



ACCU Training Courses
on Cultural Heritage Protection
in the Asia-Pacific Region 2025

Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office,
Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)

Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan

National Institutes for Cultural Heritage
Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties,
Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties

International Centre for the Study of the Preservation
and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

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Preface

The Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) was founded in Tokyo in 1971, one year before the General Conference of UNESCO adopted the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* in Paris. ACCU was established in collaboration with the Japanese government and the private sector, with the aim to contribute to the development of culture and education and to foster mutual understanding and friendship among countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Subsequently, ACCU established the ACCU Nara Office in 1999 as a centre for activities promoting cultural heritage protection in the region. Since then, ACCU Nara has advanced international cooperation for the protection of cultural heritage through various training courses, international conferences, workshops, publication of international correspondents' reports, and so on. Since launching of the programmes, they have been coordinated in close cooperation with international organisations such as UNESCO and ICCROM, and research institutes and museums under Japan's National Institutes for Cultural Heritage. ACCU Nara has also received generous support from regional organisations throughout Japan to conduct its programmes.

This year, the hybrid format for the Group Training Course established after the COVID-19 pandemic was continued, while the Thematic Training Course, Regional Workshop, and International Conference were held entirely in-person. Continuing from last year, the International Correspondents programme was held as an online session, allowing participants to engage directly with each other's work.

Outline of Training Courses in 2025

Group Training Course (Online/On-site)

- Target Participants: Young heritage professionals with 5-7 years of experience
- Training Period: 25 August - 5 September 2025 (Online)
19 September - 2 October 2025 (On-site)
- Theme: *Conservation and Management of Wooden Built Heritage*
- Number of Participants: 13 participants from 10 countries
- Curriculum: On-demand video lectures, live Q&A and discussion sessions (Online)
Presentations, Q&A and discussion sessions, on-site and practical training (On-site)

Thematic Training Course (On-site)

- Target Participants: Mid-career heritage professionals with 10-15 years of experience
- Training Period: 10 - 14 November 2025
- Theme: *3D Documentation and Management of Archaeological Sites and Cultural Site Restoration*
*The theme is set based on the requests from the participants' country
- Number of Participants: 2 participants from the Republic of Palau
- Venues: National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties; Osaka Museum of History
- Curriculum: Lectures, on-site and practical training

Regional Workshop (On-site)

- Target Participants: Cultural heritage specialists
- Training period: 20 - 24 October 2025
- Theme: *Inventory and Data Management of Archaeological Artefacts and Museum Collections*
*The theme is set based on the needs of the host country.
- Number of Participants: 15 participants from the Samarkand Institute of Archaeology and other institutions engaged in cultural heritage in the Republic of Uzbekistan

- Venue: Samarkand Archaeological Institute
- Curriculum: Lectures, practical training, presentations, discussion

International Conference (On-site)

- Target Participants: Senior heritage professionals
- Conference Period: 17 - 18 December 2025
- Theme: *Conservation and Interpretation of Archaeological Sites and Authenticity: Approaches to 'Reconstruction' through Asia's Diverse Practices and Rationales*
- Number of Participants: 15 participants from 7 countries
 - *The conference was also open to observers (499 registrations from 36 countries)
- Venue: Nara Palace Site (excursion), Nara Prefectural Convention Centre (conference)
- Content: Excursion, presentations, panel discussion

International Correspondent (Online)

- Target Participants: Former ACCU Nara programme participants
- Date: 14:00-16:00 (JST), 22 January 2026
- Theme: *Heritage Conservation in the Asia-Pacific: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities*
- Number of Participants: 5 correspondents from 5 countries
- Content: Presentations, Q&A and discussion

On behalf of ACCU Nara, I would like to express my profound appreciation to the distinguished lecturers who kindly shared their expertise and to the organisations that provided generous support. I also thank all participants for their active participation and interest in ACCU programmes. Specifically, I would like to thank all related personnel from the Agency for Cultural Affairs, ICCROM, National Institutes for Cultural Heritage (Tokyo and Nara), Nara Prefectural Government, Wakayama Prefecture Cultural Heritage Center, Todai-ji Temple, Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Osaka Museum of History, and Tenri, Nara, and Shiojiri City and Shirakawa Village Governments for their continuing cooperation and support for cultural heritage protection in the Asia-Pacific region.

MORIMOTO Susumu
Director
Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office,
Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)

Contents

Preface

I.	Group Training Course	
	1. General Information	9
	2. Course Summary	16
	3. Course Evaluation	34
II.	Thematic Training Course	
	1. General Information	45
	2. Course Summary	47
	3. Course Evaluation	53
III.	Regional Workshop	
	1. General Information	57
	2. Course Summary	60
	3. Course Evaluation	69
IV.	International Conference	
	1. General Information	75
	2. Course Summary	79
	3. Course Evaluation	85
V.	International Correspondent	
	1. General Information	89
	2. Abstracts	91
VI.	Appendix	
	1. Group Training Course	98
	2. Thematic Training Course	101
	3. Regional Workshop	101
	4. International Conference	104
	5. International Correspondent	106
	6. Staff Members of ACCU Nara	107

1. General Information

Group Training Course for Young Professionals on Cultural Heritage Protection in the Asia-Pacific Region 2025

Conservation and Management of Wooden Built Heritage

1. Background

Starting from 2000, in partnership with the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan; ICCROM, and National Research Institutes of Cultural Properties (Tokyo and Nara), Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office, Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU Nara) has initiated and conducted multiple capacity building and outreach programmes targeting young professionals involved in research, conservation, and management of cultural heritage in the countries of Asia and Pacific.

The 26th ACCU Group Training Course was held under the theme, Conservation and Management of Wooden Built Heritage. The course was open to young professionals who have been working for some years within the field of conservation and management of wooden architecture, are eager to expand their knowledge and skills, share experiences, and contribute to the sustainable protection of wooden buildings, structures, and historic districts which reflect the character and identity of the Asia-Pacific countries and are, therefore, important to preserve for future generations.

2. Dates and Method

Dates: 25 August – 5 September 2025 (Online)
19 September – 2 October 2025 (Onsite)

Method: Self-paced learning using on-demand lecture materials, Q&A and discussion sessions (both online and onsite), presentations & discussion, practical training, study visits

3. Organisers

This course was jointly organised by the below.

- Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan: Financial support and professional assistance (dispatchment of two specialists for Unit 2)
- Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO, Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office (ACCU Nara): Overall course planning and administration
- International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM): Support in information-sharing, selection of participants, and professional assistance (dispatchment of three resource persons for Units 1 and 3)
- National Research Institutes for Cultural Properties (Tokyo and Nara): Professional assistance (dispatchment of one lecturer for Unit 2, provision of reference material for Unit 3)

In addition, the course was supported by the below.

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
- Japanese Association for Conservation of Architectural Monuments (JACAM)
- Japan Consortium for International Cooperation in Cultural Heritage (JCIC-Heritage)
- Japanese National Commission for UNESCO
- Nara Prefectural Government
- Tenri and Nara City Governments

4. Objectives

Inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2020, traditional skills, techniques and knowledge for the conservation and transmission of wooden architecture are vast and deeply rooted in Japan. Here, nearly all traditional buildings, whether secular or sacred, World Heritage or local landmark, are made of wood. Hot and humid climate, frequent natural or manmade disasters necessitated the continuous repair and restoration of these buildings, forming the foundation of solid principles, methods and skills for their preservation and continuity that are widely recognised and appreciated inside and outside the country.

Considering the above, the main objectives of this course are to provide participants with:

- Theoretical knowledge and basic practical skills of repair and restoration, conservation, and management of individual wooden structures as well as historic districts based on Japanese know-how and experiences;
- Knowledge on philosophy and methodology of preservation and legal protection systems for wooden architectural heritage based on Japanese examples; and
- Opportunities and a platform where participants and lecturers can share their knowledge and practice, as well as build professional networks.

5. Course Curriculum

The course programme is designed so that participants can learn the protection systems and overall process of survey and documentation, repair, and restoration methods, everyday management, and utilisation of individual buildings as well as historic districts based on Japanese examples. In addition to Japanese experts, resource persons from ICCROM delivered lectures and participated in discussions related to international theory and practice for wooden architecture conservation and management.

The course is structured into five interconnected units and involves online and on-site programmes. Portions about theory were predominated conducted online through on-demand lecture material, while practical training and study visits were conducted in person.

5.1. Online Programme

- The course digital platform (iPAGE) was set up to provide the participants access to video lectures on-demand, textbooks, and other learning material to study before their arrival in Japan. Participants were able to log on and access course resources at any time that fits their schedules, post to discussion boards, exchange files, and chat with their peers.
- Several online meetings were held via Zoom, mainly dedicated to lecture summaries, Q&A with lecturers, and discussion.

5.2. Onsite Programme

After completing the online programme, participants were invited to Nara for on-site training. The on-site programme included practical sessions at conservation sites, study visits in Nara and other sites in Japan, and case study presentations by participants. Below are the course units (refer to online and onsite programmes for details).

1. Global perspectives and challenges in conservation of wooden heritage
2. Protection systems for wooden built heritage in Japan
3. Conservation of wooden built heritage in Japan and in global context
4. Repair and restoration policies for especially high-value wooden structures in Japan
5. Management and utilisation of Historic Districts in Japan



Examples from ACCU Nara online learning platform iPAGE

6. Participants

6.1. Eligibility

Eligible applicants were from one of the following 36 countries located in the Asia-Pacific region that are State Parties to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention and are eligible to receive Official Development Assistance (ODA). In addition, applicants shall also be officially endorsed by the National Commission for UNESCO (NATCOM). The maximum number of participants is 15.

Eligible countries:

Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao P.D.R., Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Nauru, Nepal, Niue, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand,

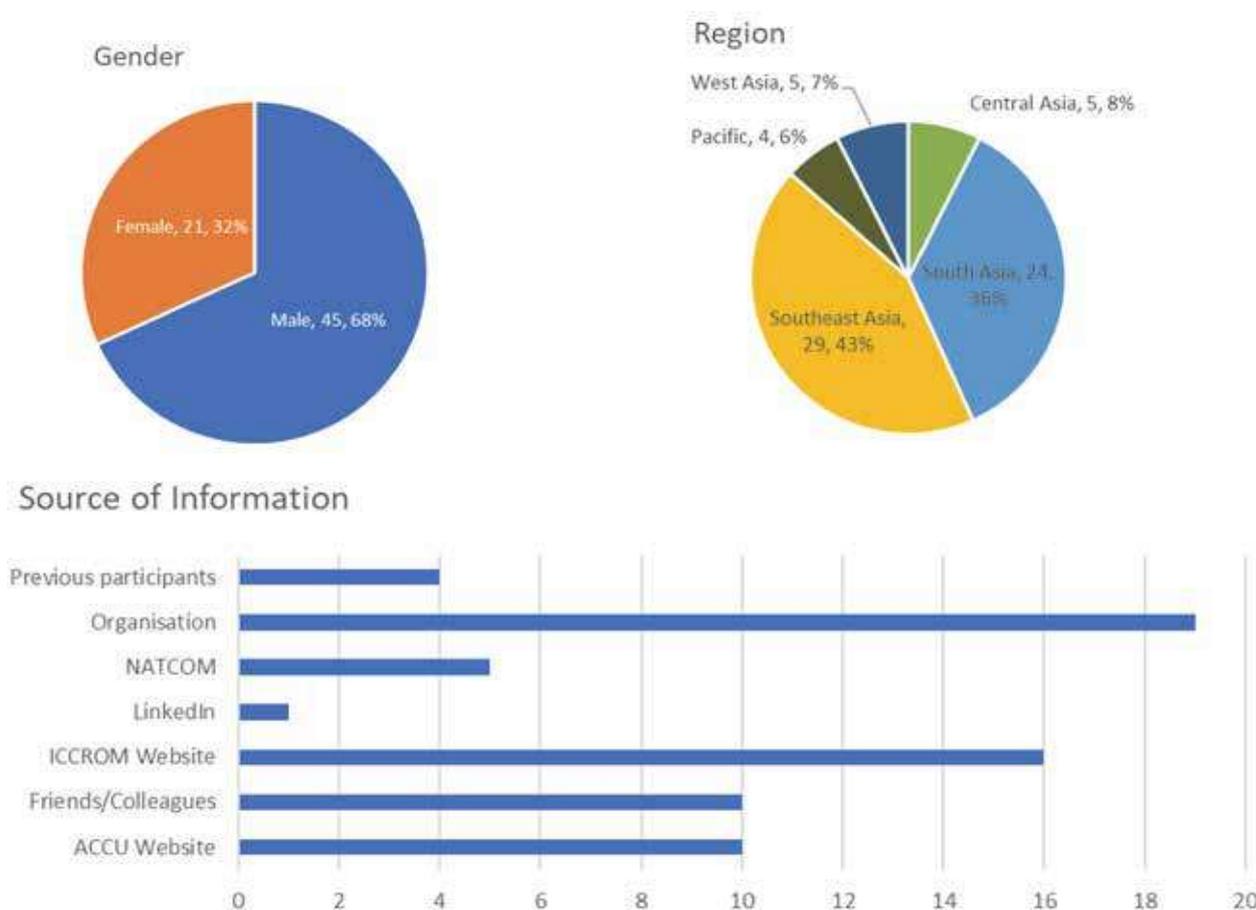
Timor-Leste, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, and Viet Nam.

6.2. Selection of Participants

In the selection process, priority was given to candidates fulfilling one or more of the below conditions.

- 1) Young heritage professionals with 5-7 years of experience working in architectural conservation and/or in the field of cultural heritage protection, with strong determination to make effective use of the outcome of the training course in their respective countries;
- 2) those who have a good command of English and can speak, read, and write in English proficiently;
- 3) those able to participate in the entire training programme, both online and on-site;
- 4) those who are willing to continue to interact and exchange information with ACCU after completing the training course; and
- 5) those who have not previously participated in an ACCU Group Training Course under the same theme (including online training courses).

The course announcement and call for applicants was published on ICCROM and ACCU Nara Office websites in April 2025. As total of 67 applications from 18 countries were received, which is a 67% increase in applications compared to the previous wooden build heritage course in 2023.



6.3. Applications (67 applicants from 18 countries)

The documents necessary for applying were as follows.

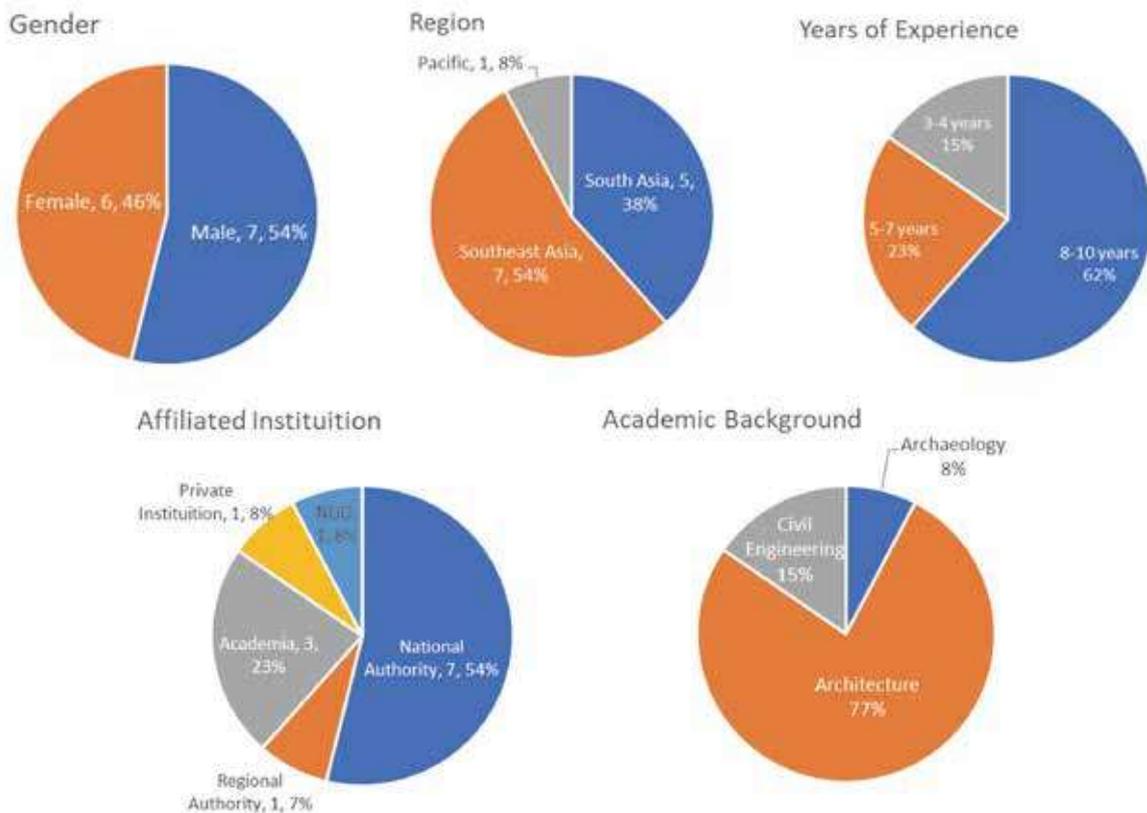
1. Application Form (online form);
2. Personal Statement (format provided);
Personal Statement is weighted heavily in the selection process and included:
 - i. Reason for application;
 - ii. Summary of the applicant's work related to the conservation or management of wooden architectural heritage; and
 - iii. Plans to utilise and develop the outcome of the training course in the applicant's country.
3. Letter of Recommendation from the home organisation of the applicant (format provided); and
4. Letter of Recommendation from National Commission for UNESCO (NATCOM), a member of Japan Consortium for International Cooperation in Cultural Heritage (JCIC-Heritage), or Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

ACCU Nara screened the applicants and made a preliminary selection of short-listed candidates. ICCROM and the Agency for Cultural Affairs were then consulted with to make a final selection. Based on this, 15 applicants were selected from 12 countries, with an additional 2 applicants on the waiting list. Where deemed necessary, ACCU Nara also confirmed the English proficiency of the applicants via phone interview. Successful candidates and their respective NATCOMs were notified in early July.

6.4. Training Participants

Due to conflicting work schedule and visa issues, 2 participants were unable to travel to Japan and complete the training course. The final group of training participants consisted of the below.

- 13 participants from 10 countries: Southeast Asia 7, South Asia 5, Pacific 1 (refer to Appendix).
- 10 participants were conservation architects, 2 participants were engineers who worked in architecture conservation, and 1 participant was an archaeologist who had experience with preserving wooden architecture elements.
- 7 of the participants worked for a national authority, 1 for regional authority, 3 for academia, 1 at a private institution, and 1 for an NGO.
- The youngest participant was 28 and the oldest was 51 (average age 36.4).
- 6 female and 7 male participants.



7. Completion Requirements

During the course period, each participant was required to complete the below to receive a Certificate of Completion.

1. Complete all video lectures and attend all online sessions (online).
2. Submit all check point reports (online).
Content: Specific questions related to the content of each lecture.
3. Submit a case study report (Word document & PowerPoint) and make a presentation (onsite).
Content: Describe the specific issues that exist in wooden built heritage protection systems, conservation and restoration, or management and utilisation in your country, preferably based on specific case studies from your own work, experience, and insights.
4. Submit a final report (Word document & PowerPoint) and make a presentation (onsite).
Content: (1) long-term and short-term action plans developed from the training course outcomes, and (2) possible solutions for the challenges mentioned in the Case Study Report.
5. Submit the course evaluation (onsite).

8. Secretariat

ACCU Nara Office

WAKIYA Kayoko, Vice Director, Programme Operation Department, with Patricia SUN, Intern, were responsible for the overall course planning arrangement and the moderating of the online and onsite sessions. YOSHIDA Machi, subsection head of the International Cooperation Division was responsible for disseminating the course information and creating the training materials. NAGANO Sekiroh, staff of the International Cooperation Division was responsible for logistical arrangements and other support services in Japan. KAJIWARA Lintaro, project staff, supported participants and lecturers during the on-site sessions. HATA Chiyako was the Japanese and English interpreter during the on-site course. The Planning Coordination Division of ACCU also assisted the course.

ICCROM

EJIMA Yusuke, Project Manager, Programmes Unit, assisted ACCU with selection of participants and overall administration. Gamini WIJESURIYA, Special Advisor, provided lecture videos and an online discussion session for Unit 1. Tomás Meraz CASTAÑO, Movable Heritage Project Officer, attended the opening ceremony and gave a lecture and commentary on the participants case study reports on the first day of on-site training in Japan. Anne NYHAMAR, Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage, attended the closing ceremony and gave a lecture and commentary on the participants final report presentations on the last day of on-site training in Japan.

Group Training Course for Young Professionals on Cultural Heritage Protection in the Asia-Pacific Region 2025
Conservation and Management of Wooden Built Heritage

Online Programme
25 August (Mon.) - 5 September (Fri.)

Date	Content	Lecturer	Method	
8/25 (Mon.) 14:00-15:00 JST	Orientation (Closed Session)	ACCU Nara	Zoom	
Streaming begins 08/25 (Mon.)	UNIT 1: Global Perspectives and Challenges in Cultural Heritage Conservation			
	1-1. International Charters and Approaches to Heritage Conservation (Introduction to ICCROM / Evolution of Conservation Philosophy, Principles & Charters) 1-2. Diversity of Wooden Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region and Local Approaches to Conservation	Gamini WIJESURIYA (ICCROM)	On-demand Lecture Videos Reading Material	
	1-3. Current State and Issues in Cultural Heritage Conservation in the Asia-Pacific Region (Principles, Practices, and Cultural Contexts in Conservation: A Case Study of the Development of the Cultural Properties Designation System in Japan) 1-4. Protection of Cultural Properties in Japan (Outline and History of Legal Frameworks & the Cultural Properties System)	INABA Nobuko (University of Tsukuba)		
	UNIT 2: Protection Systems for Wooden Built Heritage in Japan			
	2-1. Outline (Monuments as Cultural Property / Basics of Restoration / Approaches to Intervention in the Legal Framework)	KANAI Ken (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)		On-demand Lecture Videos Reading Material
	2-2. History and Diversity of Japanese Wooden Architecture	INAGAKI Tomoya, KIYONAGA Yohei (Agency for Cultural Affairs)		
	2-3. Preservation of Wooden Structures in Japan I (Restoration of Cultural Properties / Disaster Preparedness / Human Resources Development)			
	2-4. Preservation of Wooden Structures in Japan II (Safeguarding and Transmission of Techniques / Procurement of Material / Promotion of Utilisation)			
	UNIT 3: Conservation & Restoration of Wooden Architecture in Japan and in Global Context			
	3-1. (Ref.) Wooden Structures in Asia	TOMODA Masahiko (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)	On-demand Lecture Videos Reading Material	
	3-2. Comparison of Conservation Philosophy and Methods of Wooden Structures in Europe and Beyond	Alejandro MARTINEZ (Kyoto Institute of Technology)		
	UNIT 4: Repair and Restoration Policies for Wooden Structures of Especially High-Value in Japan			
	4-1. Restoration Procedure for Cultural Properties in Japan	TAI Tadatsugu (Wakayama Prefecture Cultural Heritage Center)	On-demand Lecture Videos Reading Material	
	4-2. Cultural Property Restoration in Post-Disaster Recovery: A Case Study of Japanese Reconstruction Support in Nepal			
	4-3. (Ref.) Survey and Documentation of Individual Wooden Structures (Measurement, Damage Assessment & Trace Investigation)	KONDO Mitsuo (Japanese Association for Conservation of Architectural Monuments)		
	4-4. (Ref.) Philosophy of Japanese Restoration Policy of Wooden Structures			
	4-5. (Ref.) Repair of Wooden Structures (Private House): A Case Study of the Seki Family Residence			
	UNIT 5: Protection and Utilisation of Groups of Traditional Buildings in Japan (Rural Towns & Farm Villages)			
	5-1. Community Participation in Townscape Preservation in Japan (Nara Important Preservation District for Groups of Historic Buildings)	WATANABE Yasushi (Board of Education, Shiojiri City)	On-demand Lecture Videos Reading Material	
	8/28 (Thu.) 14:00-17:00 JST	Unit 1/2: Q&A Session	Gamini Wijesuriya (ICCROM) INABA Nobuko (University of Tsukuba) KANAI Ken (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties) KIYONAGA Yohei (Agency for Cultural Affairs)	Zoom
9/4 (Thu.) 13:00-17:00 JST	Unit 4/5: Q&A Session	TAI Tadatsugu (Wakayama Prefecture Centre for Cultural Property) WATANABE Yasushi (Board of Education, Shiojiri City)		
9/9 (Tue.) 14:00-15:00 JST	Mid-term Meeting	ACCU		

Group Training Course for Young Professionals on Cultural Heritage Protection in the Asia-Pacific Region 2025			
On-site Programme			
19 September (Fri.) - 2 October (Thu.)			
Date	Content (9:30 - 16:30)	Lecturer	Venue
0	9/18 (Thur.)	Arrival in Japan	
1	9/19 (Fri.) 13:30 - 20:00	Opening Ceremony / Orientation / Reception	ACCU Nara Nara Prefectural Convention Centre (Conference Room 202) NOVOTEL Nara (Water)
UNIT 1: Global Perspectives and Challenges in Conservation of Wooden Heritage			
UNIT 2: Protection Systems for Wooden Built Heritage in Japan			
2	9/20 (Sat.)	【Presentation/Discussion】 Case Study Report by participants 【Lecture】 Summary of Unit 1 & 2	Coordinators: Tomás Meraz Castaño (ICCROM) Inaba Nobuko (University of Tsukuba) Kanai Ken (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)
3	9/21 (Sun.)	Day Off (AM) International Cultural Exchange Programme in Nara (14:00-18:00) Hotel Nikko Nara	
UNIT 4: Repair and Restoration Policies for Wooden Structures of Especially High-Value in Japan			
4	9/22 (Mon.)	【Lecture】 Monument Restoration Practical Orientation 【Practical I】 Survey and Documentation of Individual Wooden Structures & Formulation of Restoration Plan I (Trace Investigation)	Tai Tadatsugu (Wakayama Prefectural Centre for Cultural Property) Tanaka Izumi (Todai-ji Temple)
5	9/23 (Tue.)	【Study Tour I】 Japanese Shrine Architecture 【Study Tour II】 World Heritage Site: Preservation and Management of Horyu-ji Temple	Tai Tadatsugu ACCU Nara Important Cultural Property Tanzan-jinja Shrine (Sakurai City) Town designated CP Kudara-dera Temple (Koryo Town) Horyu-ji Temple WHS (Ikaruga Town)
6	9/24 (Wed.)	【Practical II】 Survey and Documentation of Individual Wooden Structures & Formulation of Restoration Plan II (Trace Investigation & Damage Assessment) 【Discussion】 Investigation Outcome & Exchange of Opinions	Tai Tadatsugu Tanaka Izumi
7	9/25 (Thu.)	【Group Session】 Formulation of Restoration Plan 【Presentation】 Presentation of Restoration Plan & Wrap-up	Tai Tadatsugu Tanaka Izumi
8	9/26 (Fri.)	【Study Tour III】 Restoration of Japanese Wooden Structures (Restoration and Carpentry of Shrine Architecture)	Kaneko Takayuki, Mamekoshi Yuya, Tsuji Masaki, Bando Miharuru (Nara Prefecture Cultural Properties Conservation Office)
9	9/27 (Sat.)	Day Off (Preparation of Final Reports)	
UNIT 5: Protection and Utilisation of Groups of Traditional Buildings in Japan (Rural Towns & Farm Villages)			
10	9/28 (Sun.)	【Study Tour IV】 Townscape Preservation and Challenges in Japan (Narai & Kiso-Hirasawa)	Watanabe Yasushi (Board of Education, Shiojiri City)
11	9/29 (Mon.)		
12	9/30 (Tue.)	【Study Tour V】 Community Participation in the Preservation of WHS Shirakawa-go	Ozaki Tatsuya (Board of Education, Shirakawa Village)
13	10/1 (Wed.)	Day Off (Preparation of Final Reports)	
UNIT 3: Conservation & Restoration of Wooden Architecture in Japan and in Global Context			
14	10/2 (Thu.)	【Lecture】 Challenges and Responses in the Conservation of Wooden Structures in Norway/Europe 【Lecture】 The Conservation of Wooden Heritage Buildings in Japan from an International Perspective 【Discussion】 Presentation of Final Reports by participants Closing Ceremony	Anne Nyhamar (ICCROM) Alejandro Martinez (Kyoto Institute of Technology) All Lecturers (Optional)
15	10/3 (Fri.)	Departure from Japan	

2. Course Summary

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ACCU Nara training courses were held online for three years. Onsite training resumed in 2023 in a hybrid format. Following from the previous years, theoretical training was conducted online before participants arrived in Japan for onsite practical training. The online programme was from 25 August to 5 September, during which participants watched on-demand lecture videos and attended two online sessions with lecturers. An orientation session and mid-term meeting was also held for administrative purposes.

