

The Undertakings of the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage include:

1 Preservation and Transmission of Tangible Cultural Properties, and Utilization of Cultural Properties to Disseminate Japan's History and Traditional Culture Nationally and Internationally**(1) Collection and Preservation of Tangible Cultural Properties, and Transmission of Tangible Cultural Properties to Future Generations**

As core institutions involved in the preservation and transmission of history and traditional culture, each museum collects objects according to its own individual collection policy to ensure that the accumulation of objects is systematically and historically balanced.

We also work closely with the Agency for Cultural Affairs to actively promote donations and long-term loans from private owners, utilizing the System of Enrolled Art Objects, for example, or improving the inheritance tax system to make donation of objects easier.

Japan's cultural properties are the precious assets of the Japanese people. In order to pass on this heritage to future generations, we implement thorough management of items in the collections, and make efforts to improve the environments for these items while working systematically to conserve them, with those requiring urgent treatment given priority. This work is carried out through the coordinated efforts of NICH's conservators and professionals of conservation science as well as specialists (both internal and external) in the fields of conservation science and restoration technology, using both traditional techniques and modern scientific methods. Conservation studios and other facilities also consider the need to protect cultural properties from natural disasters, and are working with the government to make further preparations.

■Acquisition

We continually strive to collect cultural properties through purchases and donations with the aim of: (1) accumulating collections that are both systematically and historically balanced, and (2) preventing the dispersion of private collections and the export of tangible cultural properties from Japan.

Furthermore, the four museums each accept long-term loans from temples, shrines, and private collectors in order to further enhance their own distinctive regular exhibitions.

■Conservation and Restoration

Tangible cultural properties preserved in museum collections need to be restored approximately once every 100 years. The Institutes carry out two levels of conservation work: minimal treatments for general display and storage when necessary; and full-scale treatments, performed on a schematic basis in response to the condition of the object.

Number of Works in the Museum Collections

(Entries)

Total			Tokyo National Museum			Kyoto National Museum			Nara National Museum			Kyushu National Museum		
Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties	Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties	Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties	Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties	Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties
126,872	131	963	116,932	87	634	7,532	28	183	1,883	13	112	525	3	34

(Figures as of March 31, 2016)

Number of Works on Long-term Loan to the Museums

(Entries)

Total			Tokyo National Museum			Kyoto National Museum			Nara National Museum			Kyushu National Museum		
Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties	Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties	Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties	Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties	Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties
12,056	202	1,417	3,072	55	258	6,112	91	820	1,987	54	327	885	2	12

(Figures as of March 31, 2016)

(2) Exhibitions

We disseminate information both nationally and internationally to promote understanding of the history and traditional culture of Japan and other Asian regions. For this purpose, we hold attractive exhibitions and high-quality displays that reflect both visitor needs and the latest academic trends, while also taking into consideration the needs of international cultural exchange.

In addition, we are constantly striving to make our museums more visitor-friendly by creating multilingual and accessible environments, with extensive information for visitors to enhance the overall museum environment. We are also making improvements to museum management in response to visitor feedback.

■Exhibitions

Each museum holds its own distinctive regular and special exhibitions to provide opportunities for visitors to engage with traditional art and archaeological objects, including National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties. We also collaborate with overseas museums to hold exhibitions which introduce our respective cultures.

■Number of Visitors (FY 2015)

Total	Tokyo National Museum	Kyoto National Museum	Nara National Museum	Kyushu National Museum
3,987,831	1,994,508	653,336	455,859	884,128



Special Exhibition: *Kuroda Seiki, Master of Modern Japanese Painting: The 150th Anniversary of his Birth* (Tokyo National Museum, March 23–May 15, 2016)



The Beauty of Mantra: Arts in the Collection of Daigoji Temple (May 11–July 10, 2016, Shanghai Museum, China)

(3) Education

To promote understanding of the history and traditional culture of Japan and other Asian regions, we provide a variety of educational programs, such as lectures and workshops, in cooperation with schools and other educational institutions.

Furthermore, we work with universities to provide professional training and support volunteer activities with the aim of further improving our educational programs. We also implement training programs for museum professionals, conservators, and others.

In addition, we utilize the internet to disseminate information about cultural properties, and publicize our exhibitions and educational activities through the collection, publication, and display of various types of information.



Visitors to Kyoto National Museum enjoy an educational talk by one of the Museum's "Cultural Property Sommelier" volunteers



Training for conservators held at Nara National Museum

(4) Research on the Collection, Preservation, and Exhibition of Tangible Cultural Properties (Namely fine and applied arts), and Educational Activities

We conduct surveys and research relating to the collection, preservation, and exhibition of tangible cultural properties, as well as educational activities, on a systematic basis; organize international symposiums to which leading researchers are invited; arrange for NICH staff to work at overseas research institutes and attend international conferences; and conduct research while accumulating the latest information.

