



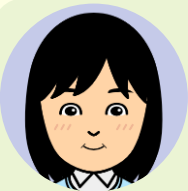
# What's Up, OITA!

Bringing the latest from Oita, Japan to people around the globe!

## International Policy Division (2025)

To everyone connected to Oita all around the globe, please allow us to introduce ourselves.

Q:What is your favourite foreign food?



Director  
Kyoko Matsuki

Using the Osaka Expo to our advantage, we will work on promoting international exchange and creating an Oita in which foreigners want to continue living.

Chinese Stir-fried Water Spinach



Passport Team  
Associate Director  
Kazuyoshi Nishimura

Gyoza, Mapo Tofu

### Main Responsibilities

- Passport inspection (overall management)
- HR development for the Passport Team

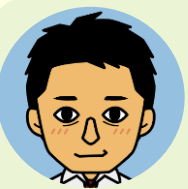


Passport Team  
Senior Staff  
Kanae Noji

Cheese Fondue, Xiao Long Bao

### Main Responsibilities

- Passport inspection and delivery
- Outsourcing of passport services
- Passport team budget



International Strategy  
Team  
Head Section Manager  
Fumitoshi Adachi

Wood-fired Pizza

### Main Responsibilities

- Promotion of overseas strategies (overall management)
- HR for the division



International Strategy  
Team  
Associate Section  
Manager  
Daisaku Okawara

Spaghetti Bolognese

### Main Responsibilities

- Promotion of overseas strategies
- Matters related to overseas promotion (United States)



International Strategy  
Team  
Senior Staff  
Junichiro Horikawa

Margarita Cocktail

### Main Responsibilities

- Budgeting, accounting, and auditing
- Nihongo Partners (Japanese language partners program)



International Strategy  
Team  
Staff  
Shiho Shono

Tortelli

### Main Responsibilities

- Matters related to overseas promotion
- MoU with Wales



Multicultural Society  
Promotion Team  
Head Section Manager  
Kazuhisa Namba

Sunday Roasts, Budae-jiggae,  
Chongqing Hot Pot

### Main Responsibilities

- Overall management of team operations and HR development for the team
- English interpretation

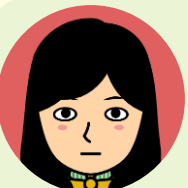


Multicultural Society  
Promotion Team  
Senior Staff  
Hiroto Hirai

Sri Lankan Curry,  
Sweet and Sour Pork

### Main Responsibilities

- Multicultural society promotion projects
- Matters related to support for Ukraine



Multicultural Society  
Promotion Team  
Senior Staff  
Misaki Fujikawa

Indomie Mi Goreng

### Main Responsibilities

- JET Programme
- Activities of the CIRs
- What's Up, Oita!



British CIR  
Rosa Boutelle

Age-dashi Tofu,  
Hamburger Steaks



Chinese CIR  
Jin Kanu

Grilled Salmon, Beef Bowl  
(Gyudon) with Raw Egg



Korean CIR  
Suyoung Ahn

Oita Sashimi (Ryukyu),  
Cool Udon

## Coordinators for International Relations (CIRs)

# News from Taketa City

Taketa City  
Homepage



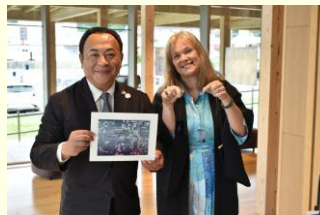
Recently, Mareike Mohr, a glass artist with ties to Taketa's sister city, Bad Krozingen, Germany, held an exhibition at GLANZ TAKETA. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, an opening event was held with Ms. Mohr herself, in which around 30 people gathered to listen to Ms. Mohr amiably introduce her background and works.

Ms. Mohr stated, “I’m filled with gratitude that I was able to hold this exhibition in Taketa city. It feels like a miracle! The people of Taketa City are warm-hearted and welcomed me with open arms. If I have the opportunity, I would love to exhibit in Taketa city again in the future.”

The exhibition was held from the 17<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> of May, featuring a total of 15 works, including 6 glass artworks, some of which were made specifically for Taketa City, and 9 prints.

During her visit to Taketa City, Ms. Mohr homestayd with 3 families, and enjoyed interacting with Japanese culture with local residents, sightseeing and visiting hot springs in Taketa City.

This exhibition has further strengthened the ties between Taketa City and Bad Krozingen.