Onsite training was from 19 September to 2 October, during which practical sessions at conservation sites, study visits in Nara and other sites in Japan, and case study presentations by participant were held.

25 August (Online)

■Orientation

A brief introduction of ACCU Nara and an overview of the course objectives, curriculum, schedule, and other general administrative information was provided to course participants. In addition, the online platform, iPAGE, and completion requirements for the course was also explained in detail. After the conclusion of the orientation session, participants gained access to the online learning material. Over the course of the online programme, a total of 11 compulsory lecture videos and 15 supplementary videos were streamed.



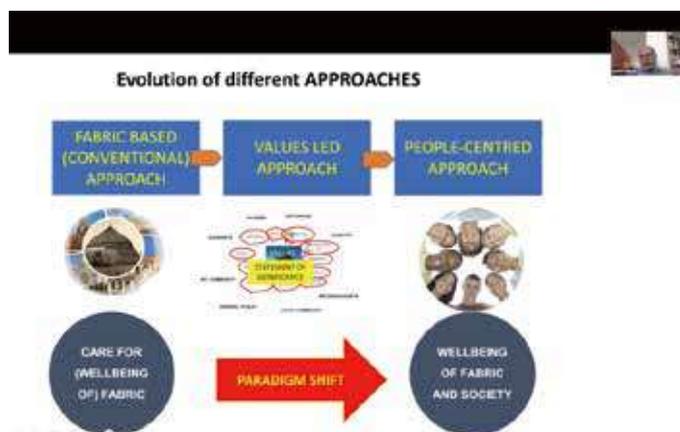
Online Orientation Session

28 August (Online)

■Q&A and Discussion Session

Unit 1: *Global Perspectives and Challenges in Cultural Heritage Conservation*

Lecturers: Gamini WIJESURIYA (ICCROM), INABA Nobuko (University of Tsukuba)



Lecture Summary for Unit 1, Gamini WIJESURIYA

Dr WIJESURIYA gave a summary of the lecture videos he provided for the course, speaking about changes in the field of cultural heritage and focusing on the complexity and importance of conserving wooden heritage in the Asia-Pacific region. He explained that heritage conservation initially tended to emphasise preservation of the original material, but has since shifted toward a values-based approach that places greater importance on cultural values and engagement with local communities in decision-making processes.

In response to a question from a participant regarding the classification of attributes and distinguishing between tangible, intangible, and process-based elements, he noted that there is no clear consensus

among heritage professionals, as values and attributes are often complexly overlapped and multi-layered.

Furthermore, a participant raised concerns about time constraints for implementing projects, prompting a discussion on how Japan and other countries manage their timelines. Another participant also shared a case in which a management plan formulated eight years earlier could not be implemented due to a change in government; during the delay, deterioration progressed to the point that the original plan was no longer applicable. Dr WIJESURIYA emphasised that while research and planning is crucial, conservation often requires immediate action due to urgent situations, and the process should involve a collective, participatory approach.

Prof INABA's lecture summary served as the bridge between Unit 1 and Unit 2. She discussed the development of Japan's legal system for cultural property protection, emphasising the importance of creating unique systems based on local culture rather than copying foreign models.

Unit 2: *Protection Systems for Wooden Built Heritage in Japan*

Lecturers: KANAI Ken (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties), INAGAKI Tomoya & KIYONAGA Yohei (Agency for Cultural Affairs)

Mr KANAI started the session by providing a short summary of the two main systems for identifying heritage properties in Japan: designation (*shitei*) and registration (*toroku*), highlighting their different approaches to preservation and utilisation. Mr KIYONAGA briefly summarised his lecture about securing traditional techniques and materials for conservation of wooden buildings in Japan, including the role of the *Furusato-no-mori* (Hometown Forest) program in preserving skills and knowledge.

Many participants expressed interest in the two different systems for protecting cultural property in Japan, sharing their past experiences with the difficulty of gaining consent from owners and surrounding community members. Prof INABA mentioned that the Japanese registration (*toroku*) system has less restrictive conditions compared to designation (*shitei*), which has been effective in persuading owners. Mr KIYONAGA provided further insight into this, noting that although the registration system is effective in cataloguing cultural properties, it nonetheless faces a range of challenges arising from its relatively lenient regulatory framework.

Some participants also further inquired about protection systems outside of built heritage and how to integrate them effectively into legal systems. Prof INABA explained that Japan's cultural property law includes both natural and cultural elements, with natural monuments being protected under the same legal framework rather than the Ministry of Environment. Similarly, she also clarified that Japan designates both static and dynamic cultural properties, including food-related items, under the same cultural property law.

Some participants also further inquired about protection systems outside of built heritage and how to integrate them effectively into legal systems. Prof INABA explained that Japan's cultural property law includes both natural and cultural elements, with natural monuments being protected under the same legal framework rather than the Ministry of Environment. Similarly, she also clarified that Japan designates both static and dynamic cultural properties, including food-related items, under the same cultural property law.

4 September (Online)

■Q&A and Discussion Session

Unit 4: *Repair and Restoration Policies for Wooden Structures of Especially High-Value in Japan*

Lecturer: TAI Tadatsugu (Wakayama Prefecture Cultural Heritage Center)



Lecture Summary for Unit 4, TAI Tadatsugu



Lecture Summary for Unit 2, KANAI Ken

Mr TAI gave a short lecture summary on preserving authenticity in conservation of wooden buildings in Japan, explaining the detailed procedure of dismantling and repair of buildings, including the careful investigation and recording of each component, the use of traditional techniques, and the emphasis on maintaining the original structure and materials as much as possible.

Many participants were fascinated with the rigorous Japanese conservation methods and repair cycles and had many questions regarding approval processes, financial support, licencing systems for conservation architects, and project proponents. A participant asked a question regarding sourcing materials, as sometimes

it can be very difficult to find the same species of wood in the specifications required. Mr TAI explained that this is also a very common issue that conservation architects face in Japan, especially considering natural variations even in the same species of wood, and they can only strive to find something similar enough to the original material. He also added that the Agency for Cultural Affairs provides subsidies for some local governments to maintain production capacity of traditional materials, such as cypress bark used for roofs.

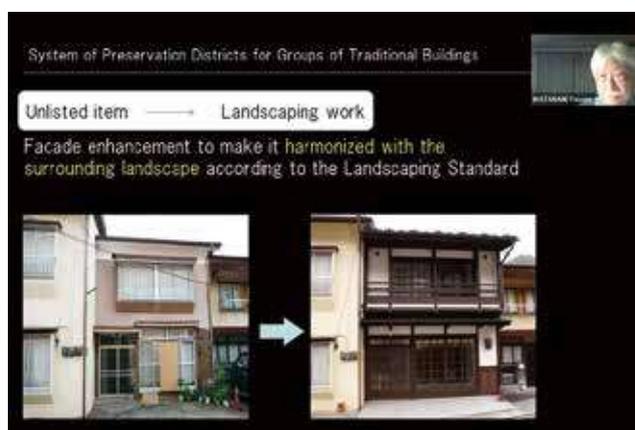
Unit 5: *Protection and Utilisation of Groups of Traditional Buildings in Japan (Rural Towns & Farm Villages)*

Lecturer: WATANABE Yasushi (Board of Education, Shiojiri City)

Mr WATANABE gave a short summary of his video lecture and explained the system for Preservation Districts for Groups of Traditional Buildings and its various requirements, focusing on Narai and Kiso-Hirasawa.

A participant raised a question regarding how to maintain townscape harmony when historical buildings from different eras and style co-exist, to which Mr WATANABE explained that it depended on what ‘theme’ the district is preserved as. As Kiso-Hirasawa’s designated value lies in its history as a lacquerware industrial town, the buildings reflect the ups and downs of business and are preserved together for that reason, even if they are not necessarily uniform and ‘harmonious.’ In other districts such as Narai, more importance is placed on maintaining a harmonious townscape that reflects its role as a post town during the Edo period.

Another participant inquired about the process in gaining support and cooperation from local community members in preservation of the district. Mr WATANABE replied that it is important to increasing willingness and enthusiasm in the community members themselves rather than having a top-down approach.



Lecture Summary for Unit 5, WATANABE Yasushi



Q&A and Discussion Session (Unit 1 and 2)

9 September (Online)

■ Midterm Meeting

A final briefing session was held by ACCU Nara staff before participants travelled to Japan. Assignment submission reminders, schedule, airport meeting place, and other important pre-arrival information was shared.

19 September

■ Opening Ceremony & Orientation

Venue: Nara Prefectural Convention Centre

Participants were welcomed by Mr MORIMOTO Susumu (ACCU Nara) and other representatives of course organisers, Mr OGIWARA Tomonari (Agency for Cultural Affairs), Mr Tomás Meraz CASTAÑO (ICCROM), Mr KATO Shinji (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties), and Mr KANAI Ken (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties). Representatives from the Nara Prefecture and Tenri City governments also joined the organisers in welcoming participants (Mr SUGIMURA Kazuhiko and Ms IMAZATO Mieko, respectively). Participants gave their self-introductions, expressed their deep gratitude for this opportunity, and shared their excitement for the following days.



Opening Ceremony

Unit 1: Global Perspectives and Challenges in Cultural Heritage Conservation
Unit 2: Protection Systems for Wooden Built Heritage in Japan

20 September

■ Participant Case Study Reports & Lectures

Venue: Nara Prefectural Convention Centre

Lecturers: Tomás Meraz CASTAÑO (ICCROM), INABA Nobuko (University of Tsukuba), KANAI Ken (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

Presentations were divided into three themes: Community & Stakeholder Involvement, Structural Repairs, and General Restoration; which was followed by a brief introduction to ICCROM by Mr CASTAÑO and lecture by Prof INABA, and then a final group discussion session.

The first session titled, Community & Stakeholder Involvement, had four case studies from Indonesia, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. In Indonesia and Nepal, living communities within heritage sites demonstrate that vernacular and religious architecture cannot be separated from daily life, rituals, and systems of knowledge transmission, yet these relationships are often strained by tourism pressures, bureaucratic procedures, and funding constraints. The second Nepal and Sri Lanka cases further highlight the strong role of religious communities, whose authority and intangible practices can both safeguard cultural continuity and complicate project timelines.

The next session themed around Structural Repairs discussed architectural projects in Bhutan, Cambodia, and Thailand, as well as an archaeological project from Bangladesh. These projects were shaped by factors such as moisture damage, fire, flooding, material decay, and incomplete documentation, often compounded by harsh climates, and limited

traditional skill. While modern materials and technologies were frequently introduced to address durability, safety, and maintenance concerns, their use often led to tensions with traditional construction systems and values of authenticity. The final session, General Restorations, illustrate how heritage interventions are shaped by natural disasters, urban development pressures, and gaps in documentation and institutional capacity. In Fiji, Malaysia, and the Philippines, restoration efforts were frequently reactive, requiring pragmatic approaches that balanced material retention, modern techniques, and limited resources. Several projects revealed tensions between preserving authenticity and addressing contemporary needs, particularly in postcolonial and rapidly urbanising contexts where the cultural meaning of historic structures remains contested.



Case Study Presentations by Participants
 From right to left, Genissa O. Villegas (Philippines); Pusparini Dharma Putri (Indonesia); Setoki Baleiyaqeta Tuiteci (Fiji)

The group discussion session focused on two major topics based on the participants' presentations. The first topic was about colonial heritage, how it has affected the local heritage, and how it is intervened and viewed today. Many of the participants have strong colonial influences in their home nations, both in architectural heritage and the legislation surrounding heritage protection. Lecturers made a strong point to decolonise the mindset and thinking surrounding heritage and create their own protection systems based on the needs of their heritage and communities. The second topic was the periodic disassembly and repair of wooden Japanese architecture. Based on the previous knowledge about traditional Japanese timber architecture, especially in the context of shrines and temples, some participants believed that it was common practice. This misconception was later clarified by Prof INABA, where she explained that complete disassembly and repair is not actually a traditional practice and is reserved for only structures of high value as it is very financially, labour, and time intensive process.



Comments and lectures by lecturers



Participants engaging in discussion



Group Photo

Unit 4: Repair and Restoration Policies for Wooden Structures of Especially High-Value in Japan

The purpose of the practical sessions and study visits of this unit was to equip participants with the ability to approach repair and restoration of wooden structures in a holistic way that considers the history, values, and functions that are attached to the structure. A major portion of the practical sessions were dedicated to trace investigations, where participants were tasked with determining the various modifications to the structure through the limited information they could gain from observations. Through on their trace investigations and observations, participants were required to unravel the history of the structure and discern where and what values structures hold. Another large part of this unit was for participants to formulate a restoration plan after receiving requests from a ‘client’ that contradict the overall history and value of the structure, which is a very real scenario that many conservation architects face. Participants were required to formulate and present their proposals in a way that balances the client’s request and the overall history and value of the structure, basing it on the outcomes of their investigations. The last part of this unit focused on the actual implementation of repair and restoration plans and the use of traditional tools and techniques.

22 September

■ Monument Restoration Practical Orientation

■ Survey and Documentation of Individual Wooden Structures & Formulation of Restoration Plan I (Trace Investigation)

Venue: Todai-ji Temple

Lecturers: TAI Tadatsugu (Wakayama Prefectural Centre for Cultural Property), TANAKA Izumi (Todai-ji Temple)

Acting as the representative for Todai-ji and client, Mr TANAKA gave participants the assignment of proposing a restoration plan for Jibutsu-do, a structure that was originally built as the Main Sanctuary of Tanzan-jinja Shrine but is now situated in Todai-ji Temple grounds after multiple relocations. Participants were tasked with presenting their plan in groups based on the below requests.

1. Determine and restore appearance to its ‘original’ form
2. Maintain its current function for Buddhist rituals

Mr TAI then explained its basic architectural features, leaving details regarding the history of the structure for participants to discover during their own investigations. Mr TAI also showed participants a variety of traditional nails

used in Japanese architecture and explained the lacquer application process, giving participants a hint regarding old nail and paint marks.

During the free time to observe the structure, some participants first examined the subfloor by crawling underneath the structure, while others examined the decorative elements found on the exterior. Many participants also noticed differing floorboard widths and lengths, uneven weathering, and other points of visible alterations. Mr TAI also pointed out old lacquer under the staircase, a place that would not be visible in the current form, and gold leaf patterns that do not match up. Participants were able to understand the importance of trace investigations and begin to theorise about previous relocations and the original form of the structure.



Lecturers giving explanations



Participants making observations of Jibutsu-do

23 September

■Japanese Shrine Architecture

■World Heritage Site: Preservation and Management of Horyu-ji Temple

Venue: Tanzan-jinja Shrine, Kudara-dera Temple, Horyu-ji Temple

Lecturers: TAI Tadatsugu (Wakayama Prefectural Centre for Cultural Property)

Participants visited Tanzan-jinja Shrine, where Jibutsu-do was originally constructed as its main sanctuary, and Kudara-dera Temple, another temple that had modified a main sanctuary of Tanzan-jinja Shrine for Buddhist purposes, to gather more information for their restoration proposals. With hints from Mr TAI, participants were quick to notice elements that had been retained and elements that had been changed over the multiple relocations and confirm the theories that they were beginning to develop. Many were particularly interested in the structure's transition from a Shinto to Buddhist structure, such as the addition of a staircase and area for Buddhist states, as well as changes in roof material and decorative elements.

In the afternoon, participants visited Horyu-ji Temple and learnt about management and community engagement in World Heritage Sites. Many participants were impressed by the enthusiasm and knowledge of the community guides, especially noting that they are volunteering out of pure interest and not for any religious merit.



Participants making observations at Tanzan-jinja Shrine



Participants making observations at Kudara-dera Temple



Volunteer Guide Tour at Horyu-ji Temple

24 September

■Survey and Documentation of Individual Wooden Structures & Formulation of Restoration Plan II (Trace Investigation & Damage Assessment)

■Investigation Outcome & Exchange of Opinions

Venue: Todai-ji Temple

Lecturers: TAI Tadatsugu (Wakayama Prefectural Centre for Cultural Property), TANAKA Izumi (Todai-ji Temple)

Participants split into groups and worked on their presentations of their investigation findings. Based on their observations over the past two days, the groups were to share the changes that they believe were made to the Jibutsu-do over the relocations.



Group work



Group work & observations



Participants being guided around Todai-ji Temple

In the afternoon, Mr TANAKA guided participants to other parts of Todai-ji Temple, including the Main Hall, Hokke-do Hall, the oldest surviving structure in Todai-ji Temple, and Shigatsu-do Hall, which was undergoing partial disassembly and repair. Many participants commented on the excellent state of conservation despite the high footwork traffic and continuity of religious functions, as this is something they sometimes find difficult to balance in their home countries.



Lecturers giving feedback

At the end of the day, participants presented their investigative results and the changes to the structure over its relocations. As each group was a mix of specialities and backgrounds, they had differing observations and perspectives. After the presentations, Mr TAI revealed the correct answer regarding the history of modifications of Jibutsu-do. Out of the four groups, two groups were able to reach the correct answer themselves.



Participants presenting their findings

25 September

■Formulation of Restoration Plan

■Presentation of Restoration Plan & Wrap-up

Venue: Todai-ji Temple

Lecturers: TAI Tadatsugu (Wakayama Prefectural Centre for Cultural Property), TANAKA Izumi (Todai-ji Temple)

In the morning, participants made their final observations with Mr TAI's guidance and worked on formulating a restoration plan based on their investigations and Mr TANAKA's requests as the 'owner' of the structure. Participants presented their plans to the lecturers in the afternoon. Some groups chose to prioritise the client's request and returning the structure to its original, Shinto-style appearance by removing modifications, repainting, and re-roofing in traditional Cypress bark, while other groups proposed a more hybrid version where some modifications are removed but others are maintained. Some participants also suggested new modifications, such as raising the foundation to combat moisture damage or changing the scale of the staircase.

The lecturers applauded the participants' efforts and noted that while it is important to satisfy the client's requests, it is also important to consider the overall historical value of the structure. As most groups proposed to re-paint Jibutsu-do and restore its structure to its original form, Mr TANAKA commented that removing or changing anything from the current structure could be considered altering or erasing part of its history, and that from a conservation standpoint, refraining from further intervention and maintaining its current state is also an option. It may be more beneficial and historically important to maintain the current state. Mr TAI further added that there is no 'correct' restoration plan and highlighted the importance of balancing preservation and conservation and client and community requests for utilisation.



Participants making final observations of Jibutsu-do

Proposed Restoration Plan for the Todai-ji Temple, Jibutsu-do

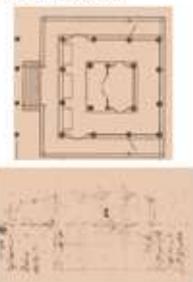
1. Base of the pillar Needs to be fixed/erected from the stone base foundation.
The base of the pillar needs to be properly fixed and erected on the stone foundation to ensure stability and durability. This will help prevent deterioration caused by fire and moisture, maintain structural weakness, control the termite attack (the insect) to ground level, and easy to apply the treatment and extend the overall lifespan of the pillar. Proper fixing will also enhance load distribution, resist ground movement, and provide long-term ability and strength to the structure.

Presented by:
1. Durahya Kulathunga (Sri Lanka)
2. Chad Heng Haur (Malaysia)
3. Binin Wangdi (Bhutan)

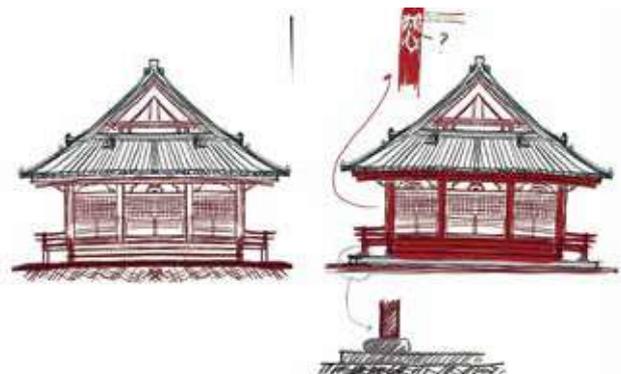
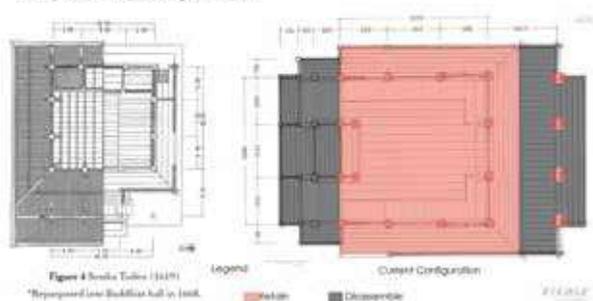
RESTORE THE BUILDING BACK TO SHINTO SHRINE

- FORM: SHINTO SHRINE
- FUNCTION: BUDDHIST TEMPLE
- PLAN: REMOVAL OF THE REAR EXTENSION
- FRAMING
- WALL LINING
- FLOORINGS
- FOUNDATIONS

- REUSE THE REMOVED TIMBER:
- * ROUND COLUMNS FOR THE CENTRAL PLATFORM STRUCTURE
- * SQUARE COLUMNS FOR THE NEW BUDDHA ENCLOSURES ON THE RESTORED BUDDHA PLATFORM ALONG THE RESTORED BACK WALL
- * RAISED CENTRAL PLATFORM WILL BE LOWER THAN THE NEW BUDDHA PLATFORM ON THE BACK WALL



Proposed Configuration



Restoration proposals by participants

26 September

■Restoration of Japanese Wooden Structures (Restoration and Carpentry of Shrine Architecture)

Venue: Oo-jinja Shrine, Nara Prefecture Historical and Artistic Culture Complex

Lecturers: KANEKO Takayuki, MAMEKOSHI Yuya, TSUJI Masaki, BANDO Miharu (Nara Prefecture Cultural Properties Conservation Office)

As participants had spent the previous sessions formulating a restoration plan for a Shinto shrine structure, participants visited Oo-jinja Shrine, which is currently undergoing disassembly and repair, to view the process in action. Staff members of the Nara Prefecture Cultural Properties Preservation Office gave detailed explanation of the ongoing project and guided participants around the site and scaffolding. Participants were amazed by the meticulous labelling of each wooden member and the care that goes into ensuring as much as possible of the original elements could be preserved and reused. Another point that many participants were surprised by was the preservation of wooden elements that no longer served any structural or decorative purpose, but were still returned to their original locations nonetheless as part of the structures' 'history' for future generations.



Lecturers giving explanations of Oo-jinja Shrine disassembly and repair project



Participants observing Oo-jinja Shrine disassembly and repair site



Group photo at Oo-jinja Shrine disassembly and repair site

Participants then visited Nara Prefectural Historical and Artistic Cultural Complex where they learned about preservation and use of traditional Japanese carpentry techniques in repair projects. They were able to talk with a resident carpenter with over 60 years of experience, who also showed participants his traditional tools and explained his current work process of preparing an old wooden member for repair.



Carpenter explaining traditional tools and techniques for repair

Participants were also able to experience splitting and smoothing a log using traditional tools and techniques, allowing them to understand the amount of skill, effort, and time required to repair and restore structures in traditional ways. Lecturers explained that though modern materials and techniques are sometimes incorporated into projects, conservation architects and carpenters must be able to use traditional tools and techniques where necessary, especially in areas that are visible from the outside. Many participants were also interested in the support from local governments and licencing and accreditation system the Agency for Cultural Affairs has in place. Participants concluded the day by touring the other workshops, noting that such a facility where restoration processes are open for viewing to the public is very commendable and could be considered in their own countries.



Participants experiencing traditional tools



Group photo in carpentry workshop

Unit 5: Protection and Utilisation of Groups of Traditional Buildings in Japan (Rural Towns & Farm Villages)

Unlike the previous unit that focuses on the preservation of individual buildings, this unit looks at preservation districts where properties of different historical and cultural values coexist. Owners, community members, and other stakeholders each have their own agendas, presenting unique challenges that require interdisciplinary solutions. The districts that participants visited have decades of experience in this regard, and the purpose of this unit was to share some insights gained over multiple generations of preservation and utilisation. Participants were able to engage directly with local government officials who were born and raised in the preservation districts and now act as key persons in connecting the local community and local government efforts. Through observations, lectures, and discussions, participants had the chance to learn about Japanese approaches to preserving and utilising living heritage towns.

