

JENESYS2025 Online Japan-Visit Advanced Program for ASEAN Alumni Report (Theme: Japanese Language, Tradition and Pop-culture)

1. Program Overview

【Objectives and Overview】

This program was conducted from November 25 to November 29, 2025, for ASEAN alumni who had previously visited Japan through the JENESYS Program. With the theme “Japanese Language, Tradition, and Pop Culture,” the program aimed to provide participants with specialized knowledge, broaden their interest in and support for Japan, and facilitate the development of networks with Japanese counterparts in related fields.

【Participants】 Total: 39 alumni from ASEAN Member States (AMS) (participants up to FY2024)
(Breakdown) Brunei 1, Cambodia 3, Indonesia 2, Malaysia 9, the Philippines 17, Singapore 2, Thailand 1, Timor-Leste 3, Viet Nam 1

【Locations】 Tokyo 38, Aichi 33

【Schedule】

This program was partially conducted in joint with the JENESYS2025 Online Japan-Visit Advanced Program for ASEAN Alumni (Theme: Social Issue and Youth Participation).

■ Online Japan-Visit Advanced Program:

Nov. 25 (Tue)	【Orientation】 【Address】 Mr. NIIOKA (Terry) Terumasa, First Secretary, Mission of Japan to the ASEAN 【Lecture】 “Anime in Japan: Now and Next (2025)” Lecturer: Mr. KAGETOSHI Yasuhiro, Animation and CG Department, Department of Academic Affairs and Education, TOHO GAKUEN College of Film, Anime, and CG 【Exchange】 Exchange with students of TOHO Gakuen 【Exchange among Participants】 Programs in groups, self-introductions, verification of roles, etc.
Nov. 26 (Wed)	【Lecture and Observation】 Share Manga Studio – Manga Kukan Lecture: “Overview of how manga is created (tools and drawing techniques)” Lecturer: Mr. NAITO Yasuhiro, Share Manga Studio – Manga Kukan 【Experience & Workshop】 Live character drawing demonstration by a professional manga artist, Mr. TANAZONO Shoichi Manga character drawing experience 【Exchange among Participants】




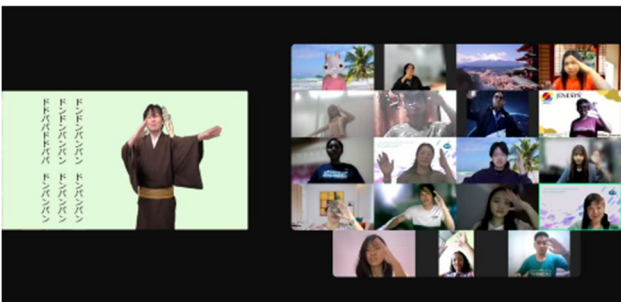
Nov. 27 (Thu) **【Lecture】 Japanese Language Lesson**
 Lecture: “New Year culture and expressions”
 Lecturer: Ms. MORI Yuko, Japanese Language Instructor, Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE) Chubu Office
 Lecture: “Onomatopoeia”
 Lecturer: Japanese Language Instructor Ms.KAMEI Fumika, JICE Chubu Office


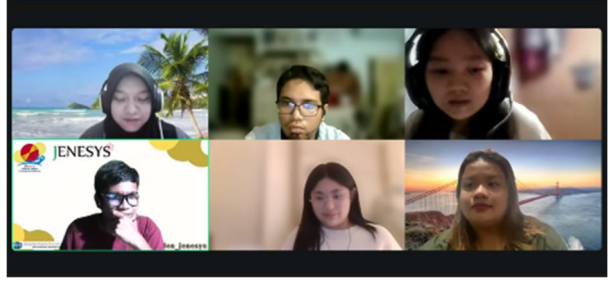

Nov. 28 (Fri) **【Cultural Experience】 Tokyo Bon-Odori Association**
 Lecture: “Origin and history of Bon Odori, introduction to Bon Odori”
 Lecturer: Mr. NAGATA Tenho, Bon Odori Instructor, Tokyo Bon-Odori Association
 Interactive Experience: “Let’s dance together! Bon Odori session”
【Exchange among Participants】
【Exchange】 Talk with JENESYS Alumni residing in Japan
 Speakers:
 Mr. Aung Si Kyaw, JENESYS 2022 Participant, Graduate Student (Myanmar)
 Ms. Noudsanath CHAISAVANG, JENESYS 2016 Participant, Graduate Student (Lao-PDR)
【Workshop】 Summarizing program findings for the Reporting Session
【Reporting Session】 Presentation of program findings