# News from Bungotakada City

Bungotakada City  
Homepage



## The “100th Anniversary of the Showa Era (1926-1989)” in Bungo Takada’s Showa-themed Town, “Showa no Machi”.

“Showa no Machi” is known as being a “real-life amusement park” and is a shopping street used by locals day to day, which has remained untouched in style since the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the Showa Era (1955). This year marks exactly 100 full years since the beginning of the Showa Era (1926), and so various events are being held in celebration in Bungotakada City.

## “Showa no Machi Exhibition Hall” Reopened After Renovation.

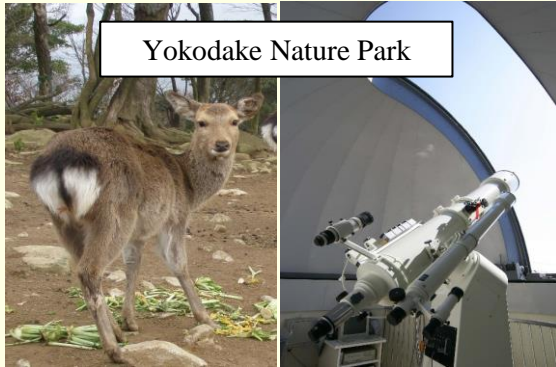
The newly renovated “Showa no Machi Exhibition Hall” located on the central street of Showa-machi in Bungotakada, has reopened this April (2025), featuring a new diorama by artist Akira Nanjo. Each of the approximately 550 dolls included in the diorama has a different expression, drawing you in as if you’ve been transported back into the Showa Era.

We hope you will all visit Bungo Takada City.



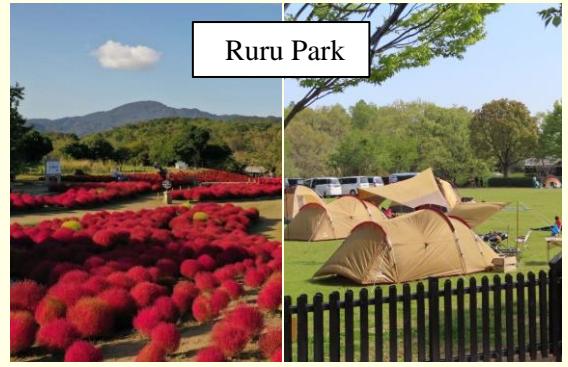


## Enjoy Summer in Nature-rich Kitsuki City ~Summer Camping in Kitsuki City!~



Yokodake Nature Park

Yokodake Nature Park is located 400m above the summit of Yokodake Mountain on the Kunisaki Peninsula, where you can camp while enjoying the magnificent view. You can enjoy being surrounded by nature and the beautiful starry sky, interacting with deer, and stargazing at night.



Ruru Park

This is a campground where both adults and children can enjoy seasonal flowers such as nemophila in spring and kochia in fall, as well as large playground in a rich nature-filled setting.



## Usa Jingu Celebrates its 1300<sup>th</sup> Year!



Photo from the Usa Jingu Shrine West Gate Completion Ceremony  
May 2<sup>nd</sup> (Fri)

Usa Jingu Shrine is the head shrine of more than 40,000 Hachiman shrines in Japan and is visited by more than 1.5 million worshippers annually. This year (2025) will mark the 1300th anniversary of the Hachiman Shrine. Therefore, various related events are scheduled to be held.



Yabusame (Horseback Archery) Ritual

Information about the Goshinko-sai Festival and Yabusame Horseback Archery Ritual

[Date] July 31st (Thursday) - August 2nd (Saturday)

[Location] Usa Jingu Shrine

※ Yabusame Horseback Archery Ritual scheduled to start at 15:00 on Friday, August 1<sup>st</sup> (rain or shine).

1,000 yen per seat (standing, with a souvenir included). Tour groups are also permitted.



# Greetings From The New CIRs

Let us introduce the 3 new Coordinators for International Relations for the Oita Prefectural Government

## Rosa Boutelle



**Hometown: U.K. (London)**

**Hobbies: Baking, Cooking, Crafts**



It's a pleasure to meet you! My name is Rosa Boutelle, and I'm from an area called "Dulwich Village" in South-East London. I started learning Japanese during school, and have been learning for around 10 years now, majoring in Japanese Studies at The University of Manchester, and undertaking a year abroad at Keio University (Tokyo).