28 September

■ Townscape Preservation and Challenges in Japan (Narai & Kiso-Hirasawa)

Venue: Kiso-Hirasawa

Lecturer: WATANABE Yasushi, SHIOHARA Masaki, IMAFUKU Daisuke (Board of Education, Shiojiri City)

The lecturers briefly explained the history of Shiojiri City's two preservation districts and first gave participants a general tour of Kiso-Hirasawa's listed buildings and sites, including the local Shinto shrine, several residential buildings, and other environmental features. Mr WATANABE emphasised that preservation districts are living heritage sites where residents still live and work, which makes preservation especially difficult. He also showed participants examples of buildings that were repaired, restored, or landscaped, noting that sometimes the most difficult choices are the harmonisation of new buildings in a way that is not intrusive or kitsch.

Many participants were particularly interested in fire-fighting facilities and how they are incorporated into the townscape while maintaining function. Mr WATANABE also explained that the local community also engages with fire-fighting activities through biannual fire drills and the city had invested in advanced water jets with limited recoil so anyone could be able to use them in the event of an emergency.



Lecturer giving explanation of Kiso-Hirasawa



Lecturer giving explanation of fire-fighting facilities

In the afternoon, participants visited a lacquerware workshop located inside a storehouse with thick earthen walls. Here, they were able to learn about the living industry behind the historic preservation district and the difficulties of maintaining traditional industries in a modernised world. Overall, participants found it very interesting that Kiso-Hirasawa's preservation district is themed around a particular industry rather than a specific period in history, and the maintenance of authentic lacquerware artisanship with limited influence from tourism to be very admirable.



Artisan explaining traditional Japanese lacquerware to participants



Group photo in front of lacquerware store

29 September

■Townscape Preservation and Challenges in Japan (Narai & Kiso-Hirasawa)

Venue: Narai

Lecturer: WATANABE Yasushi, SHIOHARA Masaki, IMAFUKU Daisuke (Board of Education, Shiojiri City)

Mr WATANABE began the day by explaining the background behind Japan's protection system for Groups of Traditional Buildings and the necessary processes for nomination. He emphasised the different preservation philosophies for different types of buildings, and that crucial role of local governments as they are the closest to and understand the needs of the community.

The lecturers also introduced various landscaped buildings and structures in Narai, including the newly built community centre that was landscaped to look like three Edo-style residences from the outside but was a single, multi-purpose hall with steel reinforced concrete inside to also function as an evacuation centre. He also introduced the first successful preservation project in Narai, the Former Nakamura Residence, that now functions as a small museum. Mr WATANABE emphasised the importance of the success of a first preservation project, as it would become a model for other projects and create momentum in the community.



Lecturers giving explanation of Narai



Lecturers introducing various buildings and structures of Narai

In the afternoon, participants had a Q&A and discussion session with the lecturer. Participants were especially interested in maintaining protection systems over multiple generations, as many struggle with changing attitudes and priorities as cultural heritage sites and buildings are passed to the next generation. Similarly, some participants were curious about how residents, especially newcomers, are incentivised to comply with preservation and landscaping regulations. Mr WATANABE explained that though there is technically a monetary penalty, the local government chooses not to enforce it as they do not want to create a precedent where exceptions are allowed if owners pay the fine. Instead, the lecturers highlighted the importance of consensus-building within the community.



Participants asking questions and engaging in discussion

30 September

■Community Participation in the Preservation of WHS Shirakawa-go

Venue: Shirakawa-go

Lecturer: OZAKI Tatsuya (Board of Education, Shirakawa Village)

Mr OZAKI introduced the background behind Shirakawa-go and its selection as one of the first Important Preservation District for Groups of Traditional Buildings and Japan's first cultural landscape World Heritage Site. He mentioned that preservation movements began in 1971, and over three generations the core principles of 'do not sell, lease, or destroy' has not changed. Nevertheless, the community has faced a wide range of challenges, including overtourism, continuity of traditional techniques and materials, and changing lifestyles.

Like in Shiojiri City, some participants were curious about the fire-fighting facilities and system, and found the water jets disguised as miniature versions of gassho style houses very interesting. Mr OZAKI also explained that each resident has a designated role in the event of an emergency, and fire-fighting is a community effort. Many participants also felt that stopping the spread of fire with a screen of water to be a very smart tactic.



Lecturer giving explanation of Shirakawa-go and its fire-fighting facilities

Participants were also shown the inside of a publicly open houses and allowed time to examine the gassho style structure and ask questions. Many participants asked about the preservation of traditional materials and techniques for roof re-thatching in a changing environment and society. Mr OZAKI explained that the village is no longer self-sufficient for roof thatching material due to lifestyle changes, and re-thatching is increasingly outsourced to professionals, but workshops are held for young residents to transmit traditional knowledge and skills. He also emphasised that the decline in use of traditional irori hearths and the lack of charcoal smoke that it emits has changed the speed of deterioration and hence re-thatching cycles, highlighting the fact that preservation goes far beyond only material and technique.



Lecturer giving explanation of gassho-style houses and roof thatching material

Some participants also expressed their struggles in combating overtourism and asked extensively about balancing preservation and utilisation. Mr OZAKI noted that all people want to be able to live a rich and carefree life, and the tourism industry is often much less hard labour compared to traditional ways of life. However, 'richness' is not only monetary, but also in human connection, cultural, and gratitude, and he emphasised that it is the duty of adults to educate the next generation about true 'richness' and instil in them a sense of pride for their cultural heritage. For more practical countermeasures, he highlighted the importance of setting a fixed capacity of tourists and the general pivot towards high level tourism in Japan.



Group photo in Shirakawa-go

Unit 3: Conservation & Restoration of Wooden Architecture in Japan and in Global Context

2 October

- Challenges and Responses in the Conservation of Wooden Structures in Norway/Europe
- The Conservation of Wooden Heritage Buildings in Japan from an International Perspective
- Presentation of Final Reports by participants
- Closing Ceremony

Venue: Nara Prefectural Convention Centre

Lecturer: Anne NYHAMAR (Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage), Alejandro MARTINEZ (Kyoto Institute of Technology)

Prof MARTINEZ began with his lecture on the international principles for built heritage intervention, presenting numerous case studies from around the world and putting conservation practices in Japan in perspective. Following, Ms NYHAMAR and Mr Samuel Billaud FERAGEN from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology gave a lecture on conservation of wooden structures in Norway, highlighting the common challenges they face with other wood-based cultures such as Japan. Across the two lectures, participants were very interested in learning about different decision-making processes in what and how to preserve.

Ms NYHAMAR and participants then went to the Nara Prefectural Government Office for a courtesy visit to the Governor of Nara Prefecture, Mr YAMASHITA Makoto. Ms NYHAMAR expressed her gratitude to the Governor and the Prefecture's contribution to cultural heritage protection, noting that Nara has set a high standard.

In the afternoon, participants gave their final presentations about the main takeaways from this course and how they planned to utilise what they have learnt in Japan in their local contexts, which was followed by feedback and discussion with lecturers. Across the case studies and discussion, a shared topic was the strengthening heritage conservation through community pride, knowledge transfer, and institutional capacity-building. Many participants highlighted that through the study visits, they were able to learn that how local communities value and understand their heritage directly shapes external perceptions and long-term preservation outcomes, underscoring the need to treat heritage not only as physical structures but as living systems embedded in daily life and surrounding landscapes. Common challenges included fragmented or outdated administrative processes, weak or misaligned legal frameworks, limited documentation standards, and shortages of trained conservation professionals. Based on their practical training, participants proposed practical strategies such as standardising surveys and documentation, developing clear guidelines and competency plans, integrating traditional and scientific knowledge through formal education, and fostering collaboration between universities, government agencies, and local workers. Discussions also stressed preventative maintenance, disaster risk reduction, and incentives for retaining traditional materials and methods, while questioning whether preservation should merely safeguard relics or serve deeper cultural and social purposes.

At the Closing Ceremony, Director MORIMOTO Susumu and lecturers congratulated participants and presented each a Certificate of Completion. Representatives of participants also gave short speeches about their experiences and what they learnt, expressing their gratitude to the course organisers and contributors.



Lectures



Courtesy visit to the Governor of Nara Prefecture



Group photo with the Governor of Nara Prefecture



Final report presentations by participants and discussion with lecturers
 Top row, from left to right, Maria Frances Valenzuela Quito (Philippines); D.P.Pubuduni Dunishya Kulathunga (Sri Lanka); Niti Sanmanoruk (Thailand); Rotanak Yong (Cambodia). Bottom row, Genissa O. Villegas (Philippines).



Closing Ceremony and participants representatives, Setoki Baleiyaqeta Tuiteci (Fiji) and Pooja Amatya (Nepal)



Group photo at Closing Ceremony

3. Course Evaluation

The 2025 Group Training Course continued the hybrid format implemented after COVID 19. The course structure of this year's course was identical to the previous years and began with two weeks of self-paced online learning and Zoom sessions followed by a two-week on-site programme in Japan. Aside from two participants who were only able to complete the online programme (one due to conflicting work schedule; another due to visa issues), all other participants successfully completed the whole course.

ACCU Nara requires all participants to complete a comprehensive course evaluation upon completion to better the following years' courses. Course feedback has been compiled in the following pages. To make potential areas for improvement clearer, comments that included suggestions or constructive feedback have been given priority for inclusion in this report.

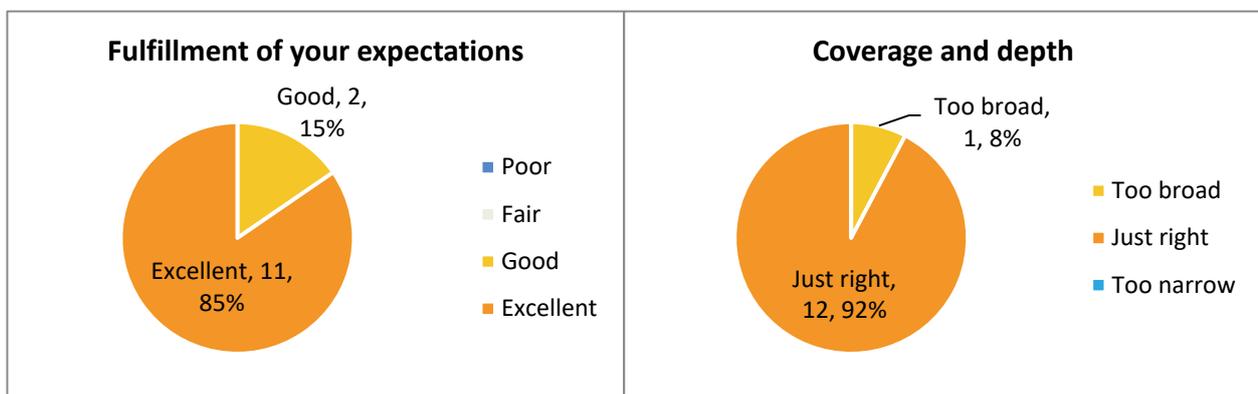
Overall, the course was highly regarded with all participants rating their fulfillment of expectations, coverage and depth, relevance to work, and applicability to interests of the course as 'excellent' (85-92%) or 'good' (8-15%). In comparison to previous years since implementation of the hybrid format, evaluation concerning interconnection and balance between online and on-site programmes, as well as for the online programme in general, was the best. This shows that feedback from previous years' participants have been adequately reflected in this year's course. The on-site programme (practical sessions) was also evaluated particularly well in comparison to previous years, with many participants giving positive feedback on the venue selection and premise for the prescribed tasks. Evaluation for study tours maintained the same high regard as previous years. However, presentations and discussions have been evaluated poorly in comparison, particularly regarding the lack of time and tight schedule for the final report presentation.

Main points for potential improvements are the following:

- **Course length & time allocation:** Nearly all participants noted that both the online and on-site programme were too short with schedules that felt rushed.
 - For the online programme, many participants wished to have more time to complete and review the video lectures and check point reports. Some participants also expressed that they wanted to have more discussion sessions with lecturers and other participants.
 - For the onsite session, over half of the participants said that days off were insufficient and more time could be allocated to group work and site observations.
 - Participants noted that time for the final report presentation and face-to-face discussions with lecturers were too short.
- **Video lectures:** A notable improvement can be observed in comparison to previous years. However, many participants noted that they prefer to also have a readable form, such as subtitles or script, of lectures to enhance comprehension and understanding.
- **Check point reports:** Some participants said that some questions were arbitrary and too long.

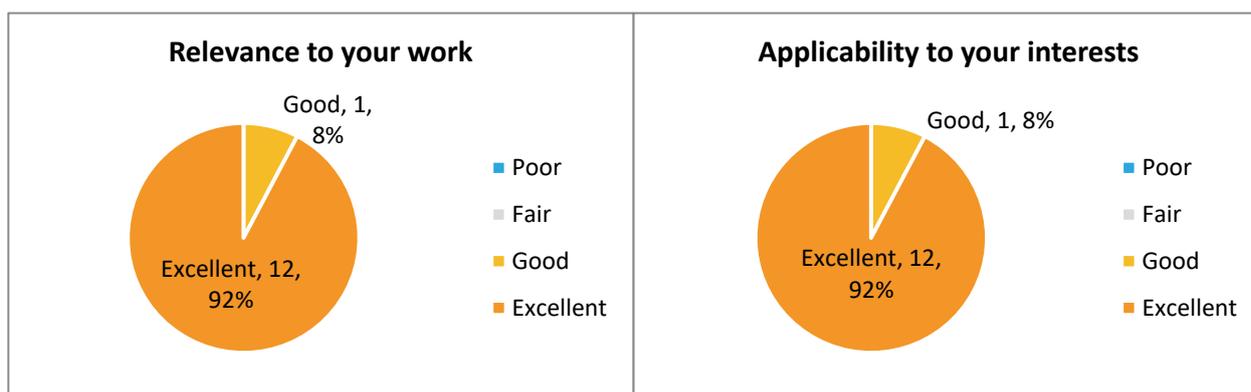
The comments and suggestions provided by the participants will be further examined and considered when planning the next training course.

A) Overall

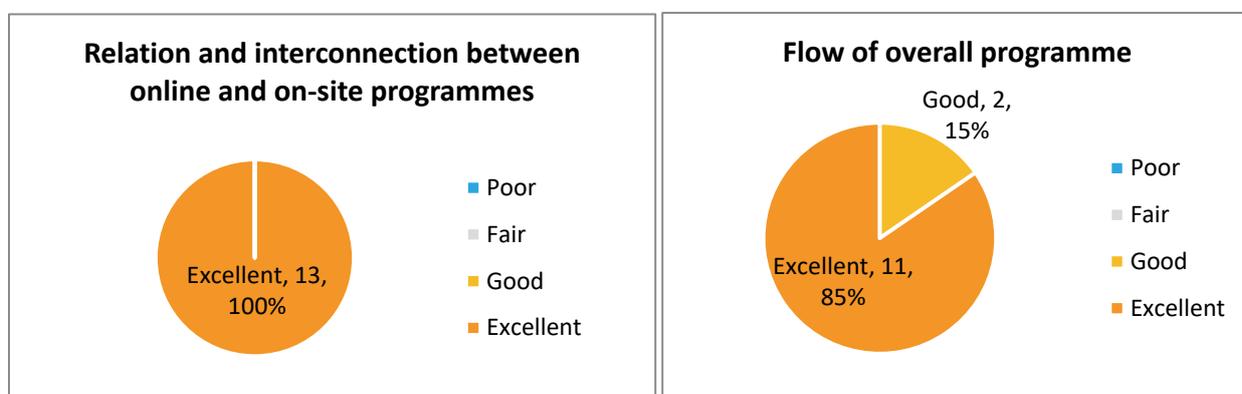


- Overall, the programme successfully met my expectations by deepening my technical knowledge, broadening my perspective on heritage conservation, and inspiring me to apply these skills in future restoration projects.

- This year's training course truly exceeded my expectations. I feel it was even better than the previous ones, with excellent facilities, well organized coordination, a beautiful venue, and a very supportive environment. The country, the people, the participants, and even the food all contributed to making this a truly memorable and valuable experience.
- The coverage and depth of the course theme were just right, providing a balanced understanding of both theoretical and practical aspects of wooden built heritage conservation.
- All the lectures and site visits conducted during the training program were highly relevant and perfectly aligned with the main theme of the course. Each lecture provided valuable theoretical insights into the conservation and management of wooden built heritage, while the site visits offered practical exposure to real-life examples and ongoing conservation projects. This well-balanced combination of theory and practice greatly enhanced our understanding and helped us apply the knowledge we gained in a more meaningful and effective way.

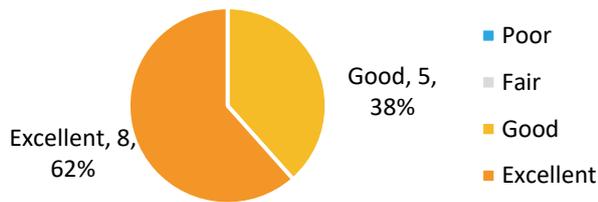


- Most parts of the training course were closely related to my field, especially the sessions on traditional wooden structures and joinery, which were excellent and highly informative.
- This training course is highly applicable to my work as an Architectural Conservator. The knowledge and skills gained through this program such as understanding the properties of timber, identifying deterioration patterns, applying suitable conservation techniques, and developing management strategies for wooden heritage structures are directly relevant to my daily responsibilities.

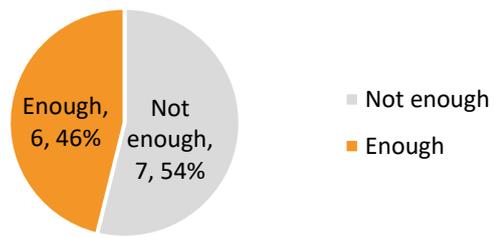


- The relation and interconnection between the online and on-site programmes were excellent, as the online sessions effectively prepared us for the practical, on-site learning experiences.
- The program was thoughtfully structured, beginning with training on a specific building and gradually expanding to encompass wider issues in historic urban conservation.
- The online lectures provided at the beginning of the program were extremely valuable in preparing us for the onsite practical training. The reading materials and resources shared by the lecturers were particularly helpful, as they enabled us to build a solid theoretical foundation before arriving in Japan. By the time we began the onsite sessions, we already had a clear understanding of the key concepts, the significance of the heritage sites, and the topics we were expected to explore. This prior knowledge allowed us to engage more confidently and meaningfully with the practical components of the training. Overall, the online phase greatly enhanced our ability to fully appreciate and absorb the learning experiences offered during the onsite program.

Balance of allocated time between online and on-site programmes



The number of days off

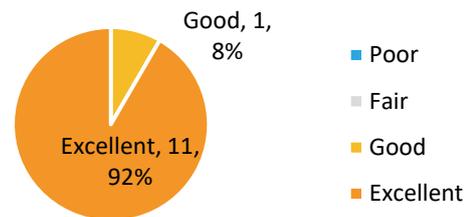


- The allocated time for both the online and onsite programs should be extended by at least five days, as it was quite challenging to complete the online lecture videos within the given timeframe.
- I believe it is better to extend the onsite program duration rather than the online component, as it allows participants to comfortably observe and understand wooden buildings, and to experience the culturally significant features of Japanese heritage.
- It would be beneficial to extend the on-site program to allow for a deeper understanding of the practical aspects, as problems will arise once the practical begins. As we know, facing, communicating, and solving the problem will make the knowledge we have more valuable.
- It would be nice to have additional day off, especially when people would observe their religious traditions.

Information and practical assistance preceding the course



Information and practical assistance during the course



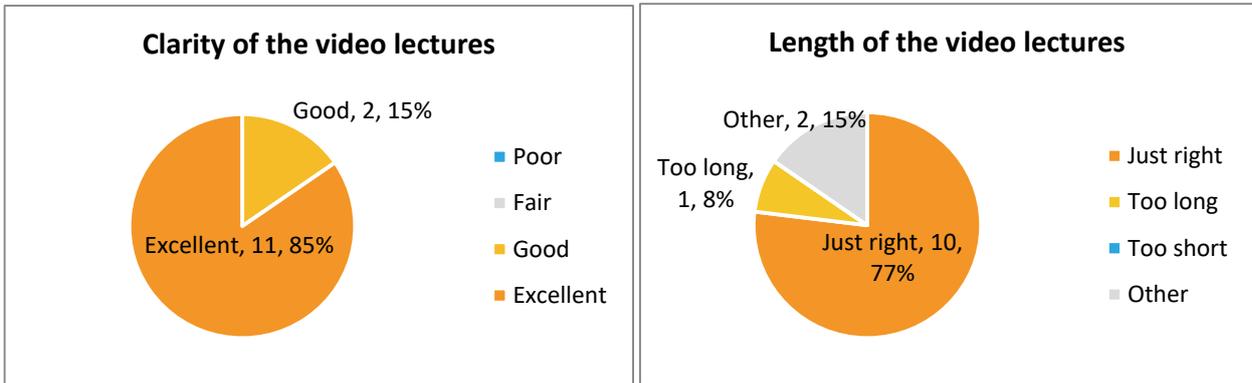
- Before the training began, ACCU provided comprehensive guidance regarding both the online and onsite components of the program. We received clear instructions on all practical matters, including the electronic devices we should bring, appropriate clothing and footwear, and proper conduct during training sessions and field visits. Every detail was thoughtfully communicated in advance, which helped us prepare thoroughly and confidently. ACCU ensured that all participants had the necessary information and support, and their well-organized directions greatly contributed to the smooth and successful implementation of the entire program.
- ACCU provided exceptional guidance and support throughout our stay in Japan. From the moment we arrived, their team ensured that we were well-oriented, comfortable, and fully prepared for every activity in the program. They offered clear instructions, timely assistance, and continuous coordination, making sure that all participants could focus entirely on learning and experiencing the heritage sites without any stress. Their attentive care, professionalism, and thoughtful organization made our entire training experience smooth, meaningful, and truly enriching. It was evident that ACCU was deeply committed to ensuring that we gained the maximum benefit from this program, both academically and culturally.

Suggestions for topics to be added to the curriculum

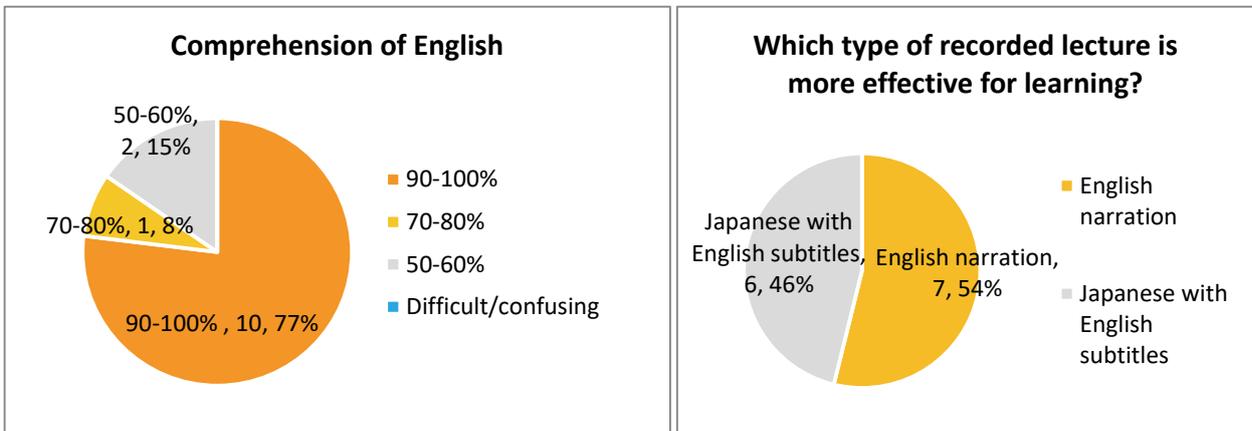
- In my opinion, it would be more beneficial if the group could provide more detailed discussions on the stability, resistance, and joinery systems of wooden structures, considering different climatic conditions and site locations, rather than focusing mainly on theoretical aspects of protection and conservation. Practical demonstrations would be especially valuable, as they help stakeholders better understand the value, importance, and durability of heritage sites when these concepts are shown through hands-on experience.
- Dialogue with the community, such as a focus group discussion.

- Legal provisions in Japan in dealing with conservation of different kinds of cultural heritage.
- Since we are dealing with the wooden structures, some structural engineering aspects could be also added so that even architects get to know a little about the engineering ways of these buildings.
- Takenaka Carpentry Tools Museum.
- I would love to learn more about the process of designating a cultural property in Japan and how they identify its significance.
- Practical onsite installation works.
- Maintenance methods for the wooden structures.

B) Online Programme

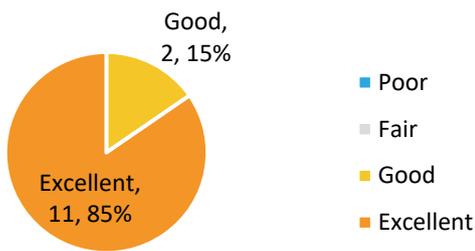


- All the lectures were clearly recorded and thoroughly prepared. I found the accompanying descriptions below the slides especially valuable, as they supported deeper understanding and post-lesson reflection.
- The lecture videos seemed quite long, and the time given to download and watch them was limited. It would be better if the duration or number of days allowed for viewing the lecture videos could be increased.
- The length of the videos can be made limited to half hour.



- The main concern is the difficulty to understand English from non-English speakers so it was very helpful to have the copy of the lecturer's presentation which have the notes that they also discussed in the videos. Video subtitles were helpful.
- For this part, the problem was not with the speaker but with my own listening skills. The PDF presentation helped me a lot because I could review it again and use Google Translate to understand the parts that I could not on my own.
- For me, if I have something to read as a guide, it is okay. Even if for the English narration, it would be good to have a subtitle too. I guess it is because I am not that good in English when hearing and conversing, which I think are also some of my classmates.
- The medium of instruction was not a significant issue for us, as we were able to clearly understand everything the lecturers taught. Despite any language differences, the explanations, demonstrations, and supporting materials made the content easy to follow and effective for all participants.

