



KAKEHASHI Project (United States)

VSJ Program 2024 for AJS Young Researchers Report

1. Program Overview

【Objectives and Overview】 The Visit and Study JAPAN Grant Program 2024 (VSJ2024)^(Note) is a program jointly implemented by the America-Japan Society, Inc. (AJS) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan's (MOFA) KAKEHASHI Project. The program aims to promote exchanges between Japan and the US by fostering a deeper understanding of Japanese culture and encouraging participants to share their experiences and discoveries within their networks in both countries.

Note: "Visit and Study JAPAN Grant Program 2024 (VSJ2024)"

THE VSJ2024 is one of the programs funded as a part of the commemoration of the centennial of the America-Japan Society, Inc. (AJS). This grant program invites students in master and doctoral courses in the United States to visit Japan for the purpose of encouraging their research and study of Japan and/or the bilateral relationship between two countries and further contributing to the higher intellectual level of their research. The AJS consequently expects the students who pass the selection process (the Participant) to become indispensable catalysts to promote the understanding of Japan in the US in various fields. The KAKEHASHI Project provides support for the visit to Japan under this program, particularly covering airfare, partial accommodation, and commuting expenses in Japan.

【Participant】 Total: 1 university student from the U.S.

【Locations】 Tokyo, Saitama, Hiroshima

【Schedule】

■ Invitation Program :

Dec. 13 (Sat)	Arrival at Narita International Airport 【Orientation】
Dec. 14 (Sun)	【Observation】 Yasukuni Shrine, Jimbocho, Akihabara
Dec. 15 (Mon)	【Observation】 Showakan, Kitanomaru Park
Dec. 16 (Tue)	【Opinion Exchange】 AJS Office Visit 【Observation】 Shibuya
Dec. 17 (Wed)	【Observation】 Sugamo Prison Marker, Ueno Park
Dec. 18 (Thu)	【Observation】 Saitama Peace Museum
Dec. 19 (Fri)	【Observation】 Ichigaya Memorial Hall, Shogi Kaikan
Dec. 20 (Sat)	Travel from Tokyo to Hiroshima 【Observation】 Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum
Dec. 21 (Sun)	【Observation】 Yamato Museum (Kure Maritime Museum), JMSDF Kure Museum

Travel from Hiroshima to Tokyo

Dec. 22 (Mon) **【Observation】** Tokyo National Museum

Dec. 23 (Tue) **【Reporting session】**

Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plan (America-Japan Society)

Departure from Narita International

2. Program Photos

Invitation Program

	
December 14, 2024 【Observation】 Yasukuni Shrine	December 19, 2024 【Observation】 Ichigaya Memorial Hall
	
December 20, 2024 【Observation】 Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum	December 23, 2024 【Reporting session】

3. Voice from Participants (excerpt)

◆ University student

During my visit to Japan, I visited a variety of public memory sites to examine the nature of the Tokyo Trial in Japanese collective memory. I was intrigued to find a salient absence of the Trial in the narratives of the war put forth by public memory and history sites around Japan.

Notably, museums built in the name of the preservation of peace (including the Saitama Peace

Museum and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum) do not mention the Trial or indeed any element of postwar international criminal justice. Perhaps the two most interesting absences were found at the Sugamo Prison Marker and the Ichigaya Memorial Hall. The former, dedicated to the site of the former Sugamo Prison in what is now Ikebukuro next to the Sunshine City complex, is hidden away in a concrete jungle-esque park; the text on it is severely worn down and the top is covered in pigeon droppings. As for the Ichigayadai tour, which includes a tour of the memorial hall which is the site where the Trial itself took place, there is no mention of the trial beyond statements like, “this happened here.” These two absences, I think, point to a unique brand of public memory/forgetting that is, as far as I can tell, peculiar in the rest of Japan’s collective memory of the war. Other sites I visited, including the Yamato Museum and the JMSDF Museum, both in Kure, Hiroshima, and the Tokyo National Museum, bore this out, as even “shameful” elements of Japan’s wartime history are explained and given a place in the broader wartime and postwar narratives of Japan’s past. Insights I received from my audience during my presentation at the America-Japan Society have helped me understand in greater detail how Japanese media has handled the Tokyo Trial. This program allowed me great insights into the nature of Japanese memory of the Tokyo Trial.