Aside from Japanese, I am very passionate about food culture and baking, taking patisserie courses in my spare time. In fact, I like food so much that I even wrote my dissertation on "Japanese bread"!

Having lived for most of my life in multicultural London, and having experienced life in Japan as a foreigner, I decided to become a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) to become a cultural bridge between Japan and the U.K. I hope to make many opportunities for Japanese and foreign members of the community to communicate and exchange cultural ideas, and I am aiming to help as many people as I can to understand one another's countries and cultures! I can't wait to get started!



## Jin Kanu



**Hometown: China (Henan Province)**

**Hobbies: Photography, Yoga**



Hello everyone, it's nice to meet you! My name is Jin Kanu, and I have just started as a Coordinator for International Relations at the Oita Prefectural Office. I am from Henan Province in the Central-East of China. I went to university in Wuhan and Beijing, and also studied abroad in Kofu City in Yamanashi Prefecture. I started learning Japanese in university and completely fell in love with it! The more I learnt about Japan and experienced cross-cultural exchanges through Japanese, the more I felt that I wanted to learn even more!

I strongly believe in the idea of fated encounters, and the fact that I have ended up working my dream job in Oita really does feel like its fate! I'm full of excitement and motivation! I'm hoping to learn more about Japan first-hand with both my eyes and heart, and to share about China with the people in Oita! I feel that it's really important to show respect to one another within international relations, and although I'm sure there will be many things that will take getting used to, I'm going to give it my all without fearing failure! I look forward to working with you!



## Suyoung Ahn



**Hometown: Korea (Suwon)**

**Hobbies: Languages, Cleaning**



Annyeonghaseyo (Hello)! My name is Suyoung Ahn, and I have just started (this April) as a Coordinator for International Relations. I am from an area in Korea called Suwon, home to a famous castle built in the Joseon Dynasty. I first came into contact with Japanese when studying at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU), becoming interested in Japan through interacting with my Japanese friends. Because of this, I decided to make a new start as a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) in the city which feels like my home away from home, Oita.

I place great value on each encounter I have with Japanese people, and I am aiming to become a cultural bridge between various countries and Japan, achieving mutual understanding between not only Japan and Korea, but also globally. From now on I will do my best as a CIR to help people in Japan and globally to both understand and love Korea. I look forward to working with you!

It makes food tastier?!

# Let's Make The Ultimate Souvenir !

British CIR  
Rosa Boutelle

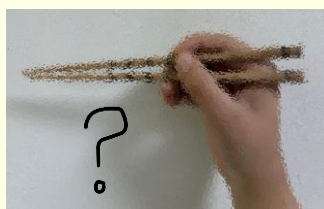


There is currently a chopsticks-making experience being held at "Hashiya Ichizen" in Yufuin! In just 2 hours, you can make your own unique pair of chopsticks, and have full bragging rights! Please go and give it a try!



2 Hours

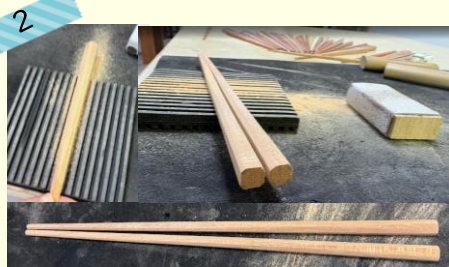
Later...



Chopsticks commemorating when my cat met my favourite cat plushie...?



I chose the length of my chopsticks and received my tools.



I sanded each corner of the chopsticks to create an octagonal shape. It was harder than I thought!



Finally, the part I had been most looking forward to, making the cat ears! The craftsmen helped me carve them out with sandpaper, a saw, and a craft knife.



And finally, I held my breath and drew the cats' features with the pyrography pen.



I then used the cap of the craft knife wrapped in sandpaper to carve out grooves in the chopsticks, making them more comfortable to hold.

## My Adventures in Yufuin City



Yufuin Station

Near Hachiya Ichizen



Yufuin Floral Village



## Q&A with Mr. Nishihara from Hashiya Ichizen:

What materials do you make chopsticks from?

We mainly use wood from trees grown in Yufuin. In particular, we often use wood from cherry trees!

What kind of chopsticks do you hope customers can make?

Chopsticks which are easy to use!  
Chopsticks which fits their hands and give them a sense of familiarity.

What kind of chopsticks do you aim to make?

Chopsticks that are barely noticeable, allowing you to focus on your food.  
Chopsticks which make food taste better!

