

This newsletter is being sent to current and former The Nippon Foundation fellows, and persons who have asked to be added to the mailing list or have been introduced by The Nippon Foundation staff.



## [The Nippon Foundation News] New Beginnings

Greetings from The Nippon Foundation. April is the start of the school year in Japan, as well as the beginning of the fiscal year for the government and many companies, making this a time of new beginnings for many people. Mid-March through mid-April is also when *sakura* cherry trees bloom across much of Japan, and many people welcome the arrival of spring with *hanami* cherry-blossom-viewing parties under the trees' white flowers. This year was also the first time that people have been able to gather for hanami parties since Japan's downgrading of the coronavirus and lifting of its last restrictions to prevent the spread of infections in May 2023. In the Tokyo area, the weather was cool and cloudy when the trees were in full bloom this year, but popular parks still saw many groups of friends, families, students, and coworkers enjoying themselves under the blooming trees.



*Sakura cherry trees in bloom along the Kanda River in Tokyo (left) and on Mount Yoshino near the ancient capital of Nara (right)*

In addition to the news articles below, we would like to inform you that the period for accepting donations to the Ukrainian Evacuees Assistance Fund concluded on March 31. We would like to thank everyone who made a donation.

In addition, the period for accepting donations to support relief efforts in areas affected by the January 1 earthquake that struck Japan's Noto Peninsula has been extended to September 30, 2024 (this date may be subject to change).

The full articles are available here:

Conclusion of Period for Donations to Ukrainian Evacuees Assistance Fund  
(2024.03.11)  
<https://www.nippon-foundation.or.jp/en/news/articles/2024/20240311-100277.html>

Extension of Period for Receiving Donations for Noto Peninsula Earthquake Relief  
(2024.04.01)  
<https://www.nippon-foundation.or.jp/en/news/articles/2024/20240401-100877.html>

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## New Joint Program Launched to Improve Education for Ethnic Minorities in Vietnam

*Bridging gaps to provide opportunities to all children*

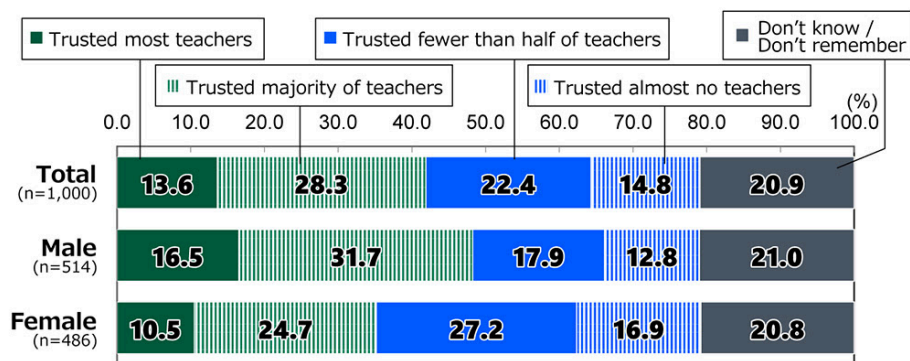


The Nippon Foundation and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) held a ceremony in Hanoi on March 21 to mark the launch of a project to support education for children from ethnic minorities in Vietnam. The two organizations announced that they will jointly provide US\$5.2 million to enable children from ethnic minorities across Vietnam to receive high-quality, inclusive education. The support will be made through Save the Children International's Vietnam office, and the program will be carried out jointly with Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training.

[Full Article](#)

## Awareness Survey of 18-Year-Olds – Education

*60% approve of university tuition being free, and half want more online higher education*



The 61st installment of the Awareness Survey of 18-Year-Olds was carried out in mid-January to gauge young people’s views on a range of issues related to education in Japan, including their experiences with compulsory education, government spending on education, and new initiatives being carried out by universities in response to Japan’s declining birthrate. Roughly 30% of respondents replied that “Acquiring basic knowledge” was the most-stressed aspect of their compulsory education, and roughly 20% said that they wished they had learned more about “financial literacy.”

[Full Article](#)

## Invisible Threats to Zero Marine Pollution Target

*Marine pollution caused by toxic chemical substances and necessary countermeasures*



As part of the Back to Blue initiative, jointly being carried out by The Nippon Foundation and Economist Impact to address marine environmental issues, an international symposium was held in Tokyo on February 6 to call attention to the toxic chemical substances that are an invisible component of marine pollution. The event brought together research and policy experts on marine chemical pollution from Japan and overseas to highlight the seriousness of marine chemical pollution and discuss steps that need to be taken going forward.

[Full Article](#)



[60% of Japanese Youths Favor Free University Education, Half Support More Online Universities: Poll](#) [2024/04/10]

[Two Powerful Helpers Behind My Climb of Mount Kilimanjaro \(2\)](#) [2024/04/04]

[The Nippon Foundation to Support Ukrainian Evacuees Wishing to Return Home to Live with Husbands, Parents \(2\)](#) [2024/03/15]

[The Nippon Foundation to Support Ukrainian Evacuees Wishing to Return Home to Live with Husbands, Parents \(1\)](#) [2024/03/14]

[I Send "Don't Forget Leprosy" Message from the Top of Mt. Kilimanjaro, Africa's Highest Peak \(3\)](#) [2024/03/08]

[Yohei Sasakawa Blog Top Page](#)

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