

The Undertakings of the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage include:

1 Acquisition and Preservation of Museum Collections

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 it easier to donate objects.

Japan's cultural properties are the precious assets of the Japanese people. In order to pass on this heritage to future generations, we make efforts to improve the environment for the works while working systematically to restore the objects, with those requiring urgent treatment given priority. This work is carried out through the coordinated efforts of specialists in the fields of conservation science and restoration technology, using both traditional techniques and modern scientific methods.

■ Collection

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 Objects 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
124,729	130	952	115,653	87	633	6,721	27	179	1,862	13	111	493	3	29

(Figures as of March 31, 2014)

Number of Objects 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
11,486	193	1,190	2,519	53	244	5,892	87	622	1,994	53	321	1,081	0	3

(Figures as of March 31, 2014)

2 Dissemination of Traditional Culture

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. We are also constantly striving to improve our facilities and management to make our museums more accessible and visitor-friendly.

■ 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 (Fiscal 2013)

Total	Tokyo National Museum	Kyoto National Museum	Nara National Museum	Kyushu National Museum
2,660,010	1,322,288	148,429	461,690	727,603



Special Exhibition: *Kano Sanraku and Sansetsu* (Kyoto National Museum; March 30-May 12, 2013)



Ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of the Special Exhibition: *The Culture of Japan* (overseas exhibition organized by the Agency for Cultural Affairs) (Venue: Vietnam National Museum of History, Hanoi) January 16-March 9, 2014

■ Educational Activities

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 also support volunteer activities with the aim of further improving our educational programs.

3 Contributing to Museum Activities as a Central Organization for Museums in Japan

We aim to play a leading role for museums in Japan while actively engaging with overseas museums and contributing to vibrant museum activities both within Japan and overseas. To achieve these goals, we are engaged in the following tasks:



The 4th Executive Committee Meeting of Asian National Museum Association (ANMA) October 8, 2013

- ① We widely disseminate the results of research into museum collections and other areas through various media such as publications and websites.
- ② We hold international symposiums with noted scholars from other countries. We also send our staff members to research institutions and international conferences overseas.
- ③ Together with other related institutions, we provide training programs for museum professionals in such fields as conservation and restoration. Through these activities, we contribute to the improvement of conservation and restoration technologies both within Japan and abroad.
- ④ While taking into account conservation considerations, we actively loan objects from our collections to public and private museums so they can be seen throughout Japan. We are also working to build a professional network through which we can offer instruction, advice and information exchange to public and private museums throughout Japan.

4 Promoting Surveys and Research as a Core Research Organization for Japan's Cultural Heritage

Besides promoting surveys and research relating to various types of cultural properties, we also contribute to the development of knowledge and techniques necessary for ensuring the preservation of precious cultural properties and handing this heritage down to future generations.



Lion dance for spring prayer at a destroyed village (Takeura, Onagawa-cho)



Reconstruction of the ceiling of Kitora Tumulus



X-ray fluorescence analysis of mural paintings of the Takamatsuzuka Tumulus

- ① We conduct a wide range of fundamental and systematic research on Japan's cultural properties and the related cultural properties of other nations. These include tangible cultural properties, monuments, cultural landscapes, and groups of historic buildings. Our research also includes topics such as the transmission and presentation of intangible cultural properties, as well as the researchers who engaged in the study of Japan's ancient castle towns through the excavation of the Asuka, Fujiwara, and Nara Palace Sites. Through this, we promote the development of methods for comprehensive research on cultural properties, thus contributing to the establishment of a foundation for the protection and appraisal of cultural properties by the

government and local public organizations.

- ② We conduct research and development aimed at establishing (1) techniques to produce digital images suitable for the recording and analyzing of cultural properties and (2) methods for conducting research on archaeological sites or dendrochronology. Through this, we contribute to increasing and providing fundamental materials that will shed light on the cultural and environmental backgrounds of cultural properties as well as the changes they have come through.
- ③ We work to raise the quality of cultural property conservation and restoration through state-of-the-art research using the latest conservation techniques, together with research into traditional restoration techniques and methods of manufacturing and utilization.
- ④ When requested by the Japanese government or local public organizations, we carry out practical, prompt, and appropriate research into cultural properties which are deemed important and in urgent need of restoration and conservation, such as the conservation work at the Takamatsuzuka and Kitora Tumuli.
- ⑤ We conduct systematic research into the collection, preservation, management and display of tangible cultural properties as well as into other related educational activities. By promoting the conservation and utilization of these properties, we help to enhance Japanese culture and ensure that these assets are handed down to future generations.

5 Promotion of International Cooperation Related to the Protection of Cultural Properties

International cooperation is essential for the protection of cultural properties, the shared heritage of mankind. To this end, we contribute to Japan's international efforts by reinforcing associations between national research institutions within Japan, conducting international research projects together with other nations, and running training programs and dispatching experts abroad as part of efforts to facilitate professional training and technology transfers related to the preservation and conservation of cultural properties. We undertake activities aimed at the safeguarding of endangered intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in the Asia-Pacific region, and endeavor to promote research. We also collect information relating to international trends in the safeguarding of ICH.



On-site training at archaeological survey of Hubuk site in Tajikistan

6 Collection of Reference Materials and Dissemination of Research Outcomes

In addition to the collection, management and preservation of materials related to cultural properties, we also work to provide wide access to information, research and studies. For this reason, we promote activities such as (1) the digitalization of material related to cultural properties, (2) the expansion of specialized archives, (3) the holding of public lectures and international symposia and (4) the improvement of each institute's website. We strive to deepen public understanding of research and studies through the improvement of displays at public facilities such as the Nara Palace Site Museum, the Fujiwara Palace Site Reference Room and the Asuka Historical Museum of the Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties.



Dr. Stanley ABE (professor, Duke University, United States of America) speaking at the 2013 lecture

7 Improving Cultural Property Protection by Assisting Local Public Organizations

We help to raise the knowledge and ability of individuals engaged in the protection of cultural properties throughout Japan by (1) providing professional and technical research-based assistance and advice to national and local governments and (2) releasing and utilizing information, knowledge, and technologies with regard to cultural properties. We also help to raise the ability of professionals who engage in the protection of cultural properties, and to educate students and younger staff through training programs for professional leaders or through collaboration with universities.



Lecture on a report-writing course

■ Collaboration with Universities

- Tokyo University of the Arts: Preventive Conservation Course (Studies on Conservation Environment, Studies on Conservation Materials)
- Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies, Kyoto University: Department of Cultural Coexistence (Cultural, Regional and Historic Studies on Environment: Studies of Cultural Heritage)
- Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences, Nara Women's University: School of Comparative Culture (Department of Lectures on Cultural History)
- Graduate School of Humanities, Kobe University (Joint Lectures on Cultural Resources)