Nov. 29 (Sat)

2. Program Photos

Online Japan-Visit Advanced Program

	
<p>November 25 【Lecture】 “Anime in Japan: Now and Next (2025)”</p>	<p>November 26 【Observation】 Share Manga Studio – Manga Kukan</p>
	
<p>November 27 【Lecture】 “Onomatopoeia”</p>	<p>November 28 【Cultural Experience】 Bon-Odori “Let’s dance together! Bon Odori session”</p>

	
<p>November 28 【Exchange】 Opinion Exchange with Alumni</p>	<p>November 28 【Workshop】 Summarizing program findings for the Reporting Session</p>
	
<p>11月29日 【報告会】 November 29 【Reporting Session】</p>	<p>November 29 【Reporting Session】 Group photo</p>

3. Participants' Inquiries and Interests (excerpt)

◆ Regarding: 【Theme Related Lecture】 “Anime in Japan: Now and Next (2025)”

- What are the major challenges the anime industry is currently facing?
- How is AI influencing the animation production process?
- What inspires creators to come up with such unique plots and characters?

Japanese anime feels completely different from Western animation in its themes, emotions, and storytelling. What influences or ideas helped shape this distinctive style?

- When rebooting anime with modernized illustrations and art styles, how can creators emphasize a sense of nostalgia? For example, some remakes of 1990s anime and manga end up feeling quite different from the original styles that fans are familiar with.

◆ Regarding: 【Theme Related Observation】 Share Manga Studio – Manga Kukan

- I've heard that many manga today are created digitally. Compared to traditional analog methods, which approach is actually more common now?
- How much time does it take to create a single manga page, and how long does it usually take to complete an entire volume?
- We learned that there are many different types of pens used in drawing manga. We hadn't realized how essential these pens are in shaping the lines, details, and the overall atmosphere of the artwork. This helped me gain a deeper understanding of how much skill and precision go into each individual scene.

◆ **Regarding: [Theme Related Lecture] Japanese Language Lesson**

- Are there any rules in Japanese onomatopoeia regarding when to write them in hiragana versus katakana?
- Even when the meaning is the same, are there cases where onomatopoeia is expressed with different sounds in Tokyo compared to other regions (such as Hokkaido)?
- In my country (the Philippines), we don't use as many onomatopoeic expressions as in Japan, but the sound of the school chime is similar to the one used in Japan.

◆ **Regarding: [Cultural Experience] Bon-Odori**

- I was surprised to see people doing Bon Odori to the latest pop songs.
- How many hours do people usually continue dancing Bon Odori?
- What is the most important thing you focus on when teaching Bon Odori?

◆ **[Exchange] Talk with alumni session**

- What did you do when you felt homesick?
- What language is used in the classes?
- We learned that Japan offers many opportunities to receive scholarships, so I hope to study in Japan and make use of such scholarships.

4. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ **Working Youth (the Philippines)**

I was especially impressed by how the sessions connected language learning with modern Japanese pop culture. The discussions, materials, and examples made the topics engaging and easy to relate to, and they deepened my understanding of how language and culture shape each other. The program also sparked my curiosity to continue exploring Japanese media, communication styles, and cultural expressions.

◆ **Working Youth (Singapore)**

Through this program, I was able to learn more about Japanese culture, language, and traditions. Also, I enjoyed the lessons, interactions, and the opportunity to learn together with participants from different countries. It has motivated me to continue learning Japanese and to share what I have learned with others in my own country.

◆ **Working Youth (the Philippines)**

What impressed me most was seeing the incredible patience, passion, and dedication that goes into creating a manga. Although I didn't read manga as a child and only discovered it after the pandemic, I immediately connected with the art and storytelling. Watching a mangaka develop unique ideas, design characters, and bring them to life through detailed storyboards and artwork made me truly appreciate the effort behind every page. I especially love manga because it often contains far more detail and nuance than the anime adaptations, capturing subtleties that are easy to miss on screen. Today's session reminded me of how deeply a mangaka's work can touch people emotionally and reinforced why their craft deserves greater recognition and appreciation.

5. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

◆ **Observation Destination Representative**

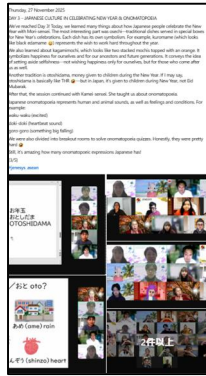
I also felt that young people in ASEAN are really interested in Japanese manga and anime.

I've been running manga experience workshops for inbound visitors for a while now, and I've also been thinking about offering online manga classes for people overseas. After this visit, I'm even more motivated to give it a try.

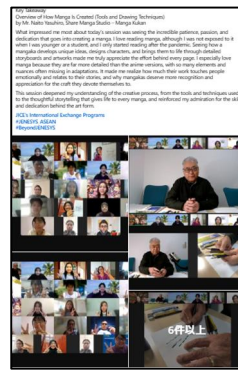
6. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt), Articles, etc.

<p>December 2, 2025 (LinkedIn) Working Youth (the Philippines) Day 1: We kicked off with an inspiring presentation by Mr. Kagetoshi Yasuhiro from TOHO GAKUEN College of Film, Animation, and CG. He guided us through the captivating world of modern anime, exploring its history, trends, and career opportunities for foreigners. It was eye-opening to see how the anime industry merges creativity with technology, and we learned about vibrant manga/anime projects like “Demon Slayer,” “One Piece”, and “Naruto”.</p> <p>Day 2: We had the privilege of hearing from professional manga artist Mr. Tanazono Shoichi, who shared his personal journey, from facing</p>	<p>November 30, 2025 (Facebook) Working Youth (Malaysia) JENESYS2025 Online Japan-Visit Advanced Program for ASEAN Alumni [Theme: Japanese Language, Tradition and Pop-culture] Date: 25 Nov 2025 - 29 Nov 2025 Once again, I was honoured with the chance of attending an online Japanese cultural programme organised by JICE (Japan International Cooperation Center). Here was our agenda during the past 5 days: 25 Nov - Lecture on current trends in Japanese Animation Industry by TOHO GAKUEN College of Film, Anime, and CG</p>

<p>challenges to achieving his dream of becoming a published artist. His insights into the creative process and techniques, both analog and digital, were incredibly motivating.</p> <p>Day 3: We delved into Japanese New Year traditions, discovering the meaning behind customs like Hatsuyume, Kadomatsu, and Osechi-ryori. We also discussed Japanese onomatopoeia, exploring how sound shapes emotion and meaning in language.</p> <p>Day 4: It was dance time! We learned the Bon Odori dance, a beautiful expression of community and remembrance. This joyful experience highlighted the cultural significance behind every step and lyric.</p> <p>Alumni talk Session: We were inspired by JENESYS alumni, who shared their journeys and how their experiences in Japan shaped their academic and personal lives.</p> <p>Day 5: Final Presentation Day!!! We discussed learnings, awareness and findings we gained through the program by group reporting.</p> <p>A huge thank you to JENESYS for organizing this transformative program! I'm grateful for the friendships formed and the knowledge gained about Japanese culture. I look forward to sharing these insights back home and continuing this exchange.</p>	<p>Lecturers: Mr. KAGETOSHI Yasuhiro, Animation and CG Department, Department of Academic Affairs and Education</p> <p>26 Nov - Manga drawing workshop</p> <p>Lecturers: Mr. NAITO Yasuhiro & Mr. TANAZONO Shoichi, Share Manga Studio – Manga Kukan</p> <p>27 Nov - Japanese Language and Culture: New Year Traditions & Onomatopoeia</p> <p>Lecturers: Ms. MORI Yuko, Ms. KAMEI Fumika from JICE</p> <p>28 Nov - Cultural experience of Bon Odori and talk with JENESYS Alumni in Japan</p> <p>Lecturers: Members of Tokyo Bon Odori Association, Mr. Aung Si Kyaw, Ms. Noudsanath CHAISAVANG</p> <p>29 Nov - Final presentation</p> <p>Although I've been immersing myself in Japanese culture for the past few years, this 5-day experience really taught me that I've barely scratched the surface and that there is still so much depth for me to explore.</p> <p>It reminded me it's probably still not too late to entertain that thought of studying in Japan someday.</p> <p>If anyone is interested in joining JENESYS activities as well, please keep an eye out on the following channels:</p> <p>* Include links to the JENESYS ASEAN Alumni Malaysia Facebook page and others.</p> <p>Last but not least, I was fortunate to meet very proactive and cooperative team members from the Philippines, Singapore and also Malaysia. It's been great talking and working with them in the past 5 days, not just in terms of our shared ASEAN heritage but also in our interest for Japanese culture.</p>
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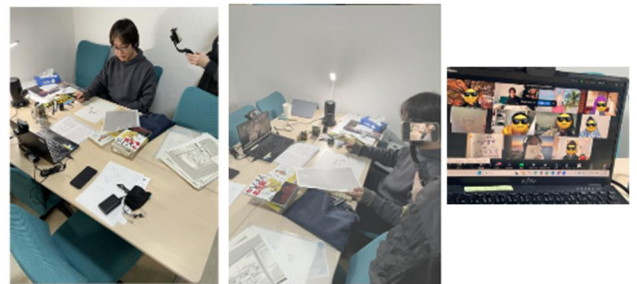
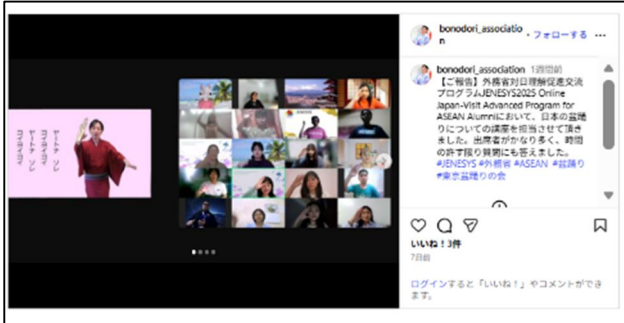


