

II Projects of the National Institutes for Cultural Heritage

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 by 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, each museum purchases cultural properties and accepts gifts and long-term loans from temples, shrines, and private collectors, etc. in order to further enhance their distinctive exhibitions and research activities.

Number of Items in the Museum Collections

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
150,277	135	1,012	121,021	89	650	9,011	29	200	1,953	13	114	18,292	4	48

(Figures as of March 31, 2024)

[Reference]

Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties	
National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties
1	5

Number of Items on Long-term Loan to the Museums

Total			Tokyo National Museum			Kyoto National Museum			Nara National Museum			Kyushu National Museum			The Museum of the Imperial Collections, Sannomaru Shozokan		
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	Total	National Treasures	Important Cultural Properties
12,428	197	1,201	2,675	52	260	6,541	90	617	1,937	54	311	1,275	1	13	6,171	8	3

(Figures as of March 31, 2024) *The figure for Sannomaru Shozokan denotes items on long-term loan from the Agency for Cultural Affairs.

■ 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 constantly strive to make our museums more visitor-friendly by setting flexible 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 2023)

Total	Tokyo National Museum	Kyoto National Museum	Nara National Museum	Kyushu National Museum	The Museum of the Imperial Collections, Sannomaru Shozokan
3,299,389	1,980,388	319,950	355,246	529,471	114,334

* The figure for The Museum of the Imperial Collections, Sannomaru Shozokan shows the number of visitors since the museum opened on November 3, 2023.



Feature Exhibition, Get in Touch with History Secrets of the Hands-on Experience (August 8-October 1, 2023) (Kyushu National Museum)



Special Exhibition: The Artistic Cosmos of Hon'ami Kōetsu (January 16-March 10, 2024) (Tokyo National Museum)



Special Exhibition Celebrating the 5th Year of His Majesty's Reign and the 30th Wedding Anniversary of Their Majesties Ushering in the Reiwa Era: 30 Years in Retrospect (November 3-December 24, 2023) (The Museum of the Imperial Collections, Sannomaru Shozokan)

(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, based on a consideration of 'new lifestyles.' Furthermore, we work with universities to provide professional training and we support volunteer activities with the aim of further improving our educational programs. We also implement training programs for museum professionals, conservators, and others.

Furthermore, we actively utilize the internet to disseminate information about cultural properties, collect and display materials, and publicize details about exhibitions and educational activities to a domestic and international audience.



Gallery guides and worksheets (available in multiple languages) (Kyoto National Museum)



A workshop on illustrated scrolls (Nara National Museum)

(4) Research on the Collection, Preservation, and Exhibition of Tangible Cultural Properties, 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.

Examining how haniwa figurines are assembled (Tokyo National Museum)



(5) Contribution to Museum-Related Activities in Japan and Overseas

We actively loan our collections out for exhibitions at other museums within Japan and overseas based on a comprehensive consideration of conservation conditions and environments. We also strive to exchange information with and provide specialist/technical guidance and advice to other museums and galleries within Japan and overseas.

IMP training (pest identification training)



(6) New Initiatives Concerning the Transmission of Cultural Heritage Through the Promotion of Cultural Properties

We endeavor to unlock the hidden charms and values of cultural properties so they can be utilized to provide rich experiences and learning opportunities. We will also strive to faithfully transmit this cultural heritage to future generations while finding new ways to utilize these treasures to promote regional revitalization and tourism.

Digital content with new socially inclusive services (multilingual subtitles, audio and sign language CG, etc.) is unveiled to the public



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

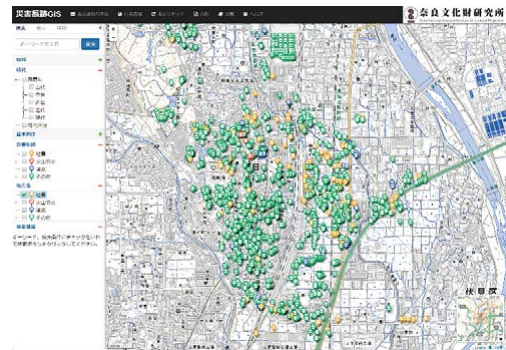
We undertake the following types of surveys and research to contribute to the formation of the framework of knowledge and techniques required to facilitate the transmission of priceless cultural properties to future generations.

(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 of 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.



Conducting an optical survey at Kuboso Memorial Museum of Arts, Izumi
(Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)



Conducting basic research on buried cultural properties across Japan
(Historical disaster site database display)
(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 to develop new cultural property research techniques that utilize the latest scientific and technological developments. We also 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.



An on-site survey of paintings using portable analysis equipment
(Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

(3) International Collaboration for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage

We promote the acquisition and analysis of information from abroad regarding cultural heritage, and also promote cooperative programs for its protection. Additionally, we implement human resource development and technology transfer programs for the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage. All of the aforementioned endeavors—which are pursued while utilizing the knowledge, technology, and experience that Japan has accumulated 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 and promote international collaboration for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage endangered by disasters and other threats. Through such activities for the protection of humanity's shared heritage, we contribute to cultural exchange and mutual understanding between countries.



A workshop in Cambodia on “Research on ICH Contributing to SDGs: Intangible Cultural Heritage for Sustainable Cities and Communities” (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.



The 18th Conference on the Study of Intangible Folk Cultural Properties (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

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

We make effective use of results obtained from past surveys and research to contribute to the enhancement of knowledge and techniques through the implementation of training tailored to the needs of local government authorities. We also cultivate the 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. Furthermore, we support the Agency for Cultural Affairs' efforts to maintain the Nara and Fujiwara Palace sites and exhibit tumuli mural paintings, and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport's efforts to restore the Nara Palace Site's Daiichiji Daigokuden Hall and other sites. We also help with the curation of Gallery 4 of the Heijokyu Izanai-kan (Guidance Center) and we cooperate with various volunteer activities across Japan.



Cultural property management training (Photographing cultural properties) (Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties)

(6) Cultural Heritage Disaster Risk Management Initiatives

The Center works to build a system for cultural heritage disaster prevention against recurring disasters such as large earthquakes and floods, and provides necessary support based on its expertise in the event of a disaster. We strive preparing guidelines, developing of technologies, public awareness and collecting and utilizing information for disaster risk management for cultural heritage.

To respond to the disaster caused by Noto Peninsula Earthquake which struck on January 1st 2024, we launched cultural heritage salvage project and cultural heritage doctor dispatch project. We engage in first aid and rehabilitation of damaged cultural heritage by the earthquake using our accumulated experience and research.



Salvaging cultural properties from storehouses damaged in the Noto Peninsula Earthquake (Cultural Heritage Disaster Risk Management Center)

3 Ensuring diverse opportunities for art appreciation and acquiring income from external sources

The NICH endeavors to make museums more attractive to visitors from Japan and overseas by disseminating information (object explanations, captions and audio guides, etc.) in English, Chinese and Korean and by offering explanations that are easy to understand, even for people with minimal knowledge of Japanese traditional culture and arts.

We strive to make museums more in tune with the 'new lifestyles' that emerged during the pandemic and we also develop digital content, run online educational programs, and implement public relations initiatives.

The NICH requires funding to improve the quality of our operations and ensure their stable continuity. We endeavor to obtain this funding from a variety of sources. We run membership programs, promote fundraising activities, make effective use of our unique venues and other property holdings, and work to obtain competitive funding, for example.



Cultural heritage conservation projects implemented using donations from companies and individuals (Tokyo National Museum, National Center for the Promotion of Cultural Properties)