## ~ The Final Product ~



"Let's be friends from now on"



pyrography pen details

grooves for comfort

I strongly recommend this experience! There are not many places where you can turn your memories into useable objects with your own hands! The craftsmen explain everything kindly and help you whenever you get stuck, so rest assured that you will end up with a pair of chopsticks that you can be proud of! Food eaten with these chopsticks is undoubtedly going to taste amazing! I can't wait to give them a go!

## 【Hashiya Ichizen】

You can find more details on Hashiya Ichizen's homepage here.





# “LINKS” with OPAM

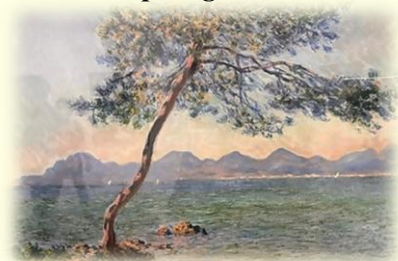
Chinese CIR  
Jin Kanu



For my first news article since starting this position, I decided to visit The Oita Prefectural Art museum (OPAM). They happened to be holding a special exhibition entitled “LINKS” with the concept of “enjoying art with all 5 senses”, so I went to take a look!



*“Japan, inspired by the world; and in turn inspiring the world.”*



*“Amid a changing world, we cherish what remains unchanged...”*



*...gazing at eternity, we treasure each fleeting moment.”*



## ⑥ Constancy Amidst Change

These are works and photographs by artists who threw themselves into the postwar avant-garde art movement. One striking image showed someone walking through the city with flyers covering his entire body. It was shocking. It reminded me that in a world that is constantly changing, the only true constant is change itself. Thinking about it gives me chills.

## ⑦ Wonderful Encounters in the Real World

Stepping outside of the world of exhibited art, I saw children playing joyful during their visit to OPAM. It made me feel that everyone here today, regardless of age or background, is being connected through art in some way, creating all kinds of meaningful encounters. I’m sure that the “LINKS” between Oita and myself will also lead to many wonderful and exciting encounters in the future!

## ① Nice to meet you, OPAM!

Before even entering the exhibition, I was immediately struck by the building itself! I loved the spiral staircase!



## ② Family “LINKS”

At the entrance to the exhibition room, 3 works by a father, his biological daughter, and his adopted son are displayed side by side. I was impressed by the layout of this piece, and how it expressed familial “LINKS”.

## ③ Connections Across Time and Cultures

Since Japanese painters traveled to Europe to study Western art, the exhibition also included Monet’s Cap d’Antibes, which is believed to have been inspired by Ukiyo-e techniques. This piece perfectly illustrates the theme of “Japan, inspired by the world; and in turn inspiring the world”. Equally, I found it strangely moving that viewers could see their own reflections in the glass on the piece, allowing them to unknowingly interact with the work when passing it by.

## ④ Art and Life

The exhibition also included these plates and vases painted on by Picasso, breaking free from traditional forms and functions. When I saw the black plate with a child’s face smiling on it, I couldn’t help but think, “With a plate like that, I would definitely go back for seconds!”

## ⑤ “If, upon self-reflection, I find no fault, then even if 10 million people oppose me, I shall go forth.”

Some of the pieces, although originating from the same era as Guernica, felt much brighter than I expected. I found it quite uplifting and encouraging to think that amidst such darkness the artists must have been trying to create their own light.





let's make perfume!

OITA FRAGRANCE MUSEUM Beppu City



Korean CIR  
Suyoung Ahn



If you're a fragrance lover don't miss out on this!

As someone currently on the hunt for the perfect scent, I visited the Oita Fragrance Museum in Beppu City. One of the highlights was the chance to create my very own perfume and scent bag. Blending different aromas and seeing them come together was a delightful and immersive experience. The entire space was filled with beautiful, soothing scents. After the workshop, I explored the museum and learned about the rich history of perfume. There was also a fascinating exhibition of various perfume products, which was both informative and visually appealing. I had a really meaningful time, engaging both my sense of smell and sight. Even visiting alone, it was absolutely worth the trip! Why not make a fragrant memory at the Oita Fragrance Museum?