November 28, 2025 (Facebook)
 Working Youth (Indonesia)
DAY 3 – JAPANESE CULTURE IN CELEBRATING NEW YEAR & ONOMATOPOEIA
 Today, we learned many things about how Japanese people celebrate the New Year with Mori-sensei. The most interesting part was osechi—traditional dishes served in special boxes for New Year’s celebrations. Each dish has its own symbolism. For example, kuromame (which looks like black edamame) represents the wish to work hard throughout the year.
 We also learned about kagamimochi, which looks like two stacked mochis topped with an orange. It symbolizes happiness for ourselves and for our ancestors and future generations. It conveys the idea of setting aside selfishness—not wishing happiness only for ourselves, but for those who come after us as well.
 Another tradition is otoshidama, money given to children during the New Year. If I may say, otoshidama is basically like THR—but in Japan, it’s given to children during New Year, not Eid Mubarak.
 After that, the session continued with Kamei-sensei. She taught us about onomatopoeia. Japanese onomatopoeia represents human and animal sounds, as well as feelings and conditions. For example:
 waku-waku (excited)



November 26, 2025 (Facebook, etc.)
 Working Youth (the Philippines)
Overview of How Manga Is Created (Tools and Drawing Techniques)
 by Mr. Naito Yasuhiro, Share Manga Studio – Manga Kukan
 What impressed me most about today’s session was seeing the incredible patience, passion, and dedication that goes into creating a manga. I love reading manga, although I was not exposed to it when I was younger or a student, and I only started reading after the pandemic. Seeing how a mangaka develops unique ideas, designs characters, and brings them to life through detailed storyboards and artworks made me truly appreciate the effort behind every page. I especially love manga because they are far more detailed than the anime versions, with so many elements and nuances often missing in adaptations. It made me realize how much their work touches people emotionally and relates to their stories, and why mangakas deserve more recognition and appreciation for the craft they devote themselves to.
 This session deepened my understanding of the creative process, from the tools and techniques used to the thoughtful storytelling that gives life to every manga, and reinforced my admiration for the skill and dedication behind the art form.

doki-doki (heartbeat sound)
goro-goro (something big falling)
We were also divided into breakout rooms to solve onomatopoeia quizzes. Honestly, they were pretty hard. Still, it's amazing how many onomatopoeic expressions Japanese has!



December 7, 2025 (Tokyo Bon-Odori Association's Instagram)
We had the honor of giving a lecture on Japanese Bon Odori as part of the JENESYS 2025 Online Japan-Visit Advanced Program for ASEAN Alumni, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

November 28, 2025 (Share Manga Studio – Manga Kukan, Osu Main Branch's blog)

“We Hosted an Online Manga Workshop for Participants from ASEAN Countries!”
(Excerpt)

Recently, as part of a program organized by the Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE), we were invited to deliver an online manga workshop for young people from ASEAN Member States. We held the session from Manga Kukan.

