

Message

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The National Institutes for Cultural Heritage (NICH) comprise four National Museums (Tokyo National Museum, Kyoto National Museum, Nara National Museum, and Kyushu National Museum) and two National Research Institutes for Cultural Properties (Tokyo National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, and Nara National Research Institute for Cultural Properties), as well as the International Research Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region (IRCI) in Sakai City, for a total of seven institutions. While each of these institutions has its own unique history and objectives, they work together as one to safeguard cultural heritage and foster its utilization, and play a key role in supporting the infrastructure for the administration of cultural heritage preservation in Japan.

The NICH's Fourth Medium-term Plan, which was launched in 2016, is now entering the third year of its five-year implementation period. In FY2018, it is our intention that the NICH will be working to create more opportunities for large numbers of people - including both Japanese citizens and overseas visitors - to learn about Japan's history and culture in depth through coming into contact with Japan's precious cultural heritage, in line with the Basic Plan on the Promotion of Culture and the Arts, which was approved by the Cabinet in March 2018. The collection, preservation, study, management, and display of cultural heritage has always been the NICH's core mission, and we will continue to further strengthen these functions, while also building on our existing display techniques by promoting the adoption of new display methods that make effective use of advanced, cutting-edge technologies, exploring the potential of highly-detailed replicas, and expanding the scope of cultural heritage digital archives, etc.

ICOM KYOTO 2019 (the 25th General Conference of the International Council of Museums), which the NICH will be hosting, and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, which will be a major focus of global attention, are fast approaching. The NICH will be working to ensure that ICOM KYOTO 2019 is a resounding success, while also making full use of this opportunity to spread awareness - both within Japan and overseas - of the richness of Japan's history and its multifaceted traditional culture, as well as to further invigorate the NICH's activities and foster a more mature understanding of the importance of cultural heritage preservation. To this end, we will be aiming to provide high-quality services, through the continued implementation of a multilingual environment, and through an approach to the management of the NICH museums that strives to make them fascinating and enjoyable places to visit.

Some of the most urgent tasks for the NICH include the examination of technical issues relating to cultural heritage disaster risk mitigation and disaster preparedness in the event of a large-scale natural disaster, the establishment of a nationwide system for rescuing cultural heritage from natural disasters, and the promotion of surveys and research relating to stabilization measures of rescued cultural heritage and restoration methods. To this end, we will be working to realize even closer coordination and collaboration with the relevant agencies, including the Agency for Cultural Affairs, and will continue to enhance the National Task Force of the Cultural Heritage Disaster Risk Mitigation Network.

Cultural properties are historical and cultural heritage that embody the foundations of our country. Besides working to ensure that these priceless cultural properties are properly preserved and utilized, so that they can be passed down to future generations, the NICH will also be working actively to spread awareness, both within Japan and overseas, of the historical, artistic, and cultural value that Japan's cultural heritage possesses, thereby helping to promote and strengthen understanding of Japanese culture.

We look forward to receiving your continued support and assistance in the future.