## Perfume workshop

- ☑16 types of fragrances
- ☑Time: Max. 50 mins



1. Choose the top note, middle note and end note of your perfume.

2. Use a pipette to measure the scent into your beaker.



3. Mix the fragrance oils.

4. Pour it into your perfume bottle.



5. Your own personal perfume is complete!

## Sachet workshop

- ☑8 types of fragrance
- ☑Time: Max. 40 mins



1. Enjoy the different scents while listening to the explanation of each natural fragrance.

2. Put your desired fragrance ingredients into your bowl.



3. Choose the design of your scent bag and put your mixed ingredients in.



4. Your scent bag is complete! (I hung mine in my locker ♪)



Address: 48-1, Kitaishigaki, Beppu City, 874-0915

Opening hours: 10:00-18:00 (hands-on experience is available until 17:00)

※ Main building closed every 3<sup>rd</sup> Fri, Café closed every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon and Sun

Museum entrance fee: (Adults) ¥700, (Students) ¥500, (Under 15s) ¥300

Perfume workshop : ¥2800 / Scent bag : ¥2500 (As of April 2025)

※ Reservation required for workshop

Homepage





# From Our Reporters



## Hidden Joy in Amber Waters

British CIR **Rosa Boutelle**

Recently I've been hooked on visiting Onsen (Japanese Hot springs)! As expected of the Onsen-famous Oita Prefecture, there are so many options, but my personal favourite so far is "Funai Onsen". Going there has given me a real sense of community, because the people who work there are so kind and go out of their way to make conversation with me, always remembering even small details about my life. What's amazing about Funai Onsen is that although it is in the centre of town it is actually a natural hot spring! Its standout feature is its amber coloured water, which looks like a pool of breakfast tea and is supposedly good for your skin. I can honestly say that after soaking in the water my skin feels much smoother, and my muscle pain goes away! Funai Onsen is only a stone's throw away from the main part of the town, so I really recommend you give it a try if you're passing by!



## Seeing is Believing

Chinese CIR **Jin Kanu**

Whenever I am asked what Japan is like, words such as: "polite", "well-mannered", "pretty", and "thoughtful" always come to mind, as this is how I experience life in Japan every day. Having returned to Japan once again (post-studying abroad), I am delighted to be experiencing these aspects of Japan once again.

For example, I'm touched by how much effort is put in by the companies who write thoughtful letters inside each package they send. So much so, that as a reminder to myself to live thoughtfully, I have begun sticking these messages to the inside of my front door! When I walk around town, I see high school students in perfectly creaseless uniforms, cars giving way to pedestrians, beautiful scenery, and hear colleagues greeting each other joyfully. Being able to witness this kind of day-to-day utopia makes even the complex trash separation system feel worth it! I'm excited to see what kind of encounters are awaiting me in the future. All I know is that for now I want to have fun living thoughtfully and respectfully!



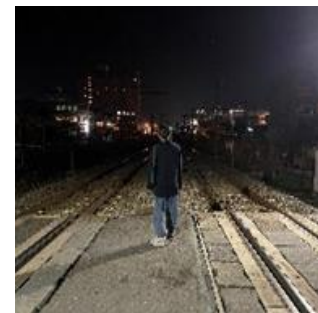
## It's Good to Be Home!

Korean CIR **Suyoung Ahn**

Having spent the past 4 years at university, I have just started my new life as a working adult in Oita. I've come back to Oita this time with a new perspective, filled with the anxiety and excitement that comes with being a fully-fledged working adult. It's great to be home!

I recently graduated from Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU), and throughout my student days I really fell in love with the nature-filled and calming atmosphere in Oita. I love all of the beautiful natural scenery, and Oita really feels like the right place for me! Up until now I have visited many places within Oita on day-trips, including: Hinode Town, Saiki City, Bungo-ono, Beppu, Kunisaki, Yufu city, and Kusu town - and each place has left a lasting impression on me. When I think about the acceleration of urbanisation it makes me want to share the charms of suburban cities like Oita with as many people as I can!

Oita gets more and more charming the more I learn about it, and even the small things like the "-ppu" at the end of "Beppu" in the announcements at Beppu station never fail to make me smile. I can't wait to continue to living my day-to-day life joyfully in Oita!



## Want to be featured in What's Up?

Kenjin-kai events? News about former international students? If you've got something you want to tell the world about Oita, let us know!

(Any format is accepted.)

### 【Submissions/Inquiries】

International Policy Division  
c/o Fujikawa, Nakayama

【Email】[a10140@pref.oita.lg.jp](mailto:a10140@pref.oita.lg.jp)

**Recruiting!**

