



## **KAKEHASHI Project (Canada)**

### **Visiting Canada Program for University Students Report**

#### **1. Program Overview**

##### **【Objectives and Overview】**

This program dispatched selected university students from across Japan to Ontario, Canada, from March 5 to March 12, with the aim of promoting understanding between Japan and Canada. During their stay, the participants engaged in exchanges with Canadian students, school administrators, government officials, and past participants of the KAKEHASHI Project. Through these exchanges, the participants experienced local life and customs and shared the attractions of Japan with the different people they encountered.

**【Participants】** Total: 4 University Students from Japan

**【Location】** Toronto, Ontario, Canada

##### **【Schedule】**

##### **■ Online Pre-study Program:**

Feb. 19 (Thu)                      **【Pre-departure Orientation】** Project objective and mission, rundown of the schedule, overseas travel warnings, precautions of infectious disease, etc.

##### **■ Dispatch Program:**

Mar. 5 (Thu)                      Departure from Haneda Airport, Arrival at Toronto Pearson International Airport

**【Post-arrival Orientation】**

Mar. 6 (Fri)                      **【Courtesy Call】** Mr. Parthi Kandavel, Councillor, Toronto City

**【Observation】** Toronto City Hall

**【Observation】** DMZ (Toronto Metropolitan University)

**【Courtesy Call】** Consulate-General of Japan in Toronto

**【Observation】** Royal Ontario Museum

**【Observation】** Chinatown

Mar. 7 (Sat)                      **【Observation】** Old Toronto

**【Observation】** St. Lawrence Market

**【Observation】** Art Gallery of Ontario

**【Observation】** Eaton Centre

**【Observation】** Nathan Phillips Square

Mar. 8 (Sun)                      **【Observation】** Niagara Falls

**【Observation】** Niagara-on-the-Lake

**【Cultural Experience】** Sugar Shack

**【Exchange】** Exchange with KAKEHASHI Alumni

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| Mar. 9 (Mon)  | <b>【Observation】</b> Ontario Provincial Legislature<br><b>【Observation】</b> Native Canadian Centre of Toronto<br><b>【School Exchange】</b> University of Toronto<br><b>【Observation】</b> Graffiti Alley<br><b>【Observation】</b> Kensington Market                                                                            |
| Mar. 10 (Tue) | <b>【Courtesy Call】</b> Japan Foundation, Toronto<br><b>【Observation】</b> Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre<br><b>【Observation】</b> Aga Khan Museum<br><b>【Cultural Experience】</b> Curling Workshop<br><b>【Workshop】</b> Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program findings, preparation of action plans) |
| Mar. 11 (Wed) | Departure from Toronto Pearson International Airport                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Mar. 12 (Thu) | Arrival at Haneda Airport                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Mar. 13 (Fri) | <b>【Reporting Session】</b> Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plans                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

## 2. Program Photos

### Dispatch Program

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| March 6, 2026 <b>【Courtesy Call】</b><br>Mr. Parthi Kandavel, Councillor, Toronto City | March 6, 2026 <b>【Observation】</b><br>DMZ (Toronto Metropolitan University)          |
|    |  |
| March 6, 2026 <b>【Courtesy Call】</b><br>Consulate-General of Japan in Toronto         | March 8, 2026 <b>【Observation】</b> Niagara Falls                                     |

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| <p>March 8, 2026 【Exchange】<br/>Exchange with KAKEHASHI Alumni</p>                  | <p>March 9, 2026 【School Exchange】<br/>University of Toronto</p>                     |
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| <p>March 9, 2026 【School Exchange】<br/>University of Toronto</p>                    | <p>March 10, 2026 【Courtesy Call】<br/>Japan Foundation, Toronto</p>                  |
|  |  |
| <p>March 10, 2026 【Cultural Experience】<br/>Curling Workshop</p>                    | <p>March 10, 2026 【Reporting Session】<br/>Group photo</p>                            |

### 3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

#### ◆ Undergraduate Student

We were amazed to see students who have been studying Japanese for less than a year speak Japanese so fluently. Through conversations that mixed both Japanese and English, we felt that both the Canadian participants learning Japanese and those of us learning English were able to understand each other's cultures more deeply.

In the calligraphy booth we helped with, we brought real brushes and inkstones, so participants could experience authentic Japanese calligraphy firsthand.



### ◆ Undergraduate Student

We visited the Consulate-General of Japan in Toronto, and through listening to their stories and asking questions, we learned that exchanges between Canada and Japan have continued throughout history. We were especially impressed to hear about the cultural interactions, such as the gifting of cherry trees.

### ◆ Undergraduate Student

We found it very interesting to hear about policy issues during our meeting on the first day with Mr. Parthi Kandavel, Councillor, Toronto City. We also enjoyed discussing Canada with the staff of the Consulate-General, as it was a rare opportunity to speak with people we normally would not have the chance to meet.