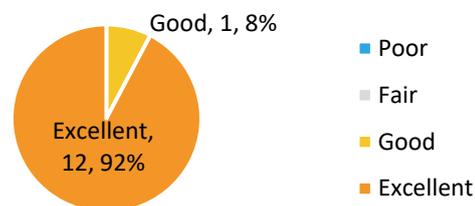
UNIT 1: Global Perspectives and Challenges in Heritage Conservation



UNIT 2: Protection Systems for Wooden Built Heritage in Japan



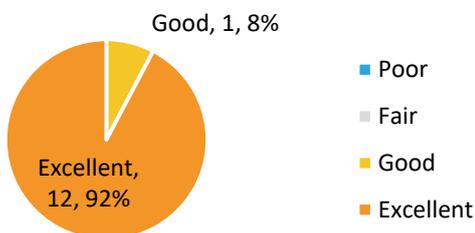
UNIT 3: Conservation of Wooden Built Heritage in Japan and in Global Context



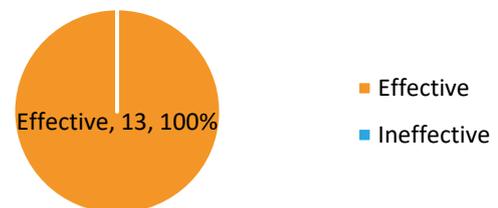
UNIT 4: Repair and Restoration Policies for Especially High-value Wooden Structures in Japan



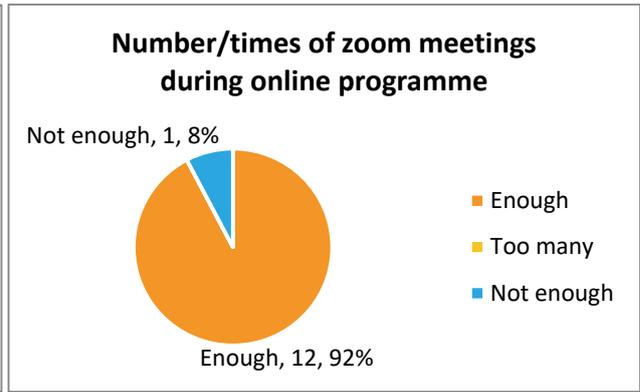
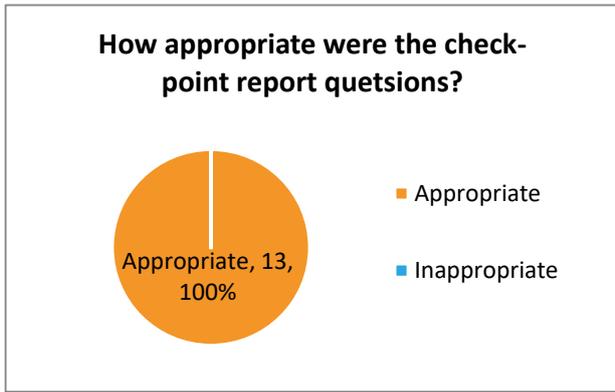
UNIT 5: Protection of Historic Districts in Japan



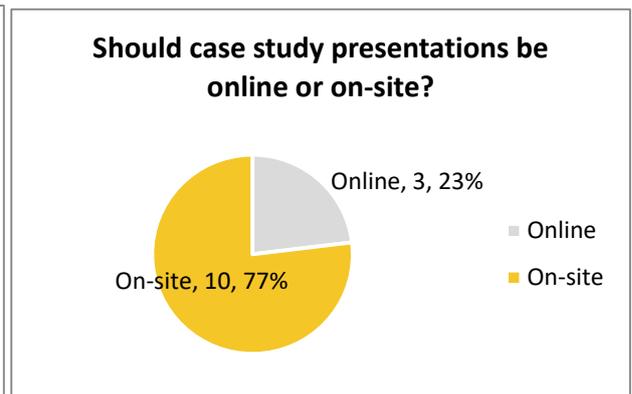
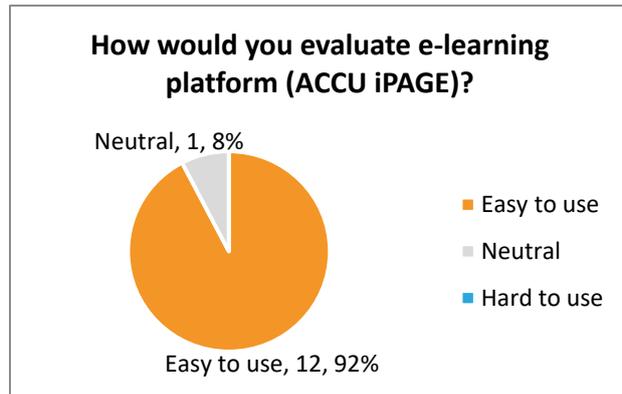
Overall, how effective and helpful did you find online course and self-study?



- In fact, all the lectures were truly meaningful and extremely helpful in broadening my knowledge. Each session contributed valuable insights that strengthened my understanding of heritage conservation and enhanced my professional skills.
- Historic district was a new and interesting topic for me.
- I personally appreciate the lectures in Units 1, 2, and 5, as they are the most relevant to my current work and ongoing projects.
- Although I wish there is more time to review, I find the online course good since this is better than having all the lectures on site.
- I strongly believe that the combination of online lectures and self-study time was extremely helpful for all participants, as it provided a solid foundation that prepared us effectively for the onsite practical training in Japan.

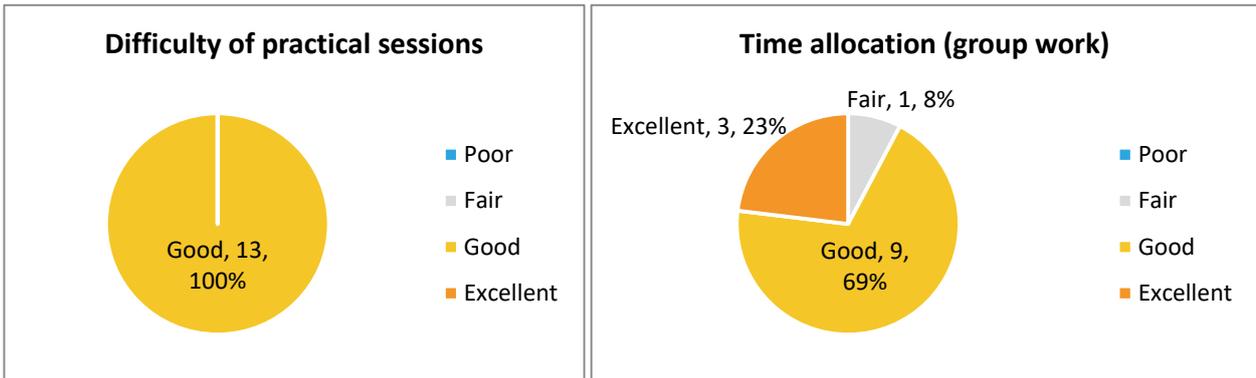
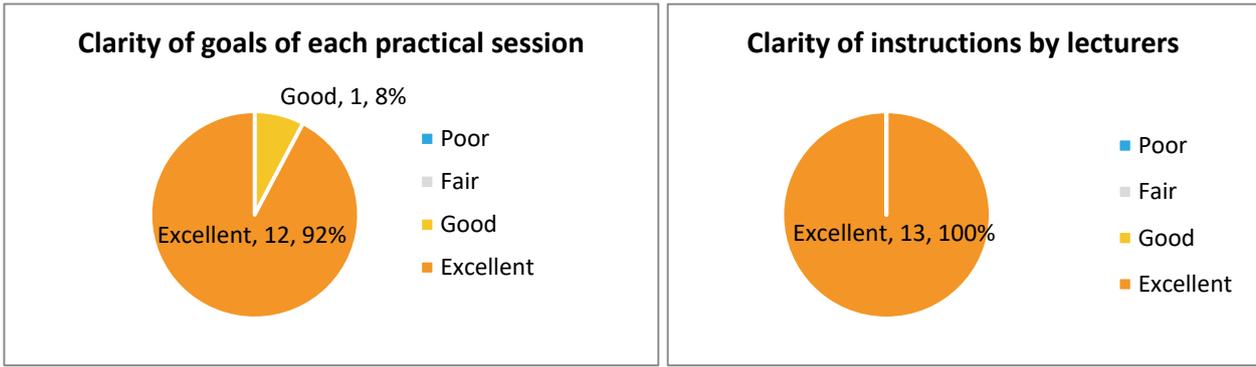


- Check points can be less words, 500 words a bit a lot.
- Generally, it is good to process the lectures especially in the context of our work and countries.
- The topic ‘Write to the speaker’ requires too many characters.
- It would better if you add 1 or 2 zoom meeting for discussions among the participants about online lectures.
- It would have been better to put interactive classes after each lecture after collecting the queries beforehand to make it more effective.
- The Zoom sessions were well planned and sufficient in number, providing an effective balance between instruction and discussion.

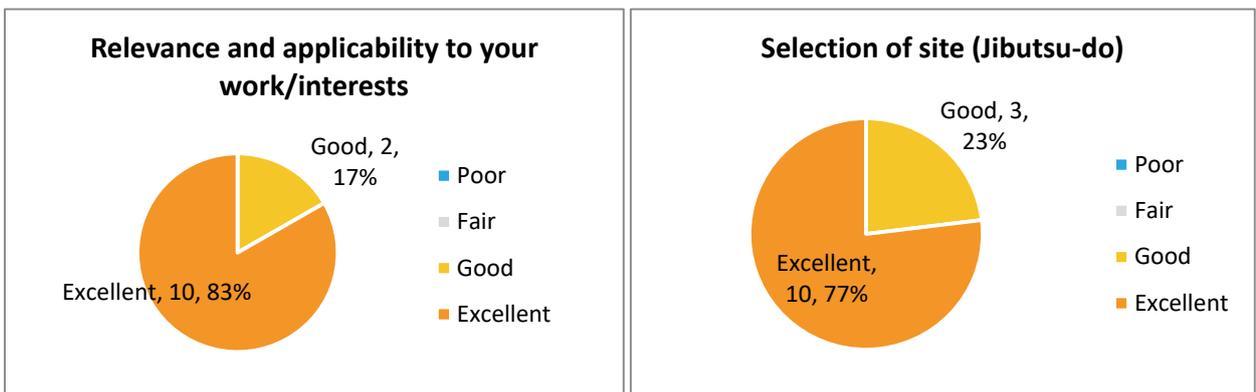


- I appreciate the platform’s simplicity and user-friendly design, which made it easy to navigate throughout the program.
- It could be best if there is a chat box to communicate with lecturer and if we could download the videos.
- I found the quiz sections and the progress indicators particularly motivating, as they encouraged me to complete the lessons even when I fell behind schedule.
- The additional learning materials provided were also excellent. They complemented the lectures effectively, offered valuable reference information, and helped deepen our understanding of the concepts and practices discussed during the program.
- For the videos, it would be helpful if there was an option to rewind and fast-forward 5 to 10 seconds.
- If the case study presentation is online, we will get one more day for other on-site activities.
- Presentations are better on-site but it could also be introduced online before.
- On-site presentation is always the best since receiving feedback is much better face-to-face.

C) On-site Programme (Practical Sessions)

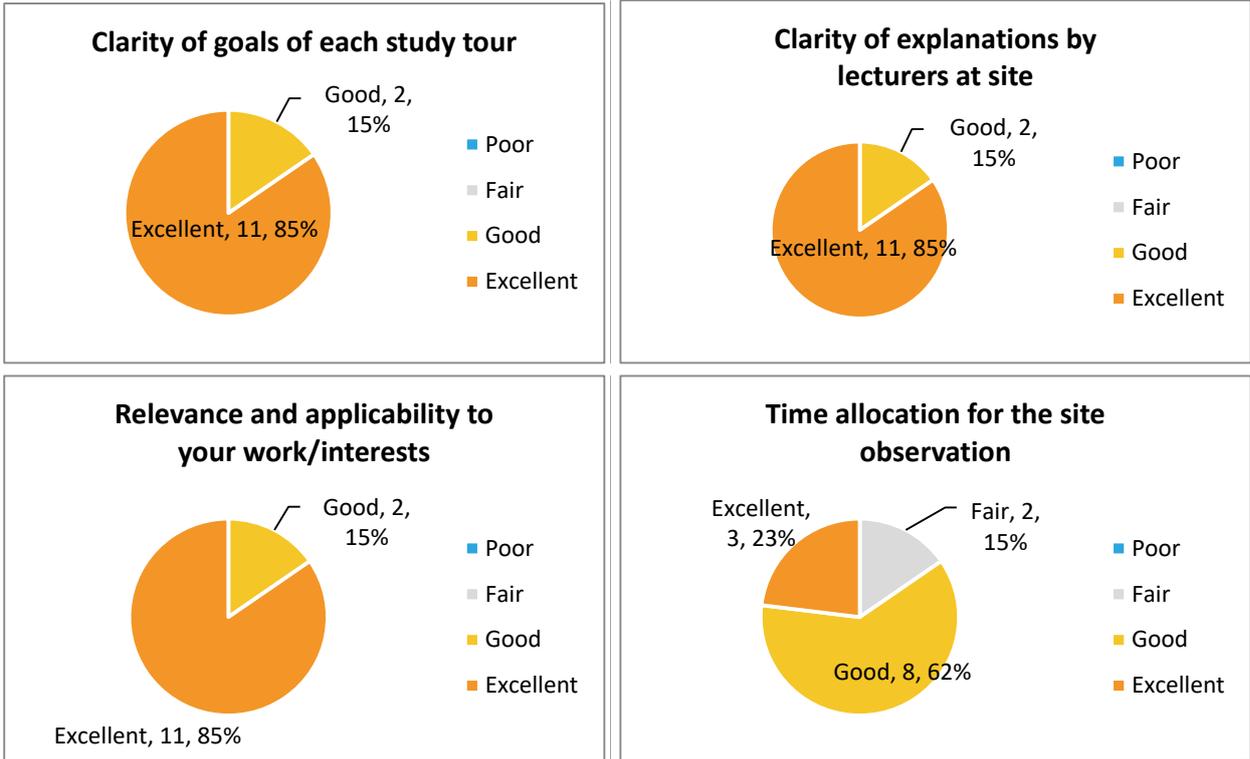


- The allocation time for the group work is fair enough considering the workload we need to complete.
- It is just right but if we could have just more time in exploring and studying the property maybe we could have presented different options.
- The practical sessions were highly beneficial, as they encouraged active discussion and idea-sharing among participants regarding key issues. The duration was suitable, though extending the sessions could make them even more effective. Providing additional architectural drawings of the buildings would also be valuable for deeper understanding. I sincerely appreciate the insights gained from these sessions.



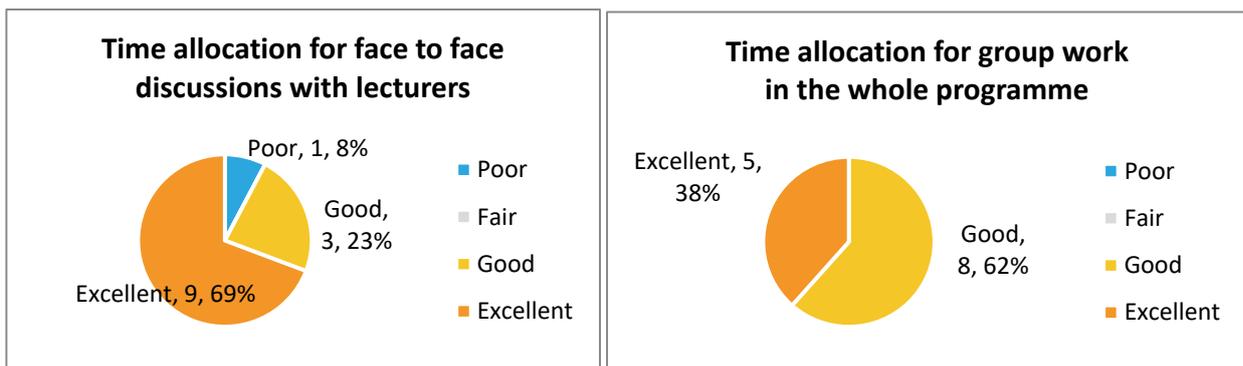
- All the sessions have relevance and applicability for my work. What we learnt in this training is the Japanese application; we need to adopt it into our people and object behaviour.
- Jibutsu-do was a perfect example and model that was created for the training. I believe all the participants will remember the procedure and in the end the result and conclusion of this session.

D) On-site Programme (Study Tours)



- More time could be allowed as this is the most important part to build our observation skills.
- All sites were relevant.
- In the case of Shirakawa-go, I believe there is much to learn not only from the management of the UNESCO site but also from the distinctive building types and the traditional methods of preservation, which provide valuable opportunities for both observation and practical learning.
- Coastal Heritage towns would be interesting to visit.

E) Discussion Sessions and Presentations

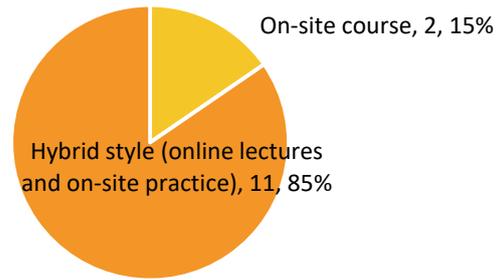


- The time with the lecturers especially during the case study and final report presentation is very tight.
- Allocating an additional half day for discussions, final presentation preparations, and group observations would greatly enhance the overall effectiveness of the program.
- I believe it would be beneficial to extend the time allocated for group work. These sessions were among the most valuable parts of the program, as they allowed us to share our own experiences and knowledge with other participants.

F) General Suggestions and Future Collaboration

Which is the most ideal training course format for you?

- On-site course
- Online course
- Hybrid style (online lectures and on-site practice)



Overall Comments

- Overall, the training course was very interesting and provided a wealth of knowledge, although the time allocated for both the online and onsite sessions felt a bit tight.
- Additional 5-7 days for online and 4 days more for on-site to cover more discussion and presentation time.
- I prefer the hybrid style, as it is advantageous for people who work full-time.
- The organisation of online and onsite training program was well thought-out and effective. However, we felt that we needed more recovery time.
- If possible, I would like to suggest increasing the number of participants for the online training sessions.

Potential Themes for Regional Workshops

- **Bangladesh:** Survey and documentation of cultural properties; digital tools for preservation and display of museum objects; disaster risk management for cultural heritage; heritage impact assessment and formulation of conservation plan.
- **Bhutan:** Conservation, restoration, repair, and protection systems for wooden structures.
- **Cambodia:** Survey, documentation, and data analysis
- **Fiji:** Comparative workshop on traditional Fijian structures and the buildings of Shirakawa-go for restoration.
- **Indonesia:** Conserving local wisdom for sustainable development and community empowerment.
- **Malaysia:** ICOMOS Malaysia is planning to organise a workshop on wood structures soon.
- **Nepal** (2 participants): Authenticity and cultural heritage classification, legal provisions, and restoration cycle planning; historic districts and its applicability in Nepal.
- **Philippines** (2 participants): Community-based disaster risk management; conservation of stone structures.
- **Sri Lanka:** 3D documentation methods; In addition, I would like to request a training workshop focused on how Japanese heritage professionals collaborate with carpenters and apply traditional woodworking techniques. Observing and learning from their approaches would provide valuable insights into the integration of skilled craftsmanship with conservation practices. Such training would help our staff understand the coordination, precision, and attention to detail that Japanese professionals employ, and allow us to adopt similar methods to enhance the quality and authenticity of heritage building conservation in Sri Lanka.
- **Thailand** (2 participants): Monitoring, preventive conservation, and maintenance planning; conservation of historic finishes and surface treatments; documentation and transmission of craft knowledge; conservation and restoration of mural paintings.



II. Thematic Training Course

1. General Information
2. Course Summary
3. Course Evaluation

1. General Information

Thematic Training Course for Mid-Career Professionals on Cultural Heritage Protection in the Asia-Pacific Region 2025

3D Documentation and Management of Archaeological Sites and Cultural Site Restoration (Republic of Palau)

1. Background

In the Republic of Palau, the degradation and damage of cultural heritage caused by the impacts of climate change, including rising sea level, typhoons, and storm surges, have become a serious issue. The island is home to a variety of cultural properties, such as ancient village sites, stone structures, and colonial-era buildings, many of which are increasingly affected by natural disasters and the passage of time.

Under these circumstances, the Palau Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development has requested training aimed at improving the skills and knowledge related to the documentation, restoration, and utilisation of cultural heritage. In particular, there is a strong demand for opportunities to learn about the advanced practices of other countries and from foreign experts on accurate site documentation using 3D technologies (such as drone surveying, photogrammetry, and laser scanning), the restoration of damaged cultural properties, and how to utilise digital data as a local resource.

The goal of this Thematic Training Course was to provide participants with the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills related to the documentation, preservation, restoration, and utilisation of Palau's cultural heritage impacted by climate change using digital methods, including 3D technologies. By learning from advanced examples and practices in Japan, the participants were able to gain practical perspectives and skills that they can apply to the protection and utilisation of their own cultural heritage.

Additionally, for the Japanese lecturers, this course served as a valuable opportunity to gather information on the current status and challenges of cultural heritage preservation in the Oceania region and to build networks for future technical cooperation and information exchange.

2. Dates and Venues

Dates: 10 November – 14 November 2025

Venues: National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties; Osaka Museum of History; and other facilities and museums of cooperating organisations.

3. Organisers

This course was jointly organised by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan; Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office, Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU); with the cooperation of the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, National Institute for Cultural Heritage; and the Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture.

4. Objectives

This training course aimed to provide participants broad knowledge and skills related to the practical application of 3D technologies in the preservation, utilisation, and management of cultural heritage.

5. Course Content

Lectures: (Day 1)

- I. Observation and Assessment of Deterioration in Stone Cultural Properties Using Digital Measurement Technologies
- II. Utilisation of 3D Data for Archaeology: From Artefact Documentation to Museum Exhibits

Practical Training: (Days 2-4)

- I. Creation of 3D Data using SfM-MVS
- II. Photography of Cultural Property

On-site Training: (Day 5)

- I. Application of 3D Technologies in Museums: Practical Approaches in Museum Settings

6. Participants

The following two individuals were selected based on recommendations from the relevant cultural heritage preservation department of the country.

- McMichael Mutok Jr., *Registrar/Historic Preservation Specialist III*, Bureau of Cultural and Historical Preservation, The Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development
- Derek Tutii Benjamin, *Historic Preservation Specialist*, Bureau of Cultural and Historical Preservation, The Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development

7. Lecturers

Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, National Institutes for Cultural Heritage

YAMAGUCHI Hiroshi, *Senior Researcher*,

Center for Archaeological Operations, Laboratory of Excavation Research Techniques

NAKAMURA Ichiro, *Specialist*,

Department of Planning and Coordination, Photography Division

WAKIYA Soichiro, *Head*,

Center for Archaeological Operations, Laboratory of Conservation Science

Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture

SUZUKI Tomomi, *Senior Researcher*,

Department of Planning and Curation, Section of Curatorial Affairs

Osaka Museum of History

KATO Shungo, *Curator*,

Information and Documentation Section

8. Secretariat

ACCU Nara Office

WAKIYA Kayoko, Vice Director, Programme Operation Department, with Patricia SUN, Intern, were responsible for the overall course planning and the moderating of training sessions. YOSHIDA Machi, subsection head of the International Cooperation Division was responsible for disseminating the course information and creating the training materials. NAGANO Sekiroh, staff of the International Cooperation Division was responsible for logistical arrangements and other support services in Japan. SUDANI Kazuko and HATA Chiyako were the Japanese and English interpreters. The Planning Coordination Division of ACCU also assisted the course

**Thematic Training Course for Mid-Career Professionals on Cultural Heritage Protection
in the Asia-Pacific Region 2025
(10 November – 14 November 2025, Nara)**

Date	9:00-12:00	13:00-16:30	Venue	Lecturer
9 Sun	<i>Arrival in Japan</i>			
10 Mon	<i>Arrival in Nara</i>	13:00-15:30 [Presentation by Participant] <i>Current Situation and Challenges in the Protection of Cultural Heritage in Palau</i> [Lecture] <i>Monitoring and Assessment of Stone Cultural Heritage Deterioration Using Digital Measurement Technologies</i> (Lecturer: WAKIYA Soichiro) <i>Application of 3D Technologies for Archaeological Investigation, Conservation, and Utilisation</i> (Lecturer: SUZUKI Tomomi) 15:30-16:30 [Discussion]	Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties	WAKIYA Soichiro (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties) SUZUKI Tomomi (Nara Prefectural Kashihara Archaeological Institute)
Nov	11 Tue	[Practical Training] Photographic Techniques for 3D Digitalisation of Cultural Heritage: Understanding Camera Settings and Shooting Methods	Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties	NAKAMURA Ichiro (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)
	12 Wed	[Practical Training] 3D Modeling of Cultural Heritage Using SfM-MVS Techniques (Part 1)		YAMAGUCHI Hiroshi (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)
	13 Thu	[Practical Training] 3D Modeling of Cultural Heritage Using SfM-MVS Techniques (Part 2)		
14 Fri	[On-site Training] Application of 3D Technologies in Museums: A Practical Approach	Osaka Museum of History	KATO Shungo (Osaka Museum of History)	
15 Sat	<i>Departure from Japan</i>			

	Lecture
	Practical
	Onsite Training

2. Course Summary

The course theme was decided based on requests from the Bureau of Cultural and Historical Preservation, Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism and Development and training was provided to two heritage professionals responsible for protecting cultural heritage in the Republic of Palau. For the first time after COVID-19, the course took place onsite in Japan and included lectures, practical sessions, and museum visits to provide hands-on training opportunities that considers both conservation and utilisation of cultural heritage.

10 November

■ Opening Ceremony

Venue: Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties

Due to a flight delay on the previous day, the schedule was revised and the programme commenced in the afternoon. The Opening Ceremony began with a welcome address by Mr MORIMOTO Susumu, Director of ACCU Nara. In his remarks, he explained that the objective of the training course is to address challenges facing cultural heritage in Palau, particularly those related to climate change, by introducing advanced Japanese conservation techniques, with a special focus on the application of 3D documentation technologies. He emphasised that 3D documentation is not the final goal, but rather a tool for understanding appropriate approaches to site protection. He also noted to the potential for future cooperation in Palau and expressed expectations that the programme would contribute to the advancement of cultural heritage protection in both countries. Following the address, lecturers and participants gave self-introductions.

■ Participant Presentation

Mr McMichael MUTOK Jr. gave a presentation outlining Palau's legal framework for cultural heritage protection and recent challenges. He introduced that Palau currently has approximately 4,000 registered cultural properties, 193 of which are archaeological sites. He identified the below major challenges.

1. Major Challenges in Cultural Heritage Protection

- **Impact of Climate Change**
Increasingly severe weather patterns and rising sea levels have caused serious damage to cultural sites.
- **Lack of Documentation**
Insufficient 3D documentation, photographic records, and mapping were identified, highlighting the need for accurate and systematic recording.
- **Management of Archaeological Sites and Artefacts**
Inadequate systems for the conservation and management of artefacts and sites after archaeological investigations.
- **Safe Storage Environments**
Storage facilities lack appropriate environmental controls, and there is strong interest in learning from Japanese case studies and expertise in collection management.
- **Shortage of Human Resources and Public Education**
There are only approximately five to six cultural heritage specialists working for the national government, serving a population of about 20,000, making it difficult to conduct sufficient public education and outreach.
- **Limited Budget and Technical Experience**
Insufficient funding and limited technical experience in conservation and restoration were cited as major constraints.

Particularly serious climate-related impacts were reported, including increased damage from typhoons and storm surges, subsidence of pillars in historic buildings, salt weathering of stone structures, collapse of heritage sites located on coastal cliffs, and soil erosion around coastal stone monuments resulting in loss of foundations.