During the workshop, I (Mr. Naito) introduced various manga tools, explained how they are used, and walked participants through the overall process of creating a manga. Meanwhile, Mr. Tanazono demonstrated drawing techniques in real time and explained how a manga comes together while showing works in progress and storyboards.

7. Presentations of Program Findings at the Reporting Session (excerpt)

Locations: Tokyo, Aichi – Presentations by a total of 6 groups

Group A-2



【Results of the Program】

◆ Learnings about the theme: Japanese Language, Tradition and Pop-culture

We deepened our understanding of the passion, technical skills, and demanding production processes behind Japanese anime and manga. Through learning about onomatopoeia, New Year traditions, and Bon Odori, we gained a deeper appreciation of the richness and charm of Japanese culture. Conversations with the Japanese language teacher helped us see how culture shapes language, values, and everyday behaviors. By recognizing both the similarities and differences between Southeast Asian and Japanese cultures, our interest in studying or working in Japan has grown even further.

◆ New Discoveries and Learnings About Japan

Hearing stories from alumni made daily life in Japan feel more realistic and relatable. Participating physically in activities such as Bon Odori and manga sketching allowed us to understand and connect with Japanese culture on a more personal level.

◆ Potential Collaborative Activities Related to the Theme

In 2026, our group plans to launch a collaborative project using social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram). The project will introduce anime and manga, Bon Odori music, and Japanese products such as food and games.

Timeline (2025–2026)

December 2025 – January 2026: Preparation of materials for the collaborative project.

February 2026: Sending invitations to educational institutions in Southeast Asia to participate in the project.

March 2026 – April 2026: Opening the social media accounts and starting weekly posts.

Our goal is to introduce lesser-known aspects of Japanese pop culture to the public, especially younger generations who may be interested in learning more about Japan beyond what they already know.

project

LAUNCHING PHASE: March 2026 - April 2026

Launching of project social media and regular posting of content every week

GOAL: Introducing lesser-known parts of popular Japanese culture to the general public, especially towards the younger generation who may be looking for chances or opportunities to learn more about Japan apart from what they already know.

Group A-3



【Results of the Program】

◆ Learnings

Day 1 (Anime Culture/TOHO GAKUEN) : Learned how dedicated Japan is when it comes to enhancing and flourishing its animation.

Day 2 (Manga Experience/Manga Kukan): The session gave us deeper respect for professional manga artists after seeing the range of tools they use and how much focus each page requires.

Day 3 (Japanese Expressions/ Onomatopoeia): Japan uses onomatopoeia to convey activity, emotion, or a state; it differs from one prefecture/region to another.

Day 4 (Bon Odori): Bon Odori shows a celebration of life, a gathering of the joys, sorrows, and emotions that make up the Japanese spirit. The stories of the alumni were inspiring. They encouraged us to pursue studying in Japan even more.

【Collaborative Activities】

Participants from involved countries prepare traditional games, cultural performances (dance, music), food introductions, and traditional clothing sessions. Homestay in each other's country to adapt would allow people to see what the country can offer and experience its lifestyle.

Group A-5



【Results of the Program】

◆ Learnings

We deepened our understanding of the richness of Japanese onomatopoeia and how it adds nuance and expressiveness to the language. Through New Year traditions and Bon Odori, we experienced firsthand how Japanese culture values family, community, and the preservation of tradition.

Learning about the real workflow of manga production gave us a new appreciation for the focus, persistence, and passion that professional creators bring to their craft. In our online sessions, we practiced basic manga drawing techniques and learned how Japanese animation visually conveys emotions through simple but effective artistic methods. Hearing from alumni also strengthened our motivation to study in Japan in the future.

【Collaborative Activities as Alumni】

● Online Activities

Japanese Word & Onomatopoeia Sharing (share interesting and fun expressions within the group)

Manga Sketch Exchange (casual exchanges of quick sketches using techniques learned from the program.)

Cultural Viewing Sessions (watch short clips about Japanese festivals or anime and share impressions)

● Alumni Support & Cultural Outreach

Provide tips and personal experiences to future participants in online sessions.

Share seasonal cultural highlights—such as New Year, Tanabata, and summer festivals—through social media and online platforms.

● Future Learning Goals

Continue deepening our understanding of Japanese language and culture.

Introduce examples of onomatopoeia and show how they are used in daily conversation.

Further develop manga drawing skills and share techniques with others.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)