The results obtained in our surveys and research are publicized using a variety of different methods, including publications and the internet, thereby contributing to the transmission of cultural properties to the next generation and to the continued enhancement of Japanese culture.



Research on collection items and donated items (Special Research Project (Applied Arts) at Tokyo National Museum)

(5) Contribution to Museum-related Activities in Japan and Abroad

We proactively loan items from our collections to museums both in Japan and abroad, while taking due account of the state of preservation of the items in question, so that they may be viewed more widely by both domestic and international audiences. We are also actively engaged in providing guidance and advice to other museums and in the exchange of information, as well as working to build a disaster response network for cultural properties.



The 5th Meeting & Conference of the Asian National Museums Association (ANMA) in Singapore (November 26, 2015)

2 Implementing Research and Collaborative Projects for the Protection of Cultural Properties and Overseas Cultural Heritage

We undertake the following types of surveys and research to contribute to the formation of the framework of knowledge and techniques required to facilitate the transmission of priceless cultural properties to future generations.

(1) Research Leading to New Ideas

We are engaged in undertaking fundamental and systematic research relating to cultural properties (including collaborative research and research-related exchange with other organizations, both in Japan and overseas) and also surveys and research

that contribute to the preservation and effective utilization of cultural properties. The results achieved by these surveys and research have led to an increase in the amount of basic data available, facilitated the accumulation of academic knowledge, and provided the basic information needed to support designation as cultural properties, while also contributing, at individual and collective levels, to the planning and establishment of cultural property preservation measures by national and local government bodies, as well as the evaluation of cultural property



Yakko adari dedicated at the Gobo Festival (Gobo City, Wakayama Prefecture)



Reinforced concrete apartment house on Hashima Island (Battleship Island, Nagasaki City, Nagasaki Prefecture)

(2) Basic Research for the Improvement of Research and Development Utilizing Science and Technology

We undertake the following types of R&D to support the development of research on the value and preservation of cultural properties:

- ① We contribute to the enhancement of the accuracy and effectiveness of cultural property survey methods through the promotion of R&D work such as the application of science and technology. We also contribute towards the clarification of the background (cultural, historical, and natural environment) against which cultural properties came into being, and the process of change in this background over time.
- ② As a core research center for research relating to cultural property preservation science and restoration techniques, restoration materials, and production techniques, we work for the development of new techniques for cultural property research, making use of the latest scientific and technological developments, and promote cutting-edge surveys and research with the aim of fostering joint research and research-related exchange with other institutions both in Japan and overseas.



Investigation by X-ray radiography using a portable scanner

(3) International Collaboration Relating to the Preservation of Cultural Heritage

We promote the acquisition and analysis of information from abroad regarding cultural heritage, and also promote cooperative programs for the protection of this heritage. Additionally, we create human resources development and technology transfer programs for the conservation and restoration of cultural properties. These programs involve training and the dispatch of specialists. All of the aforementioned endeavors—which are pursued while utilizing the knowledge, technology, and experience that Japan has for the protection of cultural heritage—are contributions of international importance. Moreover, through cooperation with researchers and other specialists in the Asia-Pacific region, we conduct research for the protection of intangible cultural heritage endangered by natural disasters and other threats, and promote protection of this heritage on an international scale. Through such activities for the protection of humanity's shared assets, we contribute to cultural exchange between countries and to mutual understanding.



Research for safeguarding endangered intangible cultural heritage (Woodblock printing in Dong Ho Village, Vietnam)

(4) Collecting and Collating Information Relating to Cultural Properties, and Publicizing and Utilizing the Results of Surveys and Research

We are working to promote the digitalization of information relating to cultural properties and expand related specialist archives, as well as organizing public lectures and international symposiums, and expanding the content included on the websites of the individual facilities that make up the NICH, with the aim of furthering the collection, collation and preservation of information relating to cultural properties and of ensuring that such outcomes are widely publicized and disseminated. We are also working to expand the displays of survey and research results held at the Nara Palace Site Museum, Exhibition Room of Fujiwara Imperial Site, and Asuka Historical Museum of the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, so as to provide the general public with a more in-depth understanding of related areas.



The 49th Public Lecture in progress at National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo

(5) Provision of Training for, and Collaboration with, Local Government Authorities in Relation to Cultural Properties

While contributing to the enhancement of knowledge and techniques through the implementation of training tailored to the needs of local government authorities by making effective use of the results obtained in past surveys and research, we also undertake cultivation of core human resources that will play key roles in the preservation of Japan's cultural properties in the future, through collaborative education projects in conjunction with university graduate schools. After the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011, we played a central role in activities conducted to rescue cultural properties at the request of the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Making effective use of this experience, we are also undertaking research projects and human resources cultivation projects aimed at putting in place a nationwide system for communication and coordination so as to build a network for safeguarding and rescuing cultural properties in the event of future large-scale disasters such as major earthquakes.



Training activity relating to rescuing cultural properties (Practicing cleaning paper materials that have been damaged in a natural disaster)