2. Current Countermeasures

- Emergency disaster prevention measures such as placing sandbags
- Environmental management through vegetation removal and planting around stone structures
- Relocation of cultural properties, although concerns were expressed about the potential loss of cultural value and site-specific historical context
- Disaster Risk Management implemented since 2019 and currently applied to ten selected sites

3. Community Participation and Education

Community involvement is emphasised in maintenance and repair activities. While site histories were traditionally transmitted orally by elders, such knowledge is increasingly being lost, resulting in neglected sites. This underscores the urgent need for accurate documentation. Other initiatives include the installation of explanatory signage at sites,

creation of educational materials, and incorporation of cultural heritage topics into school education.

4. Tourism and Promotion of Cultural Understanding

Efforts are being made to encourage tourists to learn not only about Palau's natural heritage but also its cultural heritage and history.

5. Examples of Restoration Projects

- Repair of embankments
- Restoration of stone foundations of Bai (traditional houses)
- Restoration of former Japanese military battery sites, including re-excavation of tunnels

6. Rules and Awareness-Raising for Site Protection

Basic rules, such as prohibiting the removal of objects from sites, have been established and disseminated among local communities.



Participant Presentation

■ Lectures

Monitoring and Assessment of Stone Cultural Heritage Deterioration Using Digital Measurement Technologies

Lecturer: WAKIYA Soichiro (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

Based on information shared in advance regarding conditions in Palau, the lecturer identified two potential deterioration factors affecting stone cultural heritage: salt damage and repeated wetting and drying.

For salt damage, the lecturer shared results of experiments that showed the effects of salt crystallisation on stone. He explained that while stone is strong under compression, it is weak under tensile stress, and because salt crystallisation generates internal tensile forces, it inevitably leads to deterioration.

For repeated wetting and drying, case examples were introduced in which vegetation removal exposed stone structures directly to rainfall and sunlight, accelerating surface deterioration through rapid cycles of wetting and drying. Participants shared that vegetation around a stone monolith site had recently been cleared in preparation for tourism projects, and they had noticed that the monoliths appeared to be deteriorating but were unsure why. After discussion with the lecturer, they concluded that frequent rainfall followed by direct sunlight may be a factor. In addition, comparative examples of preservation environments in Japan were also presented, including open-air settings, forested environments, and roofed shelters. Forested environments showed the best preservation conditions, while shelters that left the object exposed to direct sunlight for short intervals of the day exhibited the most rapid deterioration.

Lastly, case studies using SfM-MVS for monitoring were also introduced, demonstrating how subtle deterioration not



Lecture by WAKIYA Soichiro and demonstration of water-repellent treatment for stone

visible to the naked eye can be easily quantified and visualised. Participants were very interested in the possibilities of 3D technology in monitoring and preservation.

Overall, participants commented that the lecture highlighted the importance of continuous monitoring of stone deterioration and provided valuable insights into how inappropriate restoration methods could inadvertently cause further damage, underscoring the relevance of the lecture to future conservation and management efforts.

Application of 3D Technologies for Archaeological Investigation, Conservation, and Utilisation

Lecturer: SUZUKI Tomomi (Archaeological Institute of Kashihara)

This lecture introduced examples of practical applications of digital technology in fieldwork for archaeological investigations, focusing on documentation methods using orthophotographs. Orthophotos enables the easy creation of site and sectional drawings, providing an efficient and highly accurate recording method, particularly at sites where the investigation period is limited. Practical case studies applicable to Palau were also presented, including documentation methods for excavation areas and techniques for recording cross-sections of features containing buried artefacts.

As an application to artefact research, methods for comparing and analysing decorative patterns using data that emphasises surface reliefs that are difficult to distinguish with the naked eye were introduced. A case study demonstrated how digital measurement techniques were applied to identify bronze mirrors produced from the same mould, highlighting the contribution of 3D data to improving analytical accuracy in archaeological research.

In addition, museum-related applications were presented, including examples in which digital data were used to capture the base shapes of complex and delicate artefacts with uneven surfaces, enabling the production of custom exhibition mounts. The lecture also introduced educational programmes in museums that utilise 3D models.



Lecture by SUZUKI Tomomi

11 November

■ Practical Training

Venue: Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Yakushi-ji Temple Saiindo Excavation Site
Photographic Techniques for 3D Digitalisation of Cultural Heritage: Understanding Camera Settings and Shooting Methods

Lecturer: NAKAMURA Ichiro (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

This session focused on fundamental knowledge related to photographic techniques for creating 3D data. The lecturer first explained the uses of different camera settings, such as shutter speed, aperture, and ISO sensitivity, and emphasised the importance of using Aperture Priority mode with a fixed aperture setting when photographing for 3D modelling. Participants then tried configuring their own cameras that they brought based on the lecturer's instructions. During the practical session, many detailed questions were raised by participants regarding camera settings. The lecturer provided hands-on guidance by directly checking individual camera configurations, enabling participants to acquire appropriate settings that could be immediately applied in subsequent practical sessions. This contributed significantly to the development of practical, field-ready skills.

After gaining an understanding of these basic settings, an on-site practical session was conducted at an excavation site on the Yakushi-ji Temple Saiindo Excavation Site, where investigations by the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties were ongoing. Participants observed the creation of 3D data using the SfM-MVS method as part of post-excavation documentation. They learned about the practical workflow for photographing archaeological features, including the order and angles from which photographs should be taken.



Lecture and practical session by NAKAMURA Ichiro



Practical Session on Yakushi-ji Temple Saiindo Excavation Site

12 – 13 November

■ Practical Training

Venue: Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties

3D Modelling of Cultural Heritage Using SfM-MVS Techniques

Lecturer: YAMAGUCHI Hiroshi (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

Intensive training on creating 3D data from photographs was conducted over two days. On the first day, the session began with an introduction to fundamental digital tools currently used in archaeology, followed by explanations of various digital measurement and recording technologies. Examples included total stations, aerial LiDAR, and 3D laser scanners, with explanations of their respective characteristics, advantages, and limitations. SfM-MVS was selected as the main methodology for the practical sessions as it is a technique that allows relatively easy and low-cost creation of 3D data using only a camera, a PC, and software. It is also applicable to a wide range of sizes, from small artefacts to large archaeological features, and can be used in the creation of excavation drawings, artefact documentation, and artefact analysis.

RealityScan was introduced as one of the most effective free software currently available. Participants began by installing the software and learning basic operations. A demonstration was then conducted using pre-prepared photographs taken by the lecturer, after which participants followed the same procedures to create their own 3D models. They successfully learned the workflow step by step, including model generation, texture mapping, and the assignment of spatial coordinates.

In the next stage, participants also took photos in preparation for creating a 3D model themselves. Prior to shooting, camera settings and shooting techniques were reviewed, and photography was conducted using foundation stones at the Nara Palace Site located outside the institute. During photography, participants learned the importance of placing “markers,” which are essential for 3D model alignment, and assigning XYZ coordinates to generate georeferenced 3D data. The lecturer explained that markers have unique shapes that allow software recognition, that they can be downloaded from the official RealityScan website, and that they are fully applicable in the context of Palau. QGIS was used to assign spatial coordinates.



Lecture and practical session by YAMAGUCHI Hiroshi



Participants taking notes of stone foundation



Photos taken by participants

Participants also received instruction on photographing with a grey card and performing colour correction to achieve accurate colour reproduction. Key points emphasised during shooting included ensuring that scales and grey cards were clearly captured, placing at least three markers within the frame, and maintaining consistent documentation standards. In addition, practical advice tailored to conditions in Palau was provided, such as aligning the scale toward true north during photography to record approximate orientation when precise coordinate data cannot be obtained. On the second day, participants generated 3D models from their images. Although some models exhibited minor data gaps due to insufficient photographic coverage, the overall results were of good quality. Issues such as an insufficient number of photographed markers were identified; however, as an initial practical exercise, the photography and processing were generally well done, confirming the effectiveness of the training.



Participants making their own 3D model

14 November

■ On-site Training

Venue: Osaka Museum of History

Application of 3D Technologies in Museums: A Practical Approach

Lecturer: KATO Shungo (Osaka Museum of History)

The objective of this session was to learn from practical examples of 3D data utilisation in museums in Japan. The day began with a lecture of an overview of the museum, followed by detailed explanations of practical applications of 3D data for collection management, the characteristics of 3D data, and the types of tools used. The lecturer emphasised that 3D data does not replace original artefacts but serves primarily as a record of surface information, allowing for highly detailed documentation and observation of its surface relief and deterioration conditions.

Additional advantages discussed included the ability to observe artefacts from all angles, including areas normally not visible in exhibitions such as bases, reverse sides, and internal structures. In addition, concerns regarding legal provisions, particularly copyright issues related to the use of 3D data, were discussed with reference to Japan's legal framework. It was explained that, in most cases, non-commercial use does not



Lecture by KATO Shungo

present significant legal issues. At the same time, challenges were identified, including equipment maintenance, human resource development, and the establishment of robust data management systems.



Participants viewing AR reconstructions of historic buildings

Following the lecture, participants toured the museum facilities. An AR experience that allowed visitors to visually experience non-extant buildings was conducted. Using their own mobile devices, a 3D model of the structure appeared above pillar-hole signages on the ground. Participants operated the application smoothly and actively engaged in the AR experience. During the Q&A session, practical questions were raised regarding the time and outsourcing required for 3D data creation. The lecturer responded that photographic data collection was completed in one day by museum staff, which was then passed onto an external contractor that developed the application.

Through this lecture and site visit, it was demonstrated that the application of 3D technologies, including AR, is highly applicable to archaeological sites in Palau. Free software such as Scanniverse, which enables 3D data creation using mobile devices, was also introduced. While such tools have limitations in terms of recording accuracy, the lecturer emphasised that they are sufficiently effective for practical applications and could be feasibly introduced in Palau.

3. Course Evaluation

The Thematic Training Course was targeted at mid-career cultural heritage professionals from the Republic of Palau. There were two participants, who were nominated by the Bureau of Cultural and Historical Preservation, Ministry of Human Resources, Culture, Tourism, and Development. Both participants successfully completed the whole course. The overall course was extremely highly regarded, with both participants giving the highest possible rating for all questions and no further suggestions. This shows that the course was highly successful and satisfactory. Their comments have been summarised in the following pages and will be further examined and considered when planning the next training course.

Which session did you find the most useful? Please explain why.

- All the sessions are valuable for the protection, conservation, and utilisation of cultural heritage. However, I was more interested in the 3D documentation because it is more applicable to the field work that I do.
- All sessions provided insights into how we can apply these techniques in Palau using new and emerging technologies. They also help us understand the various risk factors that affect the restoration and long-term preservation of cultural heritage sites.

Was there something that you wanted to hear about that was not covered?

- There is nothing specific that I felt was not addressed. The sessions were very informative and very helpful.
- At this time, there was nothing specific. The sessions provided comprehensive coverage of the topics related to cultural heritage protection, restoration, and utilisation.

Please provide suggestions to improve the organisation of the course.

- The organization of the course was perfect.
- Perfect. Thank you so much for sharing this important training.

What did you learn during this workshop and how can you apply this knowledge to your current work?

- One of the most impactful areas of learning was the utilisation of 3D data in archaeology. I gained a clearer sense of how 3D technologies can be applied throughout the heritage workflow, from field documentation of artefacts and architectural features to creating digital models for research, preservation, and public interpretation. This training demonstrated how 3D data can significantly improve accuracy, support long-term monitoring, and enhance the visibility and understanding of cultural heritage.
- The sessions on photographic techniques for 3D digitisation were especially valuable. I learned how proper camera settings, lighting, angles, white balance, and shooting sequences play a crucial role in producing high quality data for 3D reconstruction. Understanding ISO, aperture, shutter speed, depth of field, and how photograph surfaces with varying textures and reflectivity will help strengthen the quality of our documentation work. These practical skills now allow me to capture images not only for archives and reports but also for generating digital models through photogrammetry.
- I gained a solid understanding of how SfM-MVS can support archaeological analysis, restoration planning, and condition assessment. This method is cost-effective and highly adaptable, making it ideal use in Palau, where resources are limited and many heritage features require regular monitoring.
- The workshop also emphasised the application of 3D technologies in museums, a growing area globally. I learned how 3D models can be used for virtual exhibitions, interactive education, preservation planning, and creating replicas for display, souvenirs, and handling. This practical approach helps museums preserve original objects while still making them accessible to the public. The workshop also showed how 3D visualizations can support storytelling, enhance visitor engagement, and safeguard fragile materials by reducing physical contact.
- In addition, the workshop deepened my understanding of stone deterioration, its causes, and appropriate preservation strategies. Learning about salt crystallisation, moisture, wet and dry cycles, and structural stress provided a scientific basis for assessing damage and planning interventions for stone platforms, pathways, and stone face monoliths. The integration of 3D documentation with stone-monitoring techniques offers an effective way to track progressive deterioration.
- The skills and knowledge gained from this workshop will immediately benefit my work in Palau. First, the 3D documentation techniques, especially image capture protocols and SfM-MVS modelling, will greatly improve our archaeological recording, survey reports, and restoration monitoring. We plan to share this knowledge with colleagues and more staff can document sites, artefacts and structure using 3D tools, creating a national digital

archive for preservation and research.

- The museum application of 3D data is also relevant to our efforts in cultural outreach and education. We can explore using 3D models for exhibitions, public programs, and digital storytelling, helping communities and visitors engage more deeply with Palau's heritage.
- Understanding stone deterioration and its documentation will support our work on traditional villages restorations work such as Beluu er a Ngerutechei and Badrulchau sites. Using 3D monitoring, we can detect early damage, evaluate restoration progress, and design better preventive preservation measures.
- The hands-on session and field session was very important. It was the first time that I learned about SFM-MVS techniques.
- The workshop also showed us on how we can apply 3D technologies in a museum; I learned how 3D models can be used for exhibition, education, preservation plan, and creating replicas for display and souvenirs.
- The museum application of 3D data is also relevant to our efforts in cultural outreach and education. We can share this knowledge to our Public Education section in our office and use 3D models for exhibitions, public programmes, and digital storytelling, helping communities and visitors engage more deeply with Palau's heritage.

If ACCU were to organise an international workshop in your country, on which topic would you like it to be held?

- The same topic as this training course. We hope to share this training to our colleagues in Palau on 3D documentation and management of archaeological sites and cultural site restoration, and including any other methods or ways of conserving of historical properties.



III. Regional Workshop

1. General Information
2. Course Summary
3. Course Evaluation

1. General Information

Regional Workshop for Cultural Heritage Protection 2025 Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan *Inventory and Data Management of Archaeological Artefacts and Museum Collections*

1. Background

Since 2000, the ACCU Nara Office has provided training for a total of 34 professionals involved in the protection of cultural properties in Uzbekistan. These efforts have encompassed training programmes in Japan as well as on-site workshops, such as the 2008 session held in Tashkent on *Methods of Artefact Documentation and Photography*. Through these ongoing initiatives, a strong and collaborative partnership has been cultivated with Uzbekistan's cultural heritage authorities, while also strengthening information exchange with relevant institutions in Japan.

Currently, the Samarkand Archaeological Institute is actively engaged in the study and excavation of archaeological sites and artefacts. However, the systematic registration and effective utilisation of the diverse materials uncovered remains a significant challenge. As digital technologies become increasingly integral to cultural heritage management, the need for efficient organisation and documentation of archaeological and natural heritage objects continue to grow, highlighting the pressing need for specialised human resource development in this field.

In response to these needs, an international workshop on the *Inventory and Data Management of Archaeological Artefacts and Museum Collections* was co-hosted with the Samarkand Archaeological Institute. The workshop aimed to strengthen practical knowledge and technical skills related to inventory creation and utilisation for professionals engaged in cultural heritage management across Uzbekistan. Japanese experts were dispatched to lead on-site training sessions and deliver lectures as part of this capacity-building initiative.

This workshop also built on the achievements of the *Cultural Heritage International Cooperation Base Exchange Project* launched in 2022 by the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties with the support of the Agency for Cultural Affairs. As a follow-up to this collaborative framework, the programme sought to deliver more practical and impactful support, advancing sustainable international cooperation and capacity development through the application of established networks and expertise.

2. Dates and Venues

Dates: 20 October – 24 October 2025

Venue: Samarkand Archaeological Institute, Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan.

3. Organisers

The workshop was co-organised by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan; the Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU Nara); and the Samarkand Archaeological Institute, Agency of Cultural Heritage, Republic of Uzbekistan. The workshop was also supported by International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM); Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, National Institutes for Cultural Heritage; and Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture.

4. Curriculum & Objectives

The curriculum was finalised in collaboration with the Uzbek counter-part to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. It offered both theoretical and hands-on training on the documentation and inventory management of archaeological artefacts and museum collections. This workshop covered the entire process, from identifying key observation points for inventory purposes to converting collected data into digital databases.

The focus was on artefacts commonly excavated in Uzbekistan, such as pottery, metal objects, and animal bones. The training aimed to equip participants with the knowledge and techniques required to create comprehensive inventories of these materials. The curriculum was designed to provide practical, region-specific applications to ensure relevance across various areas of the country.

5. Course Content

[Lectures]

- Introduction to Inventory
- Fundamentals of Inventory for Archaeological Artefacts and Museums
- Management of Archaeological Artefacts
- Introduction to Zooarchaeology

[Practical Training]

- Creating Site Numbers
- Listing & Data Entry
- Storage of Archaeological Objects
- Identification and Data Entry of Animal Bones

[Presentations and Discussions]

- Challenges in Inventory Management in Uzbekistan
- Zooarchaeological Case Studies and Issues in Uzbekistan

6. Participants

15 cultural heritage professionals from the Republic of Uzbekistan who are actively engaged in the investigation, conservation, and utilisation of cultural properties. This includes individuals affiliated with the Samarkand Archaeological Institute.

7. Instructors

Mr MORIMOTO Susumu

Director, Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office, Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU Nara)

Mr SUGIYAMA Takumi

Senior Researcher, Materials Section, Planning and Curation Division, Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture

Mr Tomás Meraz CASTAÑO

Movable Heritage Officer, Programmes Unit, International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

Dr YAMAZAKI Takeshi

Head, Environmental Archaeology Laboratory, Center for Archaeological Operations, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, Japan

8. Language & Interpreters

The workshop will be conducted through consecutive interpretation between Japanese and Uzbek, and between English and Uzbek. Ms Kurbonova Gulnoza and Ms Pulotoy Najmieva were the interpreters.

9. Secretariat

◆ ACCU Nara Office

MORIMOTO Susumu, *Director*

WAKIYA Kayoko, *Vice Director, Programme Operation Department*

YOSHIDA Machi, *Subsection Head, International Cooperation Division*

NAGANO Sekiroh, *Staff, International Cooperation Division*

Patricia SUN, *Intern, Programme Operation Department*

◆ Samarkand Archaeological Institute

Muminkhon SAIDOV, *Director*

Hikmatulla HOSHIMOV, *Head, Department of Stone Age Archaeology*

Niyoz RASHIDOV, *Researcher*

International Workshop for Cultural Heritage Protection 2025
On-site Training in Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan
“Inventory and Data Management of Archaeological Artefacts and Museum Collections”

20 (Mon) – 24 (Fri) October 2025

Date	AM (9:30-13:00)	PM (14:00-17:30)
20 Oct (Mon)	10:00 - 11:00 Opening Ceremony	14:00 - 15:30 Lecture 1: <i>Introduction to Inventory</i> (Tomás Meraz Castaño ICCROM)
		15:45 - 16:45 Practical Exercise (Tomás Meraz Castaño ICCROM)
	11:15 - 11:45 Orientation by ACCU	16:50 - 17:30 Lecture 2: <i>Fundamentals of Inventory for Archaeological Artefacts and Museums</i> (Morimoto Susumu ACCU Nara)
	11:45 - 13:00 Presentation by participants and Discussions: <i>Challenges in Inventory Management in Uzbekistan</i>	
	Venue: Samarkand Archaeological Institute	
21 Oct (Tue)	Lecture 3: <i>Management of Archaeological Artefacts</i> (Sugiyama Takumi Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture)	Practical Session 2: <i>Listing & Data Entry</i> (Sugiyama Takumi Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture)
	Practical Session 1: <i>Creating Project IDs</i> (Sugiyama Takumi Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture)	
	Venue: Samarkand Archaeological Institute	
22 Oct (Wed)	Practical Session 3: <i>Storage of Archaeological Objects</i> (Sugiyama Takumi Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture)	Lecture 5: <i>Introduction to Zooarchaeology</i> (Yamazaki Takeshi Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)
	Lecture 4: <i>Management of Archaeological Artefacts (Wrap-up)</i> (Sugiyama Takumi Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture)	Presentation by participants: <i>Zooarchaeological Case Studies and Issues in Uzbekistan</i>
	Venue: Samarkand Archaeological Institute	
23 Oct (Thu)	Practical Session 4: <i>Identification and Data Entry of Animal Bones: Fundamentals & Onsite Handling Process</i> (Yamazaki Takeshi Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)	Practical Session 5: <i>Identification and Data Entry of Animal Bones</i> (Yamazaki Takeshi Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)
Venue: Samarkand Archaeological Institute		
24 Oct (Fri)	9:30 - 12:00 Feedback and Discussion Wrap-Up (Sugiyama Takumi Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture) (Yamazaki Takeshi Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)	
	12:15 - 13:00 Closing Ceremony	
	Venue: Samarkand Archaeological Institute	

2. Course Summary

The workshop was held from 20 to 24 October at the Samarkand Archaeological Institute, Republic of Uzbekistan, under the theme *Inventory and Data Management of Archaeological Artefacts and Museum Collections*.

During the preliminary consultations conducted prior to the training, it was confirmed that while research and investigation of archaeological sites and excavated artefacts are actively progressing at the Institute, a system for registering, managing, and utilising the large number and wide variety of artefacts remains a challenge. In response, it was decided to organise a workshop focusing on the organisation and registration of archaeological artefacts and museum collections, as well as data management using digital technology.

Fifteen cultural heritage specialists from across Uzbekistan participated in the training. Participants were split into five groups for some practical training sessions. Sessions were also allocated to presentations and discussion, providing a valuable opportunity for the Japanese instructors to deepen their understanding of the current situation and challenges of cultural heritage protection in Uzbekistan.

20 October

■ Opening Ceremony

The Opening Ceremony was moderated by Mr Hikmatulla HOSHIMOV of the Samarkand Archaeological Institute. Dr Muminkhon SAIDOV, Director of the Institute, and Mr MORIMOTO Susumu, Director of ACCU Nara, delivered opening remarks, expressing their appreciation for the cooperation between the two organisations and their well-wishes on the implementation of the training program. This was followed by an address from Mr Tomás Meraz CASTAÑO of ICCROM who introduced the long-standing collaborative relationship with ACCU and shared his expectations and aspirations for the training. A message from Mr NAKAMURA Shin'ichiro Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the Embassy of Japan in Uzbekistan, was also delivered, which referred to the friendly relations between Samarkand and Nara and conveyed his wishes for the successful outcome of the workshop.



From left to right, Hikmatulla HOSHIMOV; Muminkhon SAIDOV; MORIMOTO Susumu; and Tomás Meraz CASTAÑO



Group Photo at Opening Ceremony

■ Presentation

Challenges in Inventory Management in Uzbekistan

A presentation was delivered by Mr Aziz ABDUKHAKIMOV, the Director of the International Silk Road Research Center, outlining the current situation and challenges of cultural heritage inventories and data management in Uzbekistan. It was noted that at present, there are no nationwide regulations or guidelines governing the creation of standardised inventories. Furthermore, it was reported that unified terminology and reference standards for museum operations have not yet been established, resulting in the use of different terms and definitions across institutions.



Presentation by Aziz ABDUKHAKIMOV

In addition, it was emphasised that a large proportion of records concerning artifacts and collections continue to be managed in paper format, and that progress in digitisation and centralised management on servers remains insufficient. Another challenge identified was that Uzbekistan is home to more than twenty museums, each differing in scale, collection content, and operational structure; consequently, it was suggested that the development of a single unified database would be difficult in practical terms, and that database systems tailored to the specific conditions of each institution would be required.

■ Lectures

Introduction to Inventory & Practical Exercises

Instructor: Tomás Meraz CASTAÑO (ICCROM)



Lecture by Tomás Meraz CASTAÑO

In the lecture, it was emphasised that the understanding and management of inventories is not an individual task but an institutional responsibility, and that each staff member must fully understand the mandate of their institution to clarify who manages inventories and for what purpose. During the discussion, participants exchanged views on their respective institutions' missions and the duties they perform. As many of the participants that worked for museums, they recognised that their responsibilities were wide-reaching and include conservation and restoration, research, collection management, exhibition and community engagement, tourism promotion, transmission of cultural heritage to future generations, and the training of specialised personnel.

For a practical exercise titled 'Points of View,' participants were asked to individually observe an unidentified object, assign it a name, and record it with drawings and descriptions. The results varied considerably, from those describing only the appearance of the object to those including its installation context, demonstrating that even when observing the same object, recorded information can differ greatly. Similarly, participants were tasked with recording one of two very similar objects, after which their partner was to deduce which object was recorded based on their notes, drawings, and measurements. Many pairs were unable to correctly identify the object their partner had recorded. Through these exercises, participants realised that without a set of shared rules, even professionals are unable to share a common understanding of artefacts in front of them. Next, participants were given ten identical postcards in different conditions and tasked to rank their value. Various potential criteria were discussed, such as the value of function, state of preservation, and integrity. Through this process, the importance of determining what should be recorded,



Practical Exercises

how value is defined, and the necessity of shared standards for identifying and recording individual artefacts became evident.

Fundamentals of Inventory for Archaeological Artefacts and Museums

Instructor: MORIMOTO Susumu (ACCU Nara)

During the lecture, it was explained that the types of data commonly handled in archaeology can generally be organised in tables, with the overall dataset understood as a hierarchical collection of tables. Ideally, tables should be interrelated by linking data through specific keys, allowing information in one table to be associated with that in another. Examples were provided, including data relating to archaeological sites, features, and artefacts. Appropriate database design is essential to organise information effectively in tabular form. Two key considerations were emphasised: what constitutes a single unit of information, and how data fields should be defined. Regardless of the specific method adopted, it is necessary to establish a shared set of rules. It was noted that standards for information management originated from bibliographic information management, particularly from the need for exchange among libraries regarding their holdings. Data that conform to shared standards can be exchanged and utilised across institutions, whereas data created according to unique, institution-specific criteria cannot easily be shared. For this reason, uniform standards for information exchange are essential.

