



# Projects of the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage

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 its collection is systematically and historically balanced.

We also work closely with the Agency for Cultural Affairs to encourage 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 donations 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 recognize the need to protect cultural properties from natural disasters, and are working with the government to make further preparations.

#### ■ Acquisition

We continually strive to acquire cultural properties through purchases and donations with the aim of: (1) building 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 distinctive regular exhibitions.

#### Number of Items 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
131,191	135	1,002	119,871	89	646	8,130	29	200	1,911	13	114	1,279	4	42

Nara National Research Institute holds 1 National Treasure and 4 Important Cultural Properties. (Figures as of March 31, 2020)

Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties	
National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties
1	4

#### Number of Items 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
12,385	194	1,178	2,591	52	245	6,520	88	615	1,974	52	306	1,300	2	12

(Figures as of March 31, 2020)

#### ■ Conservation and Restoration

Tangible cultural properties preserved in museum collections need to be conserved approximately once every 100 years. The Institutes carry out two levels of conservation work: minimal treatments that allow for the safe display and storage of the objects: and full-scale treatments, carried out systematically in accordance with the conditions of the objects.

### (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 extending opening hours and creating multilingual and accessible environments, with extensive information for visitors to enhance the overall museum experience. We are also making improvements to museum management in response to visitor feedback.

#### ■ Exhibitions

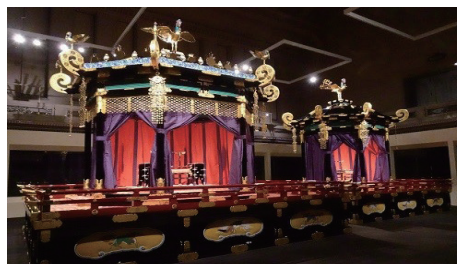
Each museum holds its own distinctive regular and special exhibitions to provide opportunities for visitors to engage with traditional art and archaeological objects, including National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties. We also collaborate with museums overseas to hold exhibitions that introduce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

## ■Number of Visitors (FY 2019)

Total	Tokyo National Museum	Kyoto National Museum	Nara National Museum	Kyushu National Museum
4,251,725	2,588,632	376,061	612,755	674,277



Special Exhibition, *Three Kingdoms: Unveiling the Story* (Kyushu National Museum)  
(October 1, 2019–January 5, 2020)



Special Viewing: *The Imperial Throne and the August Seat of the Empress* (Tokyo National Museum)  
(December 22, 2019–January 19, 2020)

### (3) Education and Outreach 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 support volunteer activities with the aim of further improving our educational programs. We also implement training programs for museum professionals, conservators, and others.

Finally, 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.



Gallery Talk at Feature Exhibition: *Seeing Red!*  
(Kyoto National Museum)



Collaboration with Nara City Board of Education: *Learning with family about Buddha statues in Nara*  
(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 symposia 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 from our surveys and research are publicized using a variety of methods, including publications and the internet, thereby contributing to the transmission of cultural properties to the next generation and to the promotion of Japanese culture.



Took part as an observer in the seventh session of the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties and Kyushu National Museum)

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

When conditions allow, we loan items from our collections to museums in Japan and abroad so that they may be viewed more widely by both domestic and international audiences. We are also actively engaged in exchanging information and providing guidance and advice to other museums.

International Symposium: "Creating Diverse Narratives: The Arts of Japan in European and North American Museums"  
(February 1, 2020; Tokyo National Museum)



## 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 through 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 the 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 properties.



A survey on the classification of folk entertainment at "Syodon Shibaya" held in Amami Oshima (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)



A building investigation on Ryotei Susaki in Takayama City (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

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

We undertake the following types of research and development 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.



X-ray fluorescence analysis of corroded metal samples (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

### (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.



Discussion at the International Researchers Forum (International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI))

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

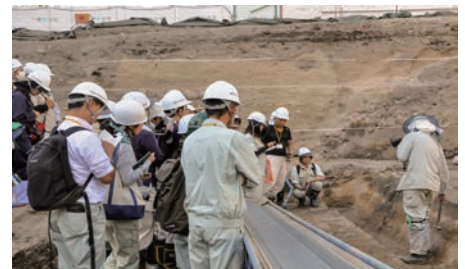
We are working to promote the digitalization of information relating to cultural properties and expand related specialist archives, as well as organizing public lectures and international symposia, and expanding the content included on the websites of the individual facilities that make up the NICH, 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.



53rd Public Lecture: "Pathway from Form, Pathway to Form" (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

#### (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 capacity building aimed at putting in place a nationwide system for coordination and collaboration so as to develop a network for safeguarding and rescuing cultural properties in the event of future large-scale disasters such as major earthquakes.



A field lecture in the basic training course on Sedimentary Geology (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

### 3 New Projects

We are undertaking the following new initiatives, with the aim of properly exercising our policy implementation function as Japan's national center for museums and cultural property research, and of ensuring that we implement policies effectively and efficiently.

