) or compare the culture and art of different eras.
4. Initiative effectively utilizes cultural and artistic resources such as cultural treasures, while incorporating new styles of presentation, methods, or innovative technologies.
5. Initiative has been designed with a view to transferring the knowhow which has been developed through the Japan Cultural Expo to future cultural and artistic activities.
6. Initiative incorporates elements designed to promote multiculturalism and the cultural and artistic activities of groups such as children, youths, adults in later life, and people with disabilities (such elements could include initiative content as well as measures to remove barriers to participation), or is an initiative held in connection with a disaster-affected region, and incorporates measures designed to promote the project domestically and internationally and attract visitors to disaster-affected areas.
7. (Cross-Category Projects only) Initiative is a large-scale undertaking with the potential to form one of the core projects of the Japan Cultural Expo. Such initiatives will draw on the cooperation of multiple entities such as cultural institutions and private-sector organizations and be implemented over a large geographical area, or comprise content that integrates aspects of multiple cultural and artistic categories.

### **Initiative demonstrates relevance to the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games and is designed to promote inbound tourism**

1. Initiative content has the potential to attract strong interest from international visitors to Japan, or incorporates narrative-based explanations or other measures designed to make content accessible to international visitors. Initiative incorporates measures designed to promote inbound tourism, which could include the provision of videos or photographs of the project.
2. Initiative has the potential to attract visitors to local regions of Japan beyond the main urban centers.
3. Initiative is designed to attract global interest on the occasion of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
4. Initiative has been designed with a view to transferring and utilizing the knowhow which has been developed through the Japan Cultural Expo to future activities in Japan.

## Further information

### Upcoming dates

- January 21-22, 2020 Culture Keepers: Pathways to a New Generation  
Reuters Pavilion, World Economic Forum Annual Meeting  
Davos, Switzerland
- January 27-28, 2020 Keynote Speech & Panel Discussion (details TBD)  
REMIX London 2020  
London, UK
- March 14, 2020 Japan Cultural Expo 2020 Opening Ceremony  
Tokyo National Museum and Ueno Park

### Official website

<https://www.ntj.jac.go.jp/nihonhaku/en/>

### Twitter

@enJPCultureExpo

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