Although data fields can be defined with relative flexibility, it is important to consider the attributes of each type of data. Fields may be grouped according to meaning, for example, information intrinsic to the object itself, to its context, and information relating to management. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that identification numbers function as unique values. It was stressed that detailed data entry rules should be established, documented, and made accessible. The preparation of glossaries and the adoption of controlled vocabularies should also be considered. In addition to the preservation of cultural properties themselves, equal attention must be given to the preservation and management of information about of cultural heritage.



Lecture by MORIMOTO Susumu

21 October

■ Lecture

Management of Archaeological Artefacts

Instructor: SUGIYAMA Takumi (Archaeological Institute of Kashihara)

First, management of data related to archaeological sites was introduced. In Japan, buried cultural properties are registered once their existence is confirmed through excavation or other investigations, and the areas where they are discovered are designated as archaeological sites. Approximately 460,000 such locations exist nationwide, and archaeological site maps have been made publicly available, including through web-based platforms in Nara Prefecture. The management process for archaeological sites follows a sequence whereby proposed development projects trigger notification procedures, consultation, and, where necessary, excavation.

Following an introduction to the Archaeological Institute of Kashihara and its museum, practical examples of archaeological collection management in Nara Prefecture were presented. As basic principles of collection management, it was explained that cultural properties should be regarded as shared property of a nation's citizens, with three key roles: protection, utilisation, and support for academic research. The Archaeological Institute of Kashihara undertakes a broad range of responsibilities, including the acceptance and registration of excavated materials, database management, loan administration, and the management of IT infrastructure and library resources. A centralised management system based on project IDs is employed, linking databases and Excel data to manage information. It was also explained that, in Japan, excavated artefacts are in principle preserved in their entirety, including materials not published in excavation reports, to ensure their availability for future research. During the discussion session,

questions were raised regarding artefact labelling methods, loan systems, the treatment of joined materials, seismic countermeasures, and dating methods, reflecting a strong interest in collection management practices.



Lecture by SUGIYAMA Takumi

■ Practical Sessions

Creating Project IDs

Instructor: SUGIYAMA Takumi (Archaeological Institute of Kashihara)

Although the overall objective of the practical training was the organisation and storage of archaeological artefacts, it was emphasised that the process should begin with simple and manageable steps. The strong recommendation was made to use Project IDs when recording and storing materials, and participants were encouraged to consider what constitutes an effective ID system. One trainee suggested that a combination of excavation site name and year would be suitable. In response, it was pointed out that the same site might be excavated more than once within a single year, raising potential difficulties. Participants explained that, in Uzbekistan, IDs are already used, with one example being a format consisting of a three-digit site code followed by the year and a serial number. When asked whether a nationally unified standard exists, opinions varied; some participants indicated that while artefacts are assigned IDs, investigations themselves are not necessarily given unique identifiers. The importance of an ID system was further explained, highlighting that adopting project-based identifiers allows information to be able to be managed and searched efficiently.



Explanation of Project IDs and discussion with participant

Listing and Data Entry

Instructor: SUGIYAMA Takumi (Archaeological Institute of Kashihara)

An example of an ID, N2025001C, was presented to illustrate how Project IDs might be structured. In this example, 'N' represented Nara Prefecture, '2025' the year, '001' a sequential number, and 'C' indicated a castle site. Using this model as a reference, trainees were tasked with devising their own ID systems individually, after which each group was required to agree on an approach and submit their proposal. Following the submission of proposals, the trainees gathered at the front of the room, and representatives from each group presented and explained their respective approaches.

To create a system that could be applied widely across the country, participants proposed reusing the numerical codes assigned to Uzbekistan's twelve provinces, which are also used for vehicle registration numbers. Additional suggestions included attaching abbreviated site names to the codes, and reference was made to the fact that Afrasiab itself comprises twenty-five districts. In response, the instructor pointed out that a system relying on unique site



Groups discussing Project ID proposals



Groups presenting Project ID proposals

abbreviations within the same province would only function if no duplicate abbreviations existed, effectively making it an ID system specific to Afrasiab rather than one suitable for broader application. Further debate addressed whether stratigraphic layer numbers should be incorporated into the ID structure. Other suggestions included using excavation numbers assigned by the Ministry of Culture or adding identifiers for the investigating organisation. The instructor emphasised that ID numbers should remain simple.

Participants also what data points are essential for managing excavation data. They were instructed to adapt examples from Japan by omitting or adding elements as appropriate to their own context. The exercise produced proposals ranging from seven to eleven data fields. The instructor emphasised the importance of establishing standards for how information is described, and that while achieving an ideal system immediately may be difficult, it was suggested that aiming for a practical and improved solution with continuous refinement through actual use is essential.



Instructor giving feedback and discussing with participants

22 October

■ Practical Session & Lecture (Wrap-up)

Storage of Archaeological Objects & Management of Archaeological Artefacts

Instructor: SUGIYAMA Takumi (Archaeological Institute of Kashihara)

A practical session was conducted using actual artefacts to create both a project ID database and an artefact database. It was explained that the first step when storing archaeological materials and creating an inventory is to determine what information should be recorded on the card accompanying each artefact. At the Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, two cards are attached to each item: a card filled out in the field; and a card including information from the excavation report. Sample storage cards used at the Archaeological Institute of Kashira were distributed, and the data fields were explained. Participants were asked to consider what information is required on a storage card and encouraged to customise the fields freely, with the objective of recording enough information for a person who is not a specialist in the field to be able to identify a specific archaeological object.

In cases where groups only included inventory, shelf, and storage-section numbers on the cards, the instructor commented

that while a simple structure is desirable, such systems may allow only one method of retrieval. Conversely, for groups that included large amounts of information, it was noted that since the card data would ultimately be digitised in Excel, only the minimum essential information needed to retrieve the artefact should be recorded on the physical card. To prevent storage cards or annotations from becoming separated from artefacts, it was also recommended that objects be stored in sealable bags within containers.

Participants then proceeded to identify each artefact assigned to them. They filled out and placed one card with each object inside a bag, after which they were returned to the boxes in numerical order to facilitate retrieval. Following, participants entered the data into Excel, where additional information not included on the paper cards, such as figure numbers in excavation reports, were added.



Participants sorting artefacts and filling out storage cards

■ Lecture

Introduction to Zooarchaeology

Instructor: YAMAZAKI Takeshi (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

A lecture was delivered on the organisation and inventory of animal bones excavated from archaeological sites. The instructor began by introducing research conducted in Japan, expressing the hope that the topic would be of interest even to participants not directly involved in the study of animal bones. It was explained that over the past forty years, the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties has analysed and reported on 379,925 specimens recovered from 189 archaeological sites across Japan. The Institute also maintains a collection of 4,978 modern comparative specimens, and the importance of reference collections in zooarchaeological research was emphasised.

During the discussion session, a question regarding whether horse bones excavated from sites should be restored was raised. The instructor explained that fractures can carry important information and therefore it is often preferable to preserve the material in its original condition. It was further explained that zooarchaeological research generally involves two main areas of investigation: the identification of animal species and the study of how animals were utilised by humans, distinguishing such research from the study of fossils. The lecturer also noted that large quantities of fish bones have been excavated in Japan, leading to significant advances in related research.

Another participant asked whether evidence of arthritis observed in horse bones, presented as an indication of heavy labour during the lecture, might instead have been caused by disease. In response, it was clarified that the condition was diagnosed as non-infectious arthritis, and that analysis of the bones indicated stress related to load-bearing activities. Another question concerned whether it is possible to determine whether excavated animals were wild or domesticated. The lecturer explained that there are methods for distinguishing the two; for example, traces of bit wear on horse teeth can indicate that the animal had been domesticated and used for riding or labour.



Lecture by YAMAZAKI Takeshi

■ Presentation

Zooarchaeological Case Studies and Issues in Uzbekistan

A presentation was delivered by Mr Olimov SANJARBEK, a zooarchaeologist from Uzbekistan. He explained that in Uzbekistan, animal husbandry developed particularly in mountainous regions that had more available water resources, and cattle breeding formed an important component of past subsistence practices. In Uzbekistan, the process of studying excavated animal bones includes recovery, cleaning, and identification, and requires both reference specimens and relevant literature functioning as a ‘bone atlas.’ During analysis, attention is paid to cut marks, as their location can indicate whether they resulted from butchery for consumption or from skinning for leathermaking.



Presentation by Olimov SANJARBEK

Examples from archaeological sites were presented. At the Ayakogitma site neighbouring Bukhara, artefacts could be divided into two phases: the first, dating from approximately 6000–5400 BCE, characterised by the presence of horses and cattle; and the second, from around 4000 BCE onwards, in which camels predominated. Animal bones from the Kafir Kala site were similarly divided into two phases, corresponding to the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods, where evidence of butchery marks was observed on sheep bones. He noted that a lack of equipment and the absence of a dedicated bone database remain significant challenges for advancing research.

Following the presentation, comments and questions were offered by the lecturers and trainees. Dr YAMAZAKI asked how sheep and goats are distinguished in analysis. Mr SANJARBEK responded that differentiation between the two species is challenging even for international specialists, and that researchers rely on reference manuals (‘bone atlases’) as well as previous studies to support identification. A participant asked about the main difficulties in zooarchaeological research; Mr SANJARBEK replied that bones are often easily damaged during excavation, while Dr Yamazaki added that limited documentation of the contextual information relating to the excavation and deposition of bones presents a further challenge.

23 October

■ Practical Session

Identification and Data Entry of Animal Bones: Fundamentals & Onsite Handling Process

Instructor: YAMAZAKI Takeshi (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

A complete skeleton of an adult sheep, borrowed from an agricultural university, was used to demonstrate that reference specimens are essential for zooarchaeological research, especially for bone identification and determining which part of the skeleton a bone belongs to. For the practical exercise, each participant was provided with an excavated bone from the Afrasiab site and tasked with identifying the bone and determining whether it belonged to the left or right side using the reference specimen. Additional explanation was provided by the lecturer regarding bone orientation. Bones possess proximal and distal ends, with the former nearer the heart. These features are important because the condition of bone ends can provide information on the age of the animal, such as the degree of fusion.

Participants recorded their identification results on small cards, including species name and anatomical part. During the practical session, it was emphasised that careful confirmation of the context, such as excavation location and conditions, constitutes critical information. The original storage wrapping paper, that was severely deteriorated in some cases, was examined, and information such as site name, feature, and date was recorded. After submitting their records, each group presented their findings and explained their recording methods. Additional discussion addressed the use of plastic bags for artefact storage and broader issues relating to storage and preservation environments.



Instructor explaining reference specimen and bone identification and recording process



Participants identifying excavated bones

Identification and Data Entry of Animal Bones

Instructor: YAMAZAKI Takeshi (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

First, key considerations were presented regarding the recovery of animal bones at excavation sites. It was emphasised that ensuring no information regarding the excavation are to omitted during recording and reporting is of critical importance. As zooarchaeologists remain relatively few worldwide, the specialists who later analyse animal bones are often not present during excavation itself, which can result in insufficient contextual information. Particular emphasis was placed on the need to record the circumstances of discovery, especially in cases where bones are found in concentrated deposits. Thus, when creating bone inventories, it was explained that records should include contextual information, skeletal element, proximal and distal end identification, and evidence of butchery marks. The distinction between excavation-related damage and butchery marks was also discussed.

During the practical exercise, participants worked in groups to enter data into Excel on computers. Following the morning's specimen-based training, they practised recording data from excavated bones.

In the final discussion session, it was noted that participants appeared to have gained an appreciation of the importance of reference specimens. The reference specimens used in the training had been borrowed from an agricultural university, and it was explained that there are various ways of building such collections.



Participants recording their findings on Excel

24 October

■ Feedback and Discussion

Instructors: MORIMOTO Susumu (ACCUNara), SUGIYAMA Takumi (Archaeological Institute of Kashihara), YAMAZAKI Takeshi (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

The instructors explained that one of the primary purposes of an inventory is to provide access to collections. In this context, the need to assign names or identifiers to storage shelves was highlighted. It was also explained that detailed information is not typically included on storage cards, but rather the minimal amount of information needed to retrieve it. Different methods of data management were introduced, including paper-based records, spreadsheets, and custom database software. From the perspective of utilising collections, digital data offer the advantage of easily searchable access. The inclusion of geographical coordinates as part of the dataset was also noted as useful for future research and management purposes. It was noted that the majority of data in Uzbekistan are currently stored using Excel and Word. The instructors explained that, when searches related to collections management are required, data may be searched directly within Excel or transferred from Excel to other applications for further analysis. Examples from the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties were introduced, including the Comprehensive Database of Archaeological Site Reports in Japan, the Mokkan Database, and other institutes' collections database. It was explained that the data fields displayed vary depending on the type and purpose of the database, and that identifying the intended users is therefore an important consideration. The design of dedicated databases requires careful planning, and the necessity of standardised descriptive practices was again emphasised.



Wrap-up lecture by SUGIYAMA Takumi and instructors giving feedback

■ Closing Ceremony

All participants were able to successfully complete the programme. Following closing remarks by the Director of ACCU Nara Mr MORIMOTO, together with Dr SAIDOV, Director of the Samarkand Institute of Archaeology, presented Certificates of Completion to the participants. Dr SAIDOV then delivered a closing address, after which a group photograph was taken, bringing the entire programme to a close.



Final remarks



Participants receiving Certificates of Completion



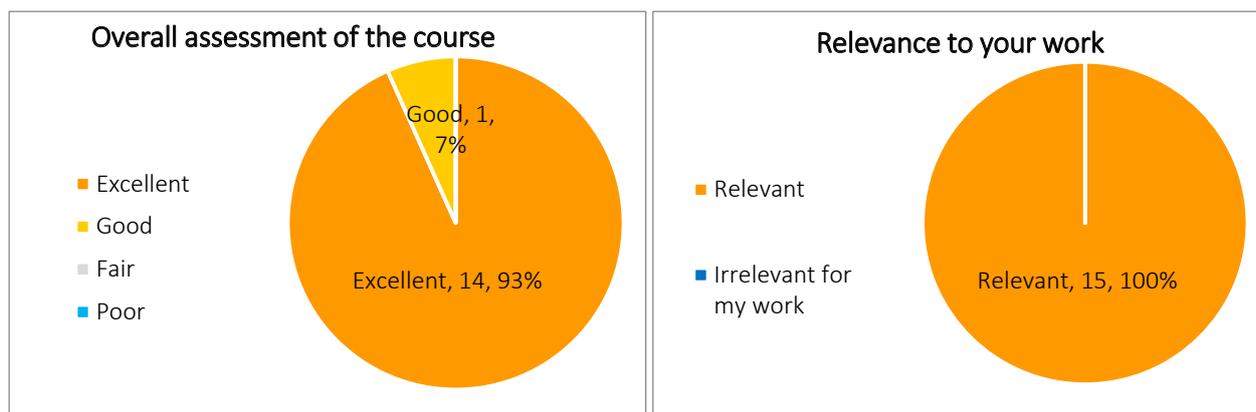
Group Photo

3. Course Evaluation

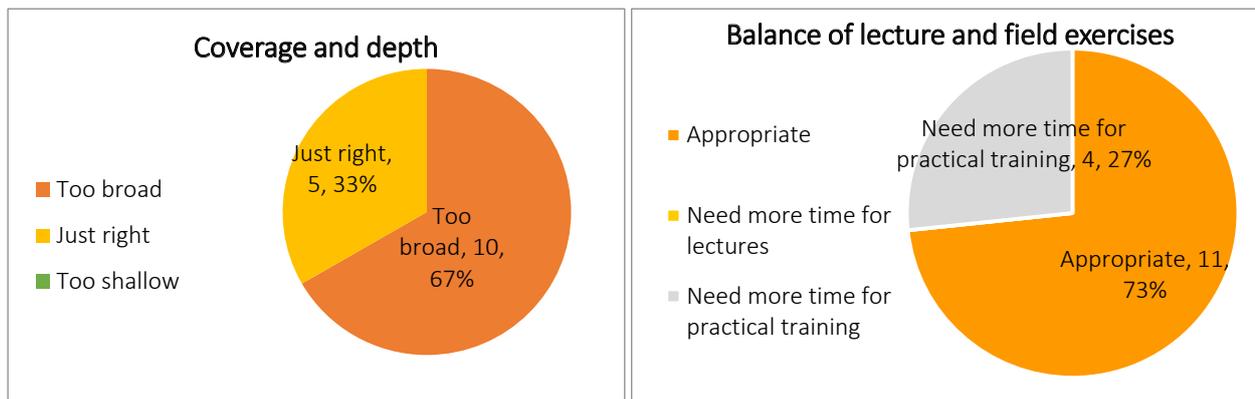
The Regional Workshop was targeted at cultural heritage professionals from the Republic of Uzbekistan. Participants were nominated by the Samarkand Archaeological Institute and included not only researchers from the Institute, but also museum workers, academics, and archaeologists from other parts of Uzbekistan. All participants successfully complete the course.

The workshop was very highly regarded overall, with nearly all participants rating the course as ‘excellent’ and very good feedback for all sessions. Balance between lectures and practical sessions was particularly well-rated, with both noted as useful for deepening their understanding. However, as the workshop covered two main topics (inventory and zooarchaeology), some felt that it was too broad and could have been longer. Another point for potential improvement is the incorporation of practical sessions at an actual excavation site or archaeological site.

Participants’ responses and comments have been summarised in the following pages and will be further examined and considered when planning the next workshop.



- The workshop was very well organized and provided both theoretical and practical knowledge. It helped me understand the importance of systematic inventory management for museum collections.
- The workshop was intellectually stimulating and methodologically well designed. As someone deeply engaged in archaeology and museum management, I found each session both relevant and inspiring. The instructors presented complex technical concepts in an accessible and practice-oriented manner, encouraging active participation and critical dialogue among the trainees.
- Throughout this workshop, I learnt about methods of inventorying that were unfamiliar for me. I learned new techniques about how to record findings in a simpler and, more importantly, more accurate way.
- The digitisation of archaeological and zooarchaeological research, with the development of modern technologies, cataloguing data and creating electronic databases is a necessary requirement for science today, and the most effective way to convey the heritage of the past to future generations in a clear, systematic, and reliable manner. Therefore, it is essential to work on a single digital platform throughout every field investigation, from data collection to the stages of analysis and archiving. I have gained such essential information from this course.
- This topic is directly related to my professional duties. The content was highly relevant to the daily work of museum specialists in Uzbekistan.
- The them was directly aligned with my professional responsibilities. As an archaeologist working in a museum, I recognise that systematic registration, documentation, and preservation of artefacts are the foundation of heritage protection. The workshop’s focus on data management highlighted how technology and structured methodology can transform preservation from a manual process into a sustainable, transparent system. This topic addressed one of the most urgent needs in both archaeological and museum practice in Uzbekistan today.
- The scope and content of the seminar topic were very broad and interesting. I learned many new things and gained a wealth of experience I had not known before. Each session was conducted in its own distinctive spirit, and the participants’ engagement were particularly inspiring. The workshop provided practical knowledge on inventorying archaeological artefacts, digitising museum collections and managing data. I gained a deeper appreciation of how crucial these processes are for preserving cultural heritage.
- The seminar was excellent and perfectly organized in every aspect. The Japanese specialists paid special attention to each participant’s opinions and to how well they understood the topic. If more workshops like this were organised, it would be extremely beneficial for Uzbek archaeologists, especially for young researchers.



- The sessions were well balanced and covered both conceptual and practical aspects of inventory and data management.
- The coverage of topics was comprehensive yet focused. Mr SUGIYAMA's sessions offered deep insight into the management of archaeological artefacts, demonstrating how theory supports real-world implementation. Dr YAMAZAKI's zooarchaeology component was more limited in scope due to the smaller number of available samples, yet it effectively introduced a specialised field that is often underrepresented in local practice. The diversity of perspectives—ranging from conservation to analytical documentation—made the overall programme well-balanced and intellectually rewarding.
- In my opinion, the topics were very well chosen for the five days, and the fact that each topic included practical sessions is one of the greatest strengths of the workshop.
- All lectures were informative and directly applicable to my work in museum collection management.
- The most intellectually engaging part was Mr CASTAÑO's session on inventory and practical exercises. His explanation of precision, imprecision, and estimation provided a conceptual framework for evaluating artefacts not only as physical items but as data carriers of cultural meaning. Through hands-on exercises, we learned to write full descriptive records, organise them within systematic tables, and link data logically—skills that strengthened both analytical thinking and technical competence. Mr SUGIYAMA's sessions were equally valuable in connecting theory with the operational realities of artefact management. His emphasis on workflow—from excavation to storage—clarified the ethical and procedural responsibility archaeologists hold in preserving material culture. Together, these lectures demonstrated how accuracy, critical analysis, and responsibility form the pillars of effective heritage documentation.
- Overall, all the lectures were very interesting. Since I am particularly interested in zooarchaeology, I found Dr YAMAZAKI's sessions especially interesting.
- All the sessions were very interesting and useful.

Are there any topics which you would like to learn but were not covered in this workshop?

- I would like to learn more about digital inventory software and advanced data management systems used in international museums.
- The workshop exceeded my expectations. I gained extensive knowledge about Japan's archaeological management systems and their inventory methodologies. Learning about Japan's Buried Cultural Property framework and the transition from preservation to active utilisation offered comparative insights that could inform policy evolution in Uzbekistan. Rather than finding gaps, I discovered new directions for research collaboration and methodological adaptation.
- I would like to hear lectures on the topic of jewellery (glass beads), how they are stored and how the database and storage cards are made.
- I am particularly interested in zooarchaeology, focusing more on the study of animal remains at archaeological excavation sites rather than in the museum context.
- I would like to learn more about geoarchaeology.
- Traditional and modern methods used in Japan for documenting pottery and techniques for illustrating images depicted on archaeological artefacts of various sizes.
- I would like an anthropology course.

What could be done to improve the workshop's effectiveness?

- Adding a short field visit to a local museum could make the training even more practical and engaging.

- My only suggestion would be to extend the programme's duration. A few additional days would enable deeper field practice and more reflective group discussions, allowing participants to internalise the methodologies more fully.
- Perhaps more time could be allocated for hands-on exercises and interactive discussions.
- Organising workshops in other areas of Uzbekistan, such as Kokand, would help decentralise professional development and highlight the untapped potential of regional heritage institutions.
- It would be good if the workshop were carried out during archaeological excavations.
- The workshop was far too brief. A workshop like this, held directly at archaeological sites, would be very interesting and productive.
- We need to increase the number of such workshops.



IV. International Conference

1. General Information
2. Course Summary
3. Course Evaluation

1. General Information

International Conference on Cultural Heritage 2025

Conservation and Interpretation of Archaeological Sites and Authenticity: Approaches to 'Reconstruction' through Asia's Diverse Practices and Rationales

1. Background & Objectives

In recent years, many Asian countries have seen a growing interest in the reconstruction of archaeological features as part of the conservation practices of archaeological sites. Alongside this trend, requests for technical assistance for reconstruction from Japanese institutions and individual experts have been increasing. In particular, the rebuilding of vanished temples, palaces, and other structures based on archaeological findings is gaining traction and on-site implementations have been actualised in various parts of the region.

In these contexts, a diversity can be observed in how value assessments and practical approaches to reconstruction are understood and applied across different countries. These differences highlight the need for more context-sensitive dialogue that goes beyond existing theoretical frameworks. In Japan, while critical opinions persist regarding reconstruction—particularly from the standpoint of authenticity—some projects have in fact been undertaken with the aim of promoting educational use and enhancing local understanding. Such approaches to reconstruction suggest that current debates require more nuanced perspectives and deeper discussions.

Considering this background, this conference aimed to provide a platform for sharing initiatives related to the reconstruction and development of archaeological sites across various Asian countries. It sought to explore, from a practical standpoint, the significance of options such as 'reconstructing non-extant structures' and the broader question of how to develop archaeological sites that lack visible remains. Rather than limiting the discussion to theoretical analysis, the conference aspired to offer concrete insights that can support decision-making processes and policy development in the field. Through this conference, we hoped to effectively present Japan's extensive experience and diverse case studies, while also facilitating the exchange of both theoretical and practical knowledge from across the region.

2. Dates and Venues

Dates: 17 December (Wednesday) to 18 December (Thursday) 2025

17 December (Wednesday): Excursion (reconstruction site of Higashi-rou of Nara Palace Site)
Opening Ceremony, Keynote Speech, Presentations

18 December (Thursday): Presentations, General Discussion

Venue: Nara Prefectural Convention Center, Nara City, Japan (online live-stream was also available)

3. Organisers

This conference was organised by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan and the Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office, Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU Nara), in collaboration with the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties (Tokyo and Nara), the Nara Prefectural Government and Nara City Government. Support was also provided by the Japan Consortium for International Cooperation in Cultural Heritage (JCIC-Heritage).