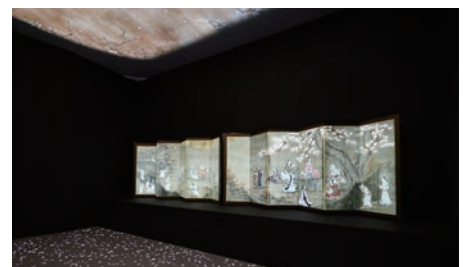
#### (1) National Center for the Promotion of Cultural Properties

In July 2018, The National Center for the Promotion of Cultural Properties (CPCP) was formally established in the headquarters of the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage, to serve as the national center for the display and utilization of Japan's cultural properties. While carefully maintaining the right balance between conservation and use of cultural properties, the CPCP is committed to providing opportunities for people at home and abroad to learn about Japan's priceless cultural heritage through strengthening support for museums, galleries, and other venues.

The CPCP's core activities are as follows.

- 1) Promotion of model projects and development of content which enable people to come in contact with cultural properties  
The CPCP collaborates with private and public organizations to create reproductions of cultural properties using advanced technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality and 8K resolution video. These reproductions provide the public with user-friendly formats for interacting with and learning about Japan's cultural properties.
- 2) Promotion of the lending of items in the collections of national museums and provision of relevant advice  
The CPCP encourages regional and local museums to exhibit the cultural properties in the collections of Japan's National Museums and provides consultations to assist them.

When conducting the project, the CPCP will bear the costs of transporting art works and advertising as well as being engaged in activities to widely convey the appeal and value of cultural properties.



Creation and utilization of a high-definition replica (an experience-based display combining images and the replicas of the *Merry-making under aronia blossoms* folding screens designated as a National Treasure)



Collection item loan promotion project by National Museums:  
*Majesty of Metalwork from the Meiji Period—Takaoka Masterpieces and Master Craftsmen in the Meiji Period* (Takaoka Art Museum, September 20-October 20, 2019)

3) Promotion of the creation of cultural property digital resources and distribution of information throughout Japan and the world  
 The CPCP aims to improve the user-friendliness of NICH's digital resources by consolidating those currently maintained separately by each national museum and research institute. These resources are being consolidated into the "e-Museum" website, a website that presents high-resolution images of approximately 1,000 National Treasures and other important cultural properties from the collections of the National Museums, and "ColBase," a website that allows users to search all of the items in the NICH-affiliated institutions' collections.



A seminar on the survey and management of a conservation environment

4) Consultation, advice, and support concerning the preservation of cultural properties  
 The CPCP provides research assistance, consultation services, and general inquiry assistance regarding conservation environments of museums. The CPCP also holds workshops and seminars about storage environments and personnel development to give other museums a reliable resource for conservation-related issues.

5) In addition, as part of our fund-raising activities, we also implement initiatives to raise funds from a wide range of sources to support projects relating to the conservation and utilization of cultural properties.

## (2) National Task Force for the Cultural Heritage Disaster Risk Mitigation Network (CH-DRM Net), Japan

The National Task Force for the Cultural Heritage Disaster Risk Mitigation Network (CH-DRM Net), Japan started in July 2014, based on the activities of the Committee for Salvaging Cultural Properties Affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred in March 2011. In preparation for disasters such as large-scale earthquakes that are expected to occur in the future, we aim to build a nationwide network for disaster risk mitigation of cultural properties. With the participation of 25 organizations, such as groups consisting widely of domestic museums, art galleries, libraries, and archives, networks for local historical materials, and various academic societies, we formed the Executive Committee of the Cultural Heritage Disaster Risk Mitigation Network, contributed to the construction of local collaboration in prefectures and municipalities, and strived to expand and strengthen the collaboration system. In February 2020, we compiled a set of "Activity guidelines" for the Executive Committee to share information in the event of a disaster and promptly form an effective support system.



A symposium poster for the National Task Force for the Cultural Heritage Disaster Risk Mitigation Network (CH-DRM Net), Japan

All cultural properties exist in their respective communities. The disaster risk mitigation of cultural properties is founded on people's understanding of the value of the cultural properties that exist in their local communities and the importance of protecting and passing them on. We believe it is an important role of this project to ensure that more people will understand the significance of them working together for the disaster risk mitigation of cultural properties.

Additionally, the NICH decided to establish Cultural Heritage Disaster Risk Management Center Japan for the implementation of this project, in October 2020.



Training on a quick fix for water-damaged materials

## (3) Japan Cultural Expo

Taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs is joining forces with related local government authorities, cultural institutions, and other groups to organize the Japan Cultural Expo, which will showcase Japanese aesthetics and values both domestically and internationally. As part of the Japan Cultural Expo, art exhibitions, performing arts shows, and cultural and artistic festivals that embody the Japanese ideal of beauty will be held throughout Japan, making this the largest project of its kind ever implemented.

The NICH will also be participating in the Japan Cultural Expo, organizing special exhibitions, thematic exhibitions and events to promote the diversity and broad appeal of Japanese culture, both within Japan and overseas. These activities will also contribute to handing down and further developing Japanese arts and culture, and further enhance international understanding of Japan.



Logo for the Japan Cultural Expo