## 4. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt), Articles, etc.

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| <p>March 5, 2026 (Instagram)</p> <p>University Student</p> <p>I'm a member of KAKEHASHI Project 2026.</p> <p>I decided to join the program because I'm interested in how science and technology are used in our society, especially as a student majoring in civil engineering.</p> <p>I'm looking forward to having many meaningful experiences during this visit and gaining valuable insights into the culture that will help deepen understanding between Canada and Japan!</p> | <p>April 1, 2026 (Instagram)</p> <p>University Student</p> <p>CONSULTATE-GENERAL OF JAPAN IN TORONTO</p> <p>We learned about the relationship between Toronto and Japan, as well as the initiatives that the Consulate-General is actively promoting. We also learned that Ontario has 14 sister cities with Japan and has received 5,200 cherry trees as a gift, highlighting the strong ties between the region and Japan.</p> <p>In addition, we had a Q&amp;A session where we had the opportunity to ask questions about Canada's resource policies and their historical background. We sincerely appreciate the time and attention given to us.</p> |



March 7, 2026 (Mr. Parthi Kandavel, Toronto City Councillor's Instagram)

A pleasure meeting with the KAKEHASHI Project delegation this morning at our Constituency office in Scarborough followed by a tour of City Hall.

The Japanese word “kakehashi” means bridge, symbolizing the bridge between both nations and cultures.

Thank you to the Consulate-General of Japan in Toronto and Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada of Canada for the opportunity to connect with the next generation.



March 10, 2026 (APF Canada's Instagram)

Definite highlight of Day 5-- KAKEHASHI lunch mixer at the Department of East Asian Studies. The in-Canada cohort delivered presentations and workshops on calligraphy, food, and origami, while everyone enjoyed delicious Japanese street food. We were very pleased to see the three Great KAKEHASHI Project alumni continuing to be “kakehashi” (bridges) between our 2 cultures.

## 5. Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plan at the Reporting Session (excerpt)

Presentations by a total of 1 group



### 【Results of the Program】

#### ◆ Learnings About Multicultural Society

In Canada, we felt that society is not shaped by a single cultural identity, but rather by the coexistence of people with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. We learned that people's sense of belonging tends to be rooted more in their local communities than in their ethnic groups.

#### ◆ High Social Awareness of Indigenous Issues

We observed that understanding of the history and current situation of Indigenous peoples is widely shared across society. Indigenous issues were treated as important topics in education, events, and public discussions. Compared with Japan, we felt that these issues are recognized as more socially sensitive and significant.

#### ◆ Differences in Communication Culture

People in Canada were generally open and friendly, which gave us a different impression compared

with Japan, where politeness and maintaining an appropriate distance are emphasized in communication.

#### 【Prospects】

- Through this program, I learned about the strong social awareness regarding Indigenous peoples. While I have been studying energy policy within my major related to natural resources, I would now like to deepen my understanding of Indigenous societies, cultures, and rights. In the future, I hope to consider working in resource development that respects Indigenous rights as one of my career paths.
- Academically, I hope to further explore what I learned in Canada—such as landscape conservation, respect for Indigenous rights, and the relationship between resource development and energy policy—by joining an environmental law research group. I would also like to apply my understanding of different languages, religions, and cultural backgrounds gained through this program to my future studies, and examine how companies and governments in Japan work to preserve cultural heritage. In terms of my career, I plan to continue engaging with the network I built through the program and keep the possibility of working abroad in mind.
- I became motivated to learn more about the legal and economic aspects of technology implementation, including Indigenous rights, environmental protection, and local landscape conservation. I also plan to continue exploring Canada's transportation systems, where multiple modes of transport coexist, and apply these insights to my academic development.
- From the perspective of understanding how legal systems influence social awareness and social structure, I hope to further my international comparison of legal systems between Asia and North America. After experiencing the richness of the international learning environment at the University of Toronto, I also hope to actively engage with international students at my own university and create more opportunities for cross-cultural understanding.

#### 【Action Plan】

##### ◆ Outreach at High Schools and Universities

We will introduce the KAKEHASHI Project to our former high schools, local high school students, and the university clubs and communities we are part of. We plan to share the lessons and experiences we gained through this program. By communicating the value and appeal of the project, we hope to encourage students to participate, take on new challenges, and deepen their intercultural understanding. We also hope to convey that opportunities to study diplomacy or take part in activities abroad are open to everyone, regardless of their background.

##### ◆ Outreach through Social Media

For about three months after returning to Japan, we will continue to share information through social media. By assigning roles within the group, we plan to post photos, experiences, and reflections from each visit on a regular basis. Through these posts, we hope to widely share the program's content and the attractions of the places we visited, helping to raise awareness and interest across society.

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE), Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada (APF Canada)