4. Participants (Listed in alphabetical order)

Japan: Moderators

INABA Nobuko (*Professor Emerit, University of Tsukuba*)

NISHI Kazuhiko (*Chief Senior Specialist for Cultural Properties, Office for International Cooperation on Cultural Heritages, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan*)

Speakers

MOTONAKA Makoto (*Director General, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties*)

TAKADA Kazunori (*Representative Director, Ichinohe Culture and Arts NPO*)

UNNO Satoshi (*Associate Professor, Department of Architecture, Graduate School of Engineering,*

University of Tokyo)

Commentators

SUZUKI Chihei (*Specialist for Cultural Properties, Office for International Cooperation on Cultural Heritages, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan*)

TAKAHASHI Chinatsu (*Head, Site Management Section, Department of Cultural Heritage, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties*)

UENO Kunikazu (*Emeritus Professor, Nara Women's University*)

International: Rapporteur (Collaborating organisations)

Rohit JIGYASU (*Programme Manager, Sustainable Urban and Built Heritage Conservation, Disaster and Climate Risk Management and Post-Crisis Recovery, ICCROM*)

Speakers (Listed in alphabetical order of countries)

Richard MACKAY (*Director of Possibilities, Mackay Strategic, Australia*)

XIAO Jin Liang (*Chief Engineer, Tsinghua Tongheng Urban Planning & Design Institute, China*)

Angaragsuren ODKHUU (*Researcher, Administration of the World Heritage-Orkhon Valley Cultural Landscape, Mongolia*)

HONG Balkeum (*Researcher, Gaya National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, Republic of Korea*)

BUI Minh Tri (*Deputy Director, Institute of Asian Civilisation Studies, Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Association Vietnam*)

5. Programme

17 December (Wednesday) Excursion (Reconstruction Site of Higashi-rou of Nara Palace Site)

Lecturer: INABA Nobuko, HAKOZAKI Kazuhisa, NISHITA Noriko, TAKAHASHI Chinatsu

International Conference: Day 1

Conservation and Interpretation of Archaeological Sites and Authenticity: Approaches to 'Reconstruction' through Asia's Diverse Practices and Rationales

Opening Ceremony

Keynote Speech

MOTONAKA Makoto (*Director General, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties*)

Presentation I (Australia)

Richard MACKAY (Mackay Strategic, Australia)

Presentation II (Japan)

UNNO Satoshi (*Associate Professor, Department of Architecture, Graduate School of Engineering, University of Tokyo*)

Discussion

(Moderator: INABA Nobuko, NISHI Kazuhiko; Rapporteur: Rohit JIGYASU; Panellists: All speakers)

18 December (Thursday) International Conference: Day 2

Presentation III (China)

XIAO Jin Liang (*Chief Engineer, Tsinghua Tongheng Urban Planning & Design Institute*)

Presentation IV (Japan)

TAKADA Kazunori (*Representative Director, Ichinohe Culture and Arts NPO*)

Presentation V (Mongolia)

Angaragsuren ODKHUU
(*Researcher, Administration of the World Heritage-Orkhon Valley Cultural Landscape*)

Presentation VI (Republic of Korea)

HONG Balkeum (*Researcher, Gaya National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage*)

Presentation VII (Vietnam)

BUI Minh Tri (*Deputy Director, Institute of Asian Civilisation Studies, Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Association*)

Discussion

(Moderator: INABA Nobuko, NISHI Kazuhiko;
Rapporteur: Rohit JIGYASU; Panellists: All speakers)

ACCU International Conference 2025
Conservation and Interpretation of Archaeological Sites and Authenticity:
 Approaches to 'Reconstruction' through Asia's Diverse Practices and Rationales

PROGRAMME

【Day 1】 14:00 - 17:00, 17 December 2025

14:00 - 14:20	Opening Remarks by Organisers and Supporting Organisations
14:20 - 14:30	Introduction of Guests and Participants
14:30 - 15:15	Keynote Speech
	Reconstruction of Wooden Structures in Archaeological Sites: A Case Study of the Nara Palace Site in the World Heritage Property 'Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara' MOTONAKA Makoto (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)
15:15 - 15:45	Presentation I - Australia
	Archaeological Sites: Conservation, Management and Meaning Richard MACKAY (Mackay Strategic)
15:45 - 16:00	Break
16:00 - 16:30	Presentation II - Japan
	Value of Archaeological Reconstruction and 'Reconstructionology' UNNO Satoshi (University of Tokyo)
16:30 - 17:00	Panel Discussion
	[Moderator] INABA Nobuko (University of Tsukuba) NISHI Kazuhiko (Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan) [Rapporteur] Rohit JIGYASU (ICCROM) [Commentators] UENO Kunikazu (Nara Women's University) SUZUKI Chihei (Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan) TAKAHASHI Chinatsu (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties) and all speakers
17:00	Closing

【Day 2】 9:30 - 17:00, 18 December 2025

9:30 - 9:40	Opening Remarks
9:40 - 10:10	Presentation III - China
	Case Study on the Conservation of Luoyang Ruins of Sui and Tang Dynasty XIAO Jin Liang (Tsinghua Tongheng Urban Planning & Design Institute)
10:10 - 10:40	Presentation IV - Japan
	Community-based Site Conservation, Interpretation and Research: Insights from the Goshono Site, Iwate Prefecture TAKADA Kazunori (Ichinohe Culture and Arts NPO)
10:40 - 11:00	Break
11:00 - 11:30	Presentation V - Mongolia
	The Possibility of Reconstruction of Tsogchin Dugan (Main Assembly Hall) of Erdene Zuu Monastery and the Bat-Tsagaan Temple of Baruun Khüree Monastery Angaragsuren ODKHUU (Administration of the World Heiritage -Orkhon Valley Cultural Landscape))
11:30 - 12:00	Presentation VI - Republic of Korea
	Authenticity and Recent Trends in Reconstruction of Archaeological Sites in Korea: Focusing on the Core Sites of Gyeongju, the Ancient Capital of the Silla Kingdom HONG Balkeum (Gaya National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage)
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
13:00 - 13:30	Presentation VII - Vietnam
	Vietnamese Palace Architecture During the Ly Dynasty from Archaeological Evidence: Morphological Identification and Comparative Analysis within the East Asian Context BUI Minh Tri (Institute of Asian Civilisahon Studies, Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Sociation)
13:30 - 16:50	Panel Discussion
16:50 - 17:00	Closing Remarks
17:00	Closing

2. Summary

The International Conference on Cultural Heritage 2025 was held on 17 to 18 December 2025 under the theme, *Conservation and Interpretation of Archaeological Sites and Authenticity: Approaches to 'Reconstruction' through Asia's Diverse Practices and Rationales*. The two-day programme consisted of the below.

17 December: Excursion (reconstruction site of Higashi-rou of Nara Palace Site)
Opening Ceremony, Keynote Speech, Presentations, Discussion

18 December: Presentations, Discussion

17 December

■ Excursion (09:00-12:00)

Venue: Nara Palace Site

The speakers were invited to tour the Nara Palace Site, a component property of the World Heritage Site 'Ancient Monuments of Nara' to gain a holistic understanding of how multiple conservation and interpretation approaches are carefully balanced across the vast archaeological landscape. Within this framework, reconstruction is presented as one important tool among many. The visit encouraged participants to reflect on the broader heritage values that cannot be conveyed through a single approach alone. By sharing this on-site experience prior to the conference, a common understanding among participants was established that was able to ground subsequent discussions in a nuanced appreciation of authenticity, conservation practice, and the diverse methods used to interpret archaeological sites in Asia.

The excursion began from the eastern edge of the site, where interventions and reconstructions are very minimal. The speakers could observe areas that have not undergone excavation and are managed as vast fields of grasslands and wetlands to best preserve the archaeological features and wooden artefacts that lie beneath. It was also noted that at the same time, these areas also serve as biodiversity hotspots, demonstrating the possibility of a synergetic relationship between nature conservation and the preservation of cultural heritage. Next, the speakers were guided around the Excavation Site Exhibition Hall by Ms TAKAHASHI Chinatsu. Inside, they were able to directly observe the archaeological features that are preserved and presented as they were found.



Speakers observing archaeological features at the Excavation Site Exhibition Hall

The speakers then moved outside and climbed the reconstructed foundation platform of the Latter Imperial Audience Hall, from which they could see other types of conservation and interpretation, such as vegetation shaped to represent pillars and earth mounds to indicate locations of past structures. In the distance, speakers could see Suzaku Gate, one of the first structures that were reconstructed at Nara Palace Site, and the reconstructed Former Imperial Audience Hall. Prof INABA Nobuko also explained the inscription of Nara Palace Site as part of the World Heritage property, 'Historic Monuments of Nara.' The speakers also visited the Information Centre for Reconstruction Project, where reproduced traditional tools are displayed and the details of the various reconstruction projects undertaken at Nara Palace Site are presented to the public. Mr HAKOZAKI explained that the main outcomes of the projects are not just the physical reconstructions, but also the transmission of traditional building and manufacturing techniques to younger craftsmen, such as wood-working and roof tile production.

The speakers then moved to the woodworking facility where wooden members used in the reconstruction of Higashi-rou were processed. Here, Mr HAKOZAKI Kazuhisa and Ms NISHITA Noriko briefly explained the extensive



Speakers observing various forms of site representation and visiting the Information Centre

research that went into the reconstruction of Higashi-rou. They explained that the reconstruction research spanned many academic fields and was based on archaeological remains, historical documents, and reference to historical buildings that have preserved their 8th century form. Finally, the speakers visited the construction site of Higashi-rou, which was in the final stages of its reconstruction.

Over the course of the excursion, it was demonstrated that reconstruction at Nara Palace Site combines several approaches to the conservation and interpretation of archaeological sites, each based on extensive academic research and thoughtful planning and careful consideration of the overall landscape and setting. Participants were able to discuss the new values that are created from reconstructions, which include not only their role in interpretation in conveying the history and value of the sites to the public but also in creating areas and opportunities for research, transmission of traditional techniques, community engagement, and nature conservation.



Woodworking facility and Higashi-rou reconstruction site



Group photo at Nara Palace Site

■ **Opening Ceremony (14:00-14:30)**

Opening Remarks by Organisers and Supporting Organisations

YAMASHITA Shin'ichiro

Councillor for Cultural Properties, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan

MORIMOTO Susumu

Director, Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office, Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO

Rohit JIGYASU

Programme Manager on Urban Heritage, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, ICCROM

MOTONAKA Makoto

Director General, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties

■ **Keynote Speech (14:30-15:15)**

Reconstruction of Wooden Structures in Archaeological Sites: A Case Study of the Nara Palace Site in the World Heritage Property 'Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara'

MOTONAKA Makoto (Director General, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

■ **Presentation I (15:15-15:45)**

Archaeological Sites: Conservation, Management and Meaning

Richard MACKAY (Director of Possibilities, Mackay Strategic)

■ **Presentation II (15:45-16:15)**

Value of Archaeological Reconstruction and 'Reconstructionology'

UNNO Satoshi (Associate Professor, Department of Architecture, Graduate School of Engineering, University of Tokyo)

■ **Panel Discussion (16:30-17:00)**

Moderators: INABA Nobuko (*Professor Emerit, University of Tsukuba*); NISHI Kazuhiko (*Chief Senior Specialist for Cultural Properties, Office for International Cooperation on Cultural Heritages, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan*).

Rapporteur: Rohit JIGYASU (*Programme Manager, Sustainable Urban and Built Heritage Conservation, Disaster and Climate Risk Management and Post-Crisis Recovery, ICCROM*)

Panellists: SUZUKI Chihei (*Specialist for Cultural Properties, Office for International Cooperation on Cultural Heritage, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan*); TAKAHASHI Chinatsu (*Section Chief, Site Management Section, Department of Cultural Heritage, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties*); UENO Kunikazu (*Emeritus Professor, Nara Women's University*); MORIMOTO Susumu (*Director, ACCU Nara*); and all speakers.



Opening remarks. From left to right, YAMASHITA Shin'ichiro (Agency for Cultural Affairs); MORIMOTO Susumu (ACCU Nara); Rohit JIGYASU (ICCROM); and MOTONAKA Makoto (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)



From left to right: Keynote Speech by MOTONAKA Makoto, Presentation I by Richard MACKAY, and Presentation II by UNNO Satoshi



Panel discussion



Group photo

18 December

■ Opening Remarks (09:30-09:40)

■ Presentation III (China) (09:40-10:10)

Case Study on the Conservation of Luoyang Ruins of Sui and Tang Dynasty

XIAO Jin Liang (*Chief Engineer, Tsinghua Tongheng Urban Planning & Design Institute*)

■ Presentation IV (Japan) (10:10-10:40)

Community-based Site Conservation, Interpretation and Research: Insights from the Goshono Site, Iwate Prefecture

TAKADA Kazunori (*Representative Director, Ichinohe Culture and Arts NPO*)

■ Presentation V (Mongolia) (11:00-11:30)

The Possibility of Reconstruction of Tsogchin Dugan (Main Assembly Hall) of Erdene Zuu Monastery and the Bat-Tsagaan Temple of Baruun Khüree Monastery

Angaragsuren ODKHUU (*Researcher, Administration of the World Heritage-Orkhon Valley Cultural Landscape*)

■ Presentation VI (Republic of Korea) (11:30-12:00)

Authenticity and Recent Trends in Reconstruction of Archaeological Sites in Korea: Focusing on the Core Sites of Gyeongju, the Ancient Capital of the Silla Kingdom

HONG Balkeum (*Researcher, Gaya National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage*)

■ Presentation VII (Vietnam) (13:00-13:30)

Vietnamese Palace Architecture During the Ly Dynasty from Archaeological Evidence: Morphological Identification and Comparative Analysis within the East Asian Context

BUI Minh Tri (*Deputy Director, Institute of Asian Civilisation Studies, Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Association*)

■ Panel Discussion (13:30-16:50)

Moderators: INABA Nobuko (*Professor Emerit, University of Tsukuba*); NISHI Kazuhiko (*Chief Senior Specialist for Cultural Properties, Office for International Cooperation on Cultural Heritages, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan*).

Rapporteur: Rohit JIGYASU (*Programme Manager, Sustainable Urban and Built Heritage Conservation, Disaster and Climate Risk Management and Post-Crisis Recovery, ICCROM*)

Panellists: SUZUKI Chihei (*Specialist for Cultural Properties, Office for International Cooperation on Cultural Heritage, Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan*); TAKAHASHI Chinatsu (*Section Chief, Site Management Section, Department of Cultural Heritage, Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties*); UENO Kunikazu (*Emeritus Professor, Nara Women's University*); MORIMOTO Susumu (*Director, ACCU Nara*); and all speakers.

■ Closing Remarks (16:50-17:00)



From top to bottom, left to right: Presentation III by XIAO Jin Liang, Presentation IV by TAKADA Kazunori, Presentation V by Angaragsuren ODKHUU, Presentation VI by HONG Balkeum, and Presentation VII by BUI Minh Tri



From left to right: Moderators, INABA Nobuko and NISHI Kazuhiko; Rapporteur, Rohit JIGYASU



Panel discussion

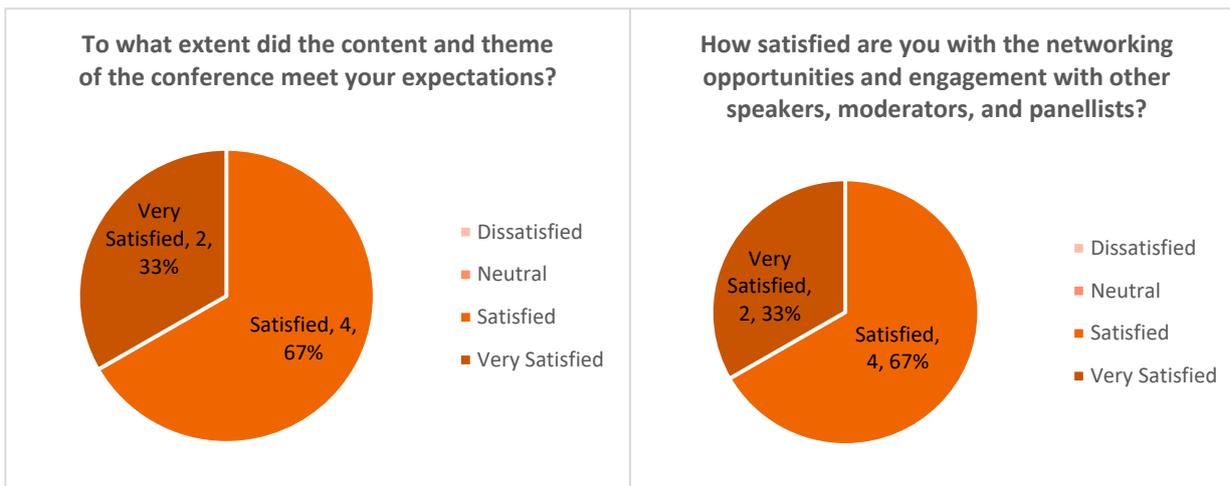
3. Course Evaluation

The International Conference was held from 17 to 18 December 2025. There were eight presenters, including one keynote speaker, and two facilitators, one rapporteur, and three commentators. Out of these fourteen participants, six submitted feedback.

Overall, the conference was highly successful and received much positive feedback from both participants and observers. In particular, many commented on the timely nature of the conference theme, noting that it is a very current issue that many countries in Asia are interested in.

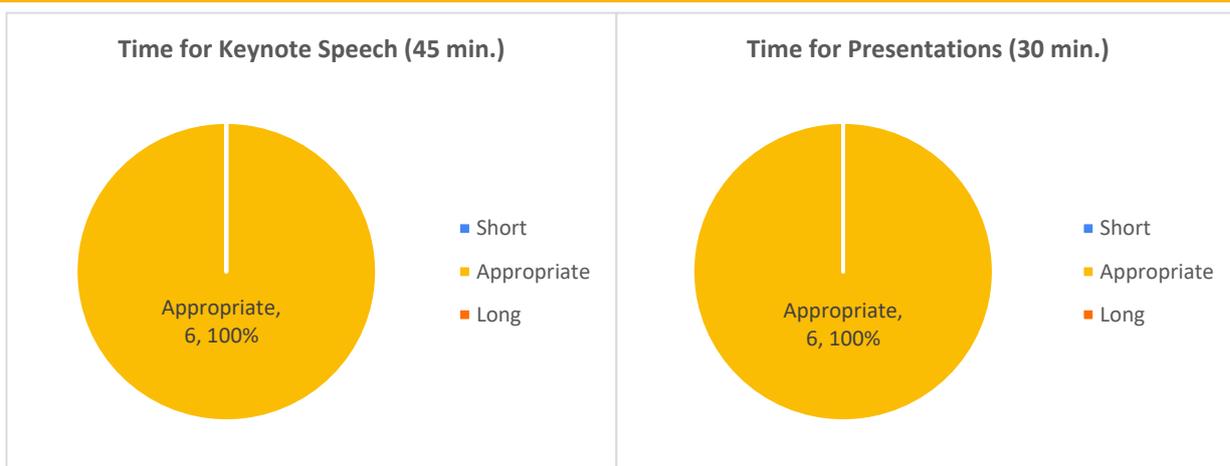
Participants' responses and comments have been summarised in the following pages and will be further examined and considered when planning the next conference.

A) Overall

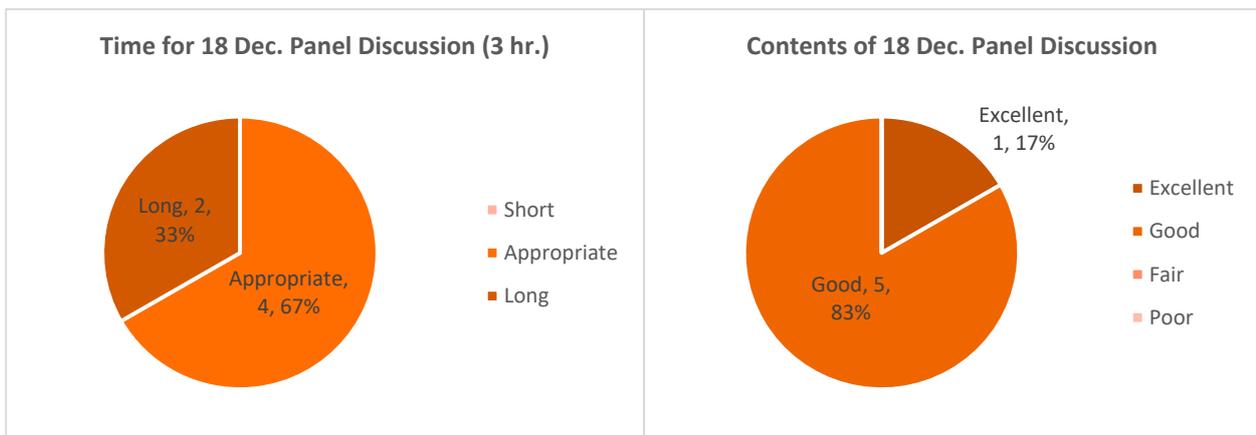
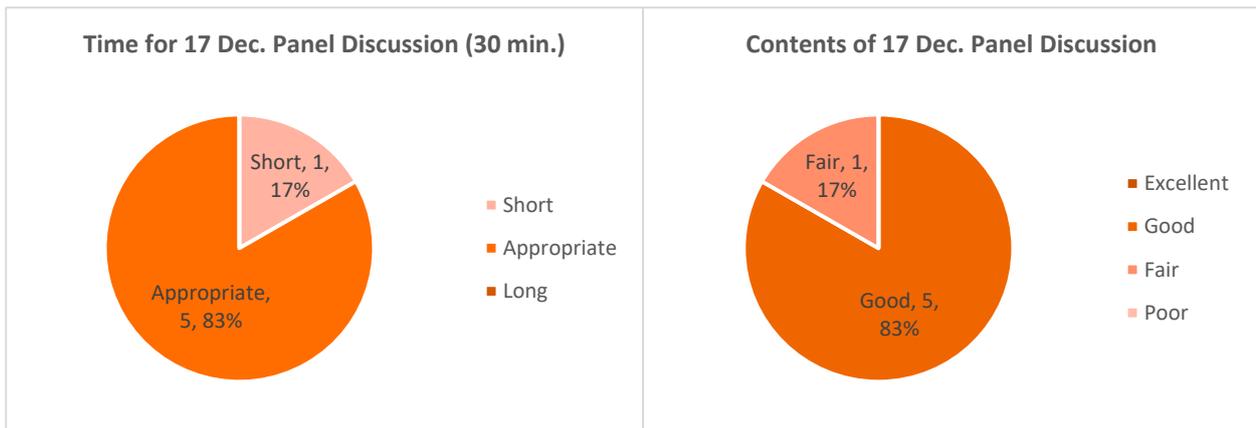


- The chosen theme was something that many people are very interested in, so we were able to have lively discussions.
- The deadline for submission of the written paper post-conference was a little tight, in view of the end of the year timing.
- The networking dinner was an important opportunity, which should be continued.

B) Keynote Speech & Presentations

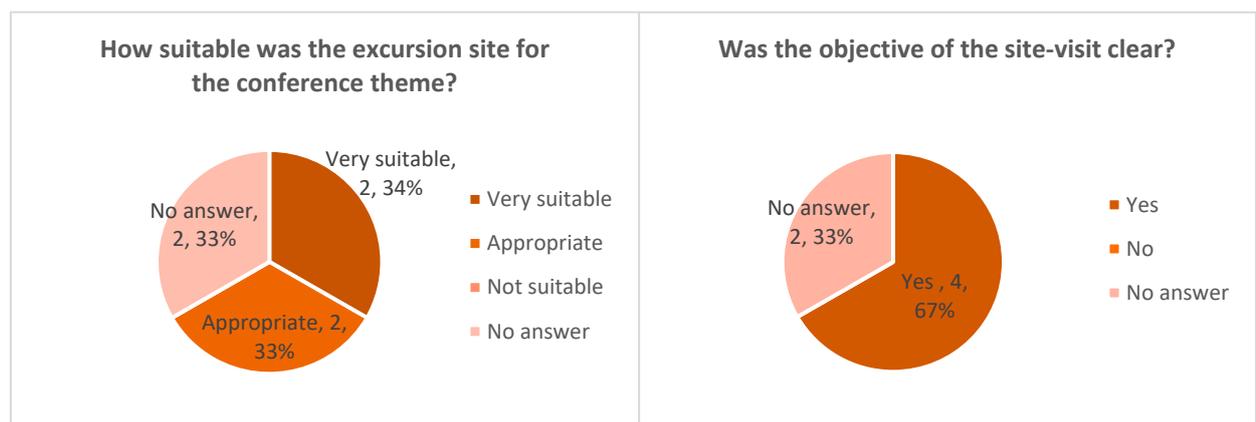


C) Panel Discussions



- The presentations and discussions were very interesting. I was able to understand each country's approach and way of thinking.
- I found it very beneficial to look at reconstruction of archaeological sites from various perspectives.

D) Excursion



- It would have been nice to visit other components of the World Heritage property to understand the context for the palace site.

Are there any topics you would like to see covered in future international conferences?

- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Approaches and case studies of digital reconstruction of archaeological sites
- Interconnection between nature and culture
- Methods and applications of measuring carrying capacity
- I would like to hear more about reconstructions in the context of East Asian archaeological sites



V. International Correspondent

1. General Information
2. Abstracts

1. General Information

International Correspondent on Cultural Heritage Protection in the Asia-Pacific Region 2025

Heritage Conservation in the Asia-Pacific: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities

1. Background

ACCU Nara invites past training course participants to share and exchange information on cultural heritage protection in their home countries. This programme is a part of ACCU Nara's information gathering and dissemination efforts, and the recent updates and challenges shared during the programme are considered when evaluating how ACCU Nara can better support ongoing heritage protection in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition, the programme also serves as platform for former participants to strengthen their networks with each and provide learning and collaboration opportunities.

Continuing from the previous year, the programme was held online with abstracts collated and published in ACCU Nara's annual report on training courses.

2. Date

14:00-16:00, 22 January 2026.

3. Organisers

This programme was organised by the Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office, Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU Nara).

4. Participants (Listed in alphabetical order of countries)

- Malaysia: **Rohayah binti CHE AMAT** (*Senior Lecturer*, Malaysia-Japan International Institute of Technology, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia)
- Nepal: **Suresh Suras SHRESTHA** (*Joint Secretary*, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation)
- New Zealand: **Matthew SCHMIDT** (*Senior Heritage Advisor/Kaitohu Matua Taonga Tuku Iho*, Southern South Island, Department of Conservation)
- Papua New Guinea: **Jethro Tulupul STALEN** (*Student*, World Heritage Studies Program, University of Tsukuba)
- Uzbekistan: **Tatyana TRUDOLYUBOVA** (*Researcher*, UNESCO Iraq Office)

5. Theme & Content

Theme: Heritage Conservation in the Asia-Pacific: Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities

Content: The presentation content should be related to cultural heritage in the Correspondents' country and introduce research or conservation and management projects conducted within it. The report should be related to cultural heritage protection projects in which the Correspondent is involved in. The focus of the International Correspondents' reports should be on the following:

- Efforts, initiatives, and achievements by the Correspondent in advancing research, protecting, transmitting, or utilising cultural heritage for the benefit of societies in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Current trends, ongoing challenges, and practical needs faced by heritage conservation professionals in Asia-Pacific countries.
- Innovative approaches, lessons learned, and opportunities for collaboration that contribute to the sustainable preservation of cultural heritage.

6. Requirements

Selected Correspondents were required to deliver a 15-minute presentation and submit a 500-word abstract.

7. Programme

14:00 – 14:05 Opening Remarks
MORIMOTO Susumu, *Director*
Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office,
Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU Nara)

- 14:05 – 14:20 Papua New Guinea: **Jethro Tulupul STALEN**, *Student*
World Heritage Studies Program, University of Tsukuba,
‘Preliminary Study on Effects on Heritage Collections due to lack of disaster and hazard policy frameworks for heritage collections in Papua New Guinea: A case study on Papua New Guinea National Museum and Art Gallery & Kokopo Museum’
- 14:20 – 14:35 New Zealand: **Matthew SCHMIDT**,
Senior Heritage Advisor/Kaitohu Matua Taonga Tuku Iho
Southern South Island, Department of Conservation
‘Te Papa Atawhai/Department of Conservation Southern South Is. New Zealand: Heritage Conservation Projects 2025-2026’
- 14:35 – 14:50 Malaysia: **Rohayah binti CHE AMAT**, *Senior Lecturer*
Malaysia-Japan International Institute of Technology,
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
‘From Research to Public Memory: Protecting Sydney Lake Garden as Cultural Landscape’
- 14:50 – 15:05 Nepal: **Suresh Suras SHRESTHA**, *Joint Secretary*
Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation
‘Cultural Heritage Rehabilitation: EXPERIENCES and ACHIEVEMENTS’
- 15:05 – 15:20 Uzbekistan: **Tatyana TRUDOLYUBOVA**, *Researcher*
UNESCO Iraq Office
‘Uzbekistan’s types and approaches to cultural heritage documentation’
- 15:20 – 15:50 Q&A and Discussion Session
- 15:50 – 16:00 Wrap-up and closing remarks

8. Secretariat

WAKIYA Kayoko, *Vice Director*, Programme Operation Department
Patricia SUN, *Intern*, Programme Operation Department
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Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)
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2. Abstracts

■ Jethro Tulupul STALEN, Papua New Guinea

Student, World Heritage Studies Program, University of Tsukuba

Title: *Preliminary Study on Effects on Heritage Collections due to lack of disaster and hazard policy frameworks for heritage collections in Papua New Guinea: A case study on Papua New Guinea National Museum and Art Gallery & Kokopo Museum*

Papua New Guinea is frequently affected by disasters and hazards, including earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, flooding, droughts, and the growing impacts of climate change. While national disaster responses understandably prioritise human safety and critical infrastructure, cultural heritage often receives little attention in disaster preparedness and recovery planning. As a result, heritage institutions face compounded risks from both extreme events and long-standing gaps in policy, resources, and preventive conservation practices.