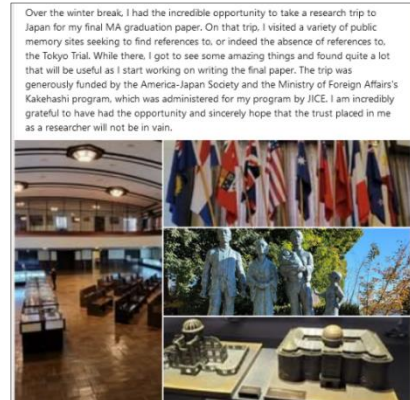
4. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt), Articles, etc.

 igstia1608 Outgassing accompanying (Showakan, Akihabara, and the Yasukuni Shrine)	 A few more pictures from my research trip to Japan. My research looks at the Tokyo Trial in Japan's Historical Memory, so visiting the former site of Sugamo Prison, the Saitama Peace Museum, and the Ichigaya Memorial Hall, where the trial itself was held, were each invaluable experiences. A big thanks to the America-Japan Society, JICA, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for very generously funding this excursion. Up next is Hiroshima, then the National Museum before I present my findings on Monday.
December 15, 2024 (Instagram) Yasukuni Shrine, Showakan, and Akihabara	December 19, 2024 (Instagram) A few more pictures from my research trip to Japan. My research looks at the Tokyo Trial in Japan's Historical Memory, so visiting the former site of Sugamo Prison, the Saitama Peace Museum, and the Ichigaya Memorial Hall, where the trial itself was held, were each invaluable experience. Up next is Hiroshima, then the Tokyo National Museum before I present my findings on Monday.



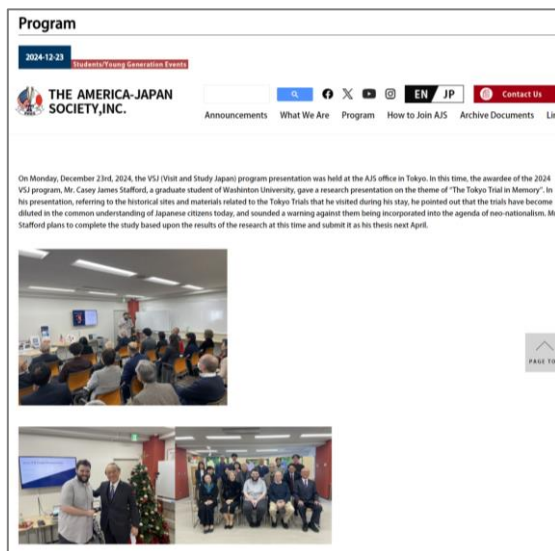
December 23, 2024 (Instagram)

Last post from my research trip to Japan. Pictures included are from the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, the Yamato Museum, the JMSDF Kure Museum, and the Tokyo National Museum.



January 21, 2025 (LinkedIn)

Over the winter break, I had the incredible opportunity to take a research trip to Japan for my final MA graduation paper. On that trip, I visited a variety of public memory sites seeking to find references to, or indeed the absence of references to, the Tokyo Trial. While there, I got to see some amazing things and found quite a lot that will be useful as I start working on writing the final paper. I am incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity and sincerely hope that the trust placed in me as a researcher will not be in vain.



December 23, 2024 (AJS's website)

On Monday, December 23rd, 2024, the VSJ (Visit and Study Japan) program presentation was held at the AJS office in Tokyo. In this time, the participant selected for the 2024 VSJ program gave a research presentation on the theme of "The Tokyo Trial in Memory". In his presentation, referring to the historical sites and materials related to the Tokyo Trials that he visited during his stay, he pointed out that the trials have become diluted in the common understanding of Japanese citizens today, and sounded a warning against them being incorporated into the agenda of neo-nationalism. Mr. Stafford plans to complete the study based upon the results of the research at this time and submit it as his thesis next April.

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

- Use photographs and museum materials in master's thesis:
 - “The Tokyo Trial in Public History” (Thesis will be completed by April and sent to AJS)
- Translate Japanese popular media on the Tokyo Trial and incorporate into the thesis
- Present thesis at a Symposium at the university sometime in the Spring Quarter

Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)

Cooperating Organization: America-JAPAN Society, Inc. (AJS)