Figure 1 (a): Before



Figure 1 (b): After

Figure 1(a) and 1(b) (Image by UNITAR/UNOSAT, 2018): Satellite imagery for an initial rapid assessment of two mixed cultural and natural heritage sites – the Kikori River Basin and Sublime Karsts, which are on Papua New Guinea's World Heritage Tentative List. (UNITAR, 2018). Figure 1(a) is the satellite imagery of the area before the disaster. Figure 1(b) is the satellite imagery of the area after the disaster.

The absence of heritage-specific disaster and hazard policy frameworks affects museum collections in Papua New Guinea. The case study at the Papua New Guinea National Museum and Art Gallery in Port Moresby and the Kokopo Museum in East New Britain Province highlight the challenges faced at both national and provincial levels and demonstrate how environmental, biological, and governance factors interact to threaten the long-term survival of cultural heritage.



Figure 2



Figure 3

Figure 2 indicates that biological specimens and natural history collections are stored on the storage racks without proper guardrails. Figure 3 shows that World War II displays are improperly displayed at the Kokopo Museum.

A mixed-methods approach combining questionnaire surveys with on-site environmental monitoring and collection condition assessments was used as part of the investigation. Data were collected on relative humidity and temperature, pests, and mould, alongside staff experiences and perceptions of disaster preparedness and institutional decision-making. The findings reveal that persistently high relative humidity levels, often exceeding recommended thresholds, have directly contributed to widespread mould outbreaks and pest infestations at the Papua New Guinea National Museum and Art Gallery. Equipment failures, including air-conditioning breakdowns, further exacerbate these

conditions and limit staff capacity to respond effectively. At Kokopo Museum, environmental risks are compounded by geological hazards such as volcanic activity, ash tephra falls, earthquakes, and flooding. These risks reflect the museum’s geographic setting and underline the need for locally adapted disaster strategies. Across both institutions, the absence of clear heritage-focused disaster plans has resulted in reactive and inconsistent decision-making.



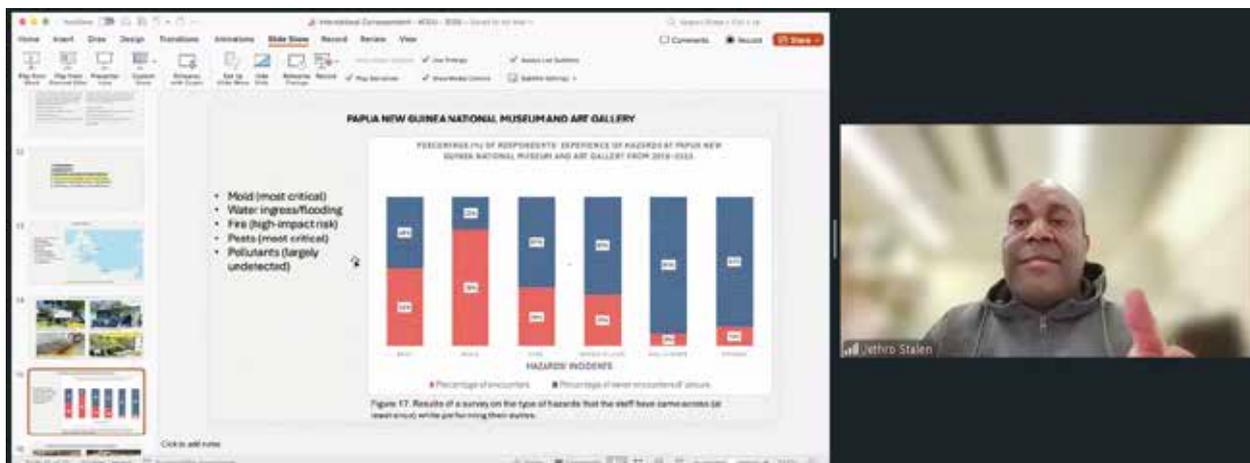
Figure 4



Figure 5

Figure 4. (supplied by Mr Tiko Waundu). Archaeological collections (Figure 4) and Natural History Collections (Figure 5) suffered from a mold outbreak. The mold was caused by high relative humidity and continuous malfunctioning of the HVAC system.

Hazards become disasters not only through sudden events, but also through prolonged inaction and insufficient planning, as we have seen through prolonged high relative humidity at the Papua New Guinea National Museum and Art Gallery. Preventive conservation, often viewed as secondary to more visible emergency responses, emerges as a critical tool for disaster risk reduction in cultural heritage. Integrating heritage into disaster policy frameworks, strengthening institutional preparedness, and empowering museum professionals in decision-making are essential steps toward safeguarding heritage collections. Ultimately, protecting heritage collections also supports people and communities. Cultural heritage provides identity, continuity, and resilience, particularly in disaster-prone contexts.



Presentation by Jethro Tulupul STALEN

■ **Matthew SCHMIDT, New Zealand**

Senior Heritage Advisor/Kaitohu Matua Taonga Tuku Iho, Southern South Island, Department of Conservation
Title: *Te Papa Atawhai/Department of Conservation Southern South Island New Zealand: Heritage Conservation Projects 2025-2026*

The Southern South Is. of New Zealand is rich in its variety of Polynesians/Māori (beginning ca. 1280AD), Pakeha (European) (beginning with the arrival of Cook in 1769) and Chinese (beginning in the later 19th century) heritage places and sites. Most of these sites lie on land and water managed by the Department of Conservation (“DOC”) as large swathes of this land are conservation areas. Of the approximately 3000 recorded heritage sites on DOC land and water, 143 places consisting of 250 heritage sites/features are actively managed by DOC.

In 2025-2026, DOC focused on the conservation of 13 heritage places. Three places were of particular importance: the Whenua Hou Codfish Island 1810s-20s settlement site; the 1870s Bobs Cove Limestone Kilns Managers House; and the 1873 Lindis Hotel ruins.

The Whenua Hou heritage site contains subsurface evidence of the 1810s-20s Pakeha and Māori settlement site

on the island. The site had been excavated on four occasions with initial work focused on research but later work for salvage reasons. Taonga/artefacts from the excavations were housed in a variety of locations for curation and conservation reasons but a comprehensive report inventorying all the known artefacts had not been undertaken. In addition, decisions were required from the Whenua Hou Committee, which has representatives on the committee from the various Runaka (Māori families) connected to the island, on where the taonga should be curated in the long term. This project produced a taonga inventory and, through a workshop with Runaka, decisions were made on the future curation of the taonga.

The Bobs Cove Limestone Kilns Managers House and the 1873 Lindis Hotel ruins are both stone structures. The Bobs Cove Managers House is located near Queenstown which, in the late 19th century, was a bustling goldfields town. Lime was required for building construction and so lime kilns were established by limestone outcrops near the town. The Bobs Cove Managers House was built of well-dressed limestone blocks by a skilled stone mason and contained only two rooms: a bedroom and an office. After the lime kilns closed at the end of the 19th century, the house was abandoned and became a ruin. DOC stabilised the ruin and built a protective roof over the top which matched the original roof alignment.

The Lindis Hotel was built in 1873 in the isolated Lindis Valley to serve travellers coming through the valley to and from Central Otago. It was built of dressed schist stone and was expanded in size in the late 19th century. It functioned as a hotel until ca. 1923 but, after the roof was removed in 1924, it became a ruin. Its importance lies in its association with an initial gold rush to this location in 1861, later depression mining and the history of early hotels and tourism. DOC is currently undertaking stonework conservation on the ruin which will finish in April 2026, and a transparent roof designed to let light onto the stonework will be built by the end of 2026.



Presentation by Matthew SCHMIDT

■ Rohayah binti CHE AMAT, Malaysia

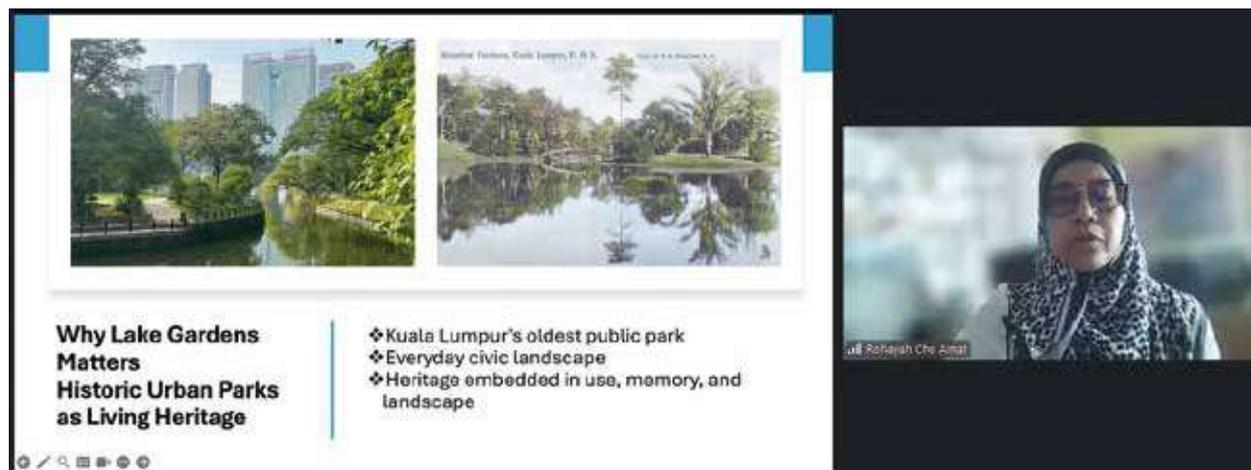
Senior Lecturer, Malaysia-Japan International Institute of Technology, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

Title: *From Research to Public Memory: Protecting Sydney Lake Garden as Cultural Landscape*

Historic urban parks are among the most intensively used public spaces in cities, yet they remain one of the most vulnerable forms of cultural heritage. Unlike monuments or historic buildings, their significance is embedded in landscapes, everyday practices, and collective memory elements that can erode gradually without any visible physical loss. This presentation reflects on a recent cultural heritage protection project centred on Lake Gardens, Kuala Lumpur's oldest public park and a foundational civic landscape in Malaysia's urban history. Lake Gardens originated in the late nineteenth century as part of the early colonial formation of Kuala Lumpur. In 1884, Alfred Reid Venning, then Treasurer of Selangor, proposed the creation of a public garden for the town. The proposal was approved by F.A. Swettenham in 1888, and a 173-acre swampy area was identified due to its proximity to government quarters and the hospital at Bluff Hill, as well as its natural setting along the Bras Bras River. Officially named the 'Public Gardens,' it was conceived in the style of European public parks of the period and formally opened on 13 May 1889 by the Governor of the Straits Settlements, Sir Cecil Clementi Smith. The lake within the park was named 'Sydney' in honour of Constance Sydney Holmes, the wife of Swettenham, and the park soon became popularly known as Lake Gardens. In 2022, the site was redesignated as Perdana Botanical Gardens, reflecting ongoing institutional and functional transformations.

The KL Dulu Trail Guide: Lake Gardens was undertaken as a commissioned heritage documentation and interpretation initiative, with the aim of safeguarding Lake Gardens not through physical conservation works, but through researched public engagement. Drawing on archival research, spatial analysis, and cultural landscape interpretation, the project examined the park's evolution from its colonial origins to its post-independence role in nation-building and its contemporary function as an everyday recreational landscape. Particular attention was given to how layers of meaning, memory, and use have accumulated over time, forming an intangible yet critical dimension of heritage value.

Rather than treating publication as an academic outcome, the project positioned the resulting guide book as a heritage protection instrument. The book functions as a public memory archive, an educational resource, and a shared reference for institutions and park users. By translating scholarly research into accessible narratives and visual storytelling, it bridges institutional knowledge and public understanding, ensuring that cultural significance is communicated beyond expert and professional circles. In this way, documentation and interpretation are reframed as active and preventative forms of heritage protection for living cultural landscapes. The presentation argues that heritage protection must move beyond material preservation to address the fragility of public memory in rapidly transforming cities. In the absence of demolition, cultural landscapes such as Lake Gardens remain vulnerable to becoming generic amenities, detached from their historical and civic meanings. By situating Lake Gardens within broader cultural landscape and living heritage discourses, the presentation offers a transferable model for protecting historic urban parks across Asia. It highlights the role of research as an ethical and practical tool for sustaining public memory, cultural continuity, and long-term stewardship while allowing landscapes to continue evolving.



Presentation by Rohayah binti CHE AMAT

■ Suresh Suras SHRESTHA, Nepal

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation

Title: *Cultural Heritage Rehabilitation: EXPERIENCES and ACHIEVEMENTS*

The catastrophic earthquake of 25 April 2015 in Nepal not only precipitated a profound humanitarian crisis but also engendered an unparalleled disruption to the country's tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The seismic event resulted in extensive structural damage across 31 districts, affecting approximately 920 cultural monuments (and 845 monasteries), with the Kathmandu Valley—recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Property—suffering damage to 170 monuments, including 33 complete collapses and 137 partial destructions. While the Post Disaster Needs Assessment quantified the economic loss to heritage at USD 205 million, the more consequential loss was epistemic and cultural: the disruption of historical continuity, erosion of traditional craftsmanship, and attenuation of socio-spiritual practices embedded in these monuments.

Nepal's heritage rehabilitation response represents a paradigmatic case of post-disaster cultural governance, wherein rehabilitation was approached as both a technical and epistemic exercise. By 2025, 815 monuments had been rehabilitated, and 164 restored within the Kathmandu Valley World Heritage Property. This demonstrates a significant alignment of institutional capacity, technical expertise, and socio-cultural engagement, resulting in a recovery trajectory that balances authenticity, structural integrity, and community agency.

The process confronted multifaceted challenges. A critical shortage of traditional technical human resources, including masons, carpenters, and artisans proficient in historical techniques, coincided with limited production of indigenous construction materials such as bricks, timber, and lime-surkhi mortar. Institutional coordination complexities, compounded by multi-layered governance involving national authorities, local stakeholders, and international partners, further complicated project execution. Additionally, rigorous documentation, archival research, and analytical assessment were indispensable prerequisites for credible heritage rehabilitation, underscoring the epistemic dimension of post-disaster heritage conservation and management.

Nepal's strategic response entailed the development of comprehensive conservation guidelines, emphasising the use of traditional techniques while circumscribing the application of modern interventions to contexts of necessity. The principles of 'Back to Traditional Technique and Technology' and 'Preserve Site Authenticity' constituted normative frameworks guiding both technical execution and policy rationale. Institutional mechanisms, including the NRA's CLPIUs and DLPIUs in coordination with the Department of Archaeology through ERCO, facilitated integrated

project management, while specialised technical task forces and capacity-building programs ensured knowledge transfer and sustainability.

Crucially, the active engagement of local communities functioned as both an epistemic and operational vector. Indigenous knowledge systems, ritualistic insights, and craftsmanship expertise were mobilised, enabling not merely structural restoration but also revitalisation of socio-cultural practices intrinsic to heritage sites.

This experience elucidates several globally relevant lessons: the centrality of systematic research and documentation, the irreplaceable value of traditional knowledge, the imperative of institutional coordination, and the efficacy of community involvement as a sustainable mechanism. Nepal's post-earthquake heritage rehabilitation exemplifies how a developing nation, despite constraints, can orchestrate a culturally sensitive, technically robust, and socially inclusive recovery paradigm.

The Nepalese case thus extends beyond mere rehabilitation; it constitutes an exemplar of heritage governance, resilience, and knowledge integration, offering critical insights for international discourse on post-disaster cultural policy and the preservation of historical authenticity.



Presentation by Suresh Suras SHRESTHA

■ **Tatyana TRUDOLYUBOVA, Uzbekistan**
Researcher, UNESCO Iraq Office

Title: *Uzbekistan's types and approaches to cultural heritage documentation*

Uzbekistan boasts a rich historical and cultural heritage comprising around 8,000 registered sites, including seven World Heritage properties: four historical cities and two natural transboundary sites, as well as one transboundary Silk Road corridor. One of these historic cities is currently on the List of World Heritage in Danger, which highlights the importance of effective documentation and protection measures, among other actions.

In this context, the Agency of Cultural Heritage is responsible for identifying historic buildings. It also registers and documents them. The Agency maintains the state register and cadastre. It issues site passports and it defines protection zones. It also oversees conservation work, expert evaluations, digitisation processes, and the management of specially protected historic areas, including traditional mahallas (neighbourhoods).

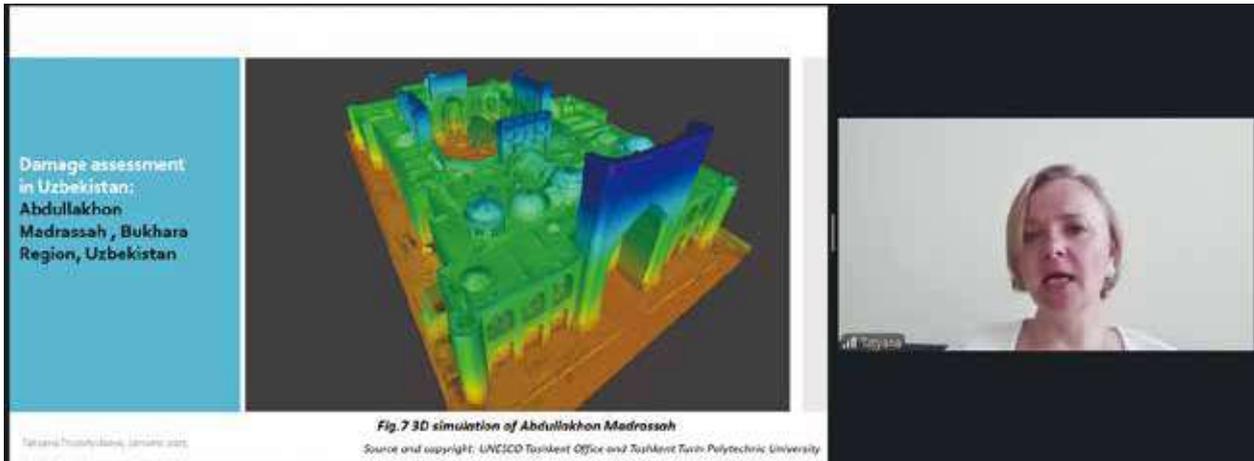
The main legal framework for the protection of cultural heritage sites is set out in the 2001 Law on the Protection and Use of Cultural Heritage Sites and the 2009 Law on the Protection and Use of Archaeological Heritage Sites. To facilitate the rehabilitation of historic sites, the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 265 (30 March 2019) introduced a comprehensive documentation package, regulating the documentation requirements related to the protection and use of tangible cultural heritage.

Within this framework, international cooperation has played a significant role in enhancing documentation practices, particularly with regard to World Heritage properties. The UNESCO Tashkent Office has made a significant contribution to preservation efforts by conducting detailed field surveys of sites such as the Historic Centre of Bukhara (2008–2013), Itchan Kala (2016), and the Historic Centre of Shakhrisabz (2017). These surveys were primarily conducted using empirical methods, such as interviewing householders, creating hand-drawn sketches of houses, and taking photographs, with all the collected data subsequently integrated into a GIS database and transmitted to the Uzbek government.

Building on this experience, more advanced documentation techniques have recently been introduced. In 2023, the UNESCO Tashkent Office, supported by the World Heritage Fund and in collaboration with Turin University Tashkent and local Bukhara companies, conducted an extensive survey of the Abdullakhan Madrasah in Bukhara. This resulted in the creation of a comprehensive photogrammetric model of the monument. This project is an example of good

practice that could be applied to other historic sites in Uzbekistan.

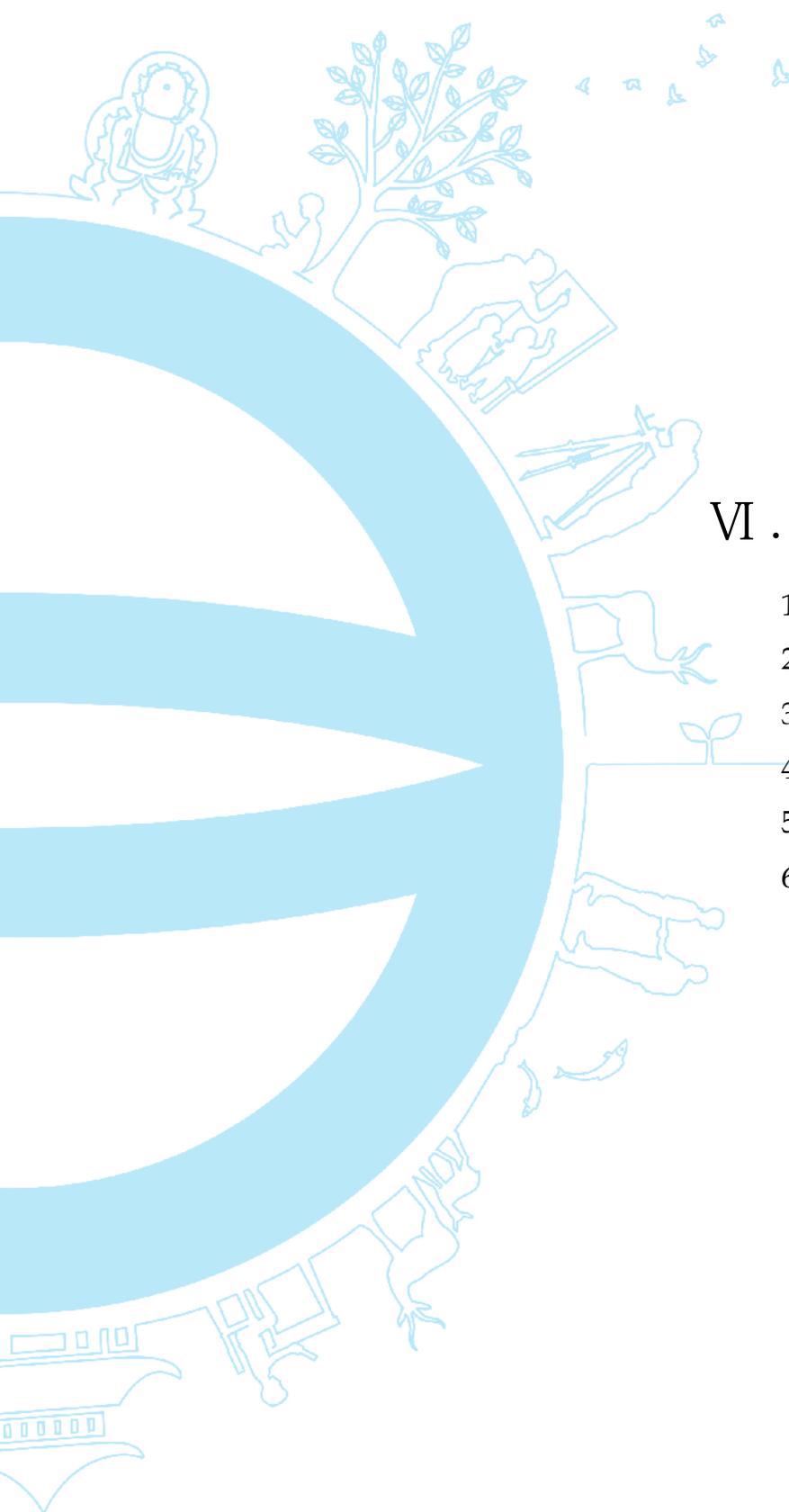
Photogrammetry can be an effective tool for documenting cultural heritage because it can provide accurate, measurable data in the form of 3D models, orthophotos and drawings. This data can support conservation analysis and decision-making. It enables the detailed recording of geometry, surface conditions, and damage, such as cracks, deformation, and material loss, while remaining non-invasive and safe for fragile historic structures. Photogrammetry also creates a permanent digital record for monitoring changes over time and planning interventions. It is relatively cost-effective and integrates well with GIS, CAD, and BIM systems. While conventional digital photography may be sufficient for smaller sites, photogrammetry is particularly valuable for documenting the complex architectural forms and traditional urban fabric of historic cities such as those in Uzbekistan in line with international heritage documentation and conservation standards.



Presentation by Tatyana TRUDOLYUBOVA



Group photo



VI . Appendix

1. Group Training Course
2. Thematic Training Course
3. Regional Workshop
4. International Conference
5. International Correspondent
6. Staff Members of ACCU Nara

1. Group Training Course

A. Participants

Bangladesh

Abir Bin KEYSAR

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Bhutan

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Rotanak YONG

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Fiji

Setoki Baleiyaqeta TUITECI

Architect, Ethos Edge



Indonesia

Pusparini Dharma Putri

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Malaysia

CHOO Heng Huat

Architect / Assistant Secretary General, ICOMOS Malaysia



Nepal

Iru SHRESTHA

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Nepal

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Research Fellow, Tripura Sundari and Sama Center, Department of Music, Kathmandu University



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Thailand

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Professor Emerit, University of Tsukuba

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Tomás Meraz CASTAÑO

Movable Heritage Project Officer, ICCROM

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Associate Professor, Kyoto Institute of Technology

Anne NYHAMAR

Senior Advisor, The Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage

Unit 4

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Councillor for Cultural Properties

■ **Nara Prefectural Government**

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F. Acknowledgements

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■ **Kudara-dera Temple**

■ **Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties**

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■ **Horyu-ji Temple**

■ **O-jinja Shrine**

OO Tadafumi

Chief Priest

■ **Japanese Association for Conservation of Architectural Monuments (JACAM)**

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HASHIMURA Koei

Chief Abbot

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TEZUKA Takuro

Owner

■ **BYAKU Narai**

TAKAYAMA Kyohei

Manager

2. Thematic Training Course

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3. Regional Workshop

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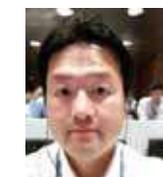
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