

About the “KAKEHASHI Project –The Bridge for Tomorrow- (Youth-Exchange Project with North America)”

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan has launched a new youth exchange program. The purpose of the U.S. portion of this program, which is called the “KAKEHASHI Project – The Bridge for Tomorrow, -” is to revitalize and boost Japan’s economy through bilateral youth exchange between the U.S. and Japan. The project has two primary objectives: 1) To promote interest in Japan, which will result in an increase in the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan, thus, contributing to Japan’s economic recovery; 2) To raise awareness of the Japan brand, including Japan’s strength and attractiveness, e.g., “Cool Japan” and Japanese-style values.

The government of Japan has provided funding to the Japan-U.S. Educational Commission as the partnering international organization. Entrusted from the Japan-U.S. Educational Commission, the Japan Foundation implements the programs of invitation and dispatch of 4,600 students between Japan and the U.S., beginning from Japanese fiscal year 2013, in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Center and The Laurasian Institution.

In the invitation program, 2,300 American students in total, ranging basically from junior high school to graduate school, are invited on a 10 day study tour to Japan. During their stay, they are scheduled to travel to Tokyo and local areas, and visit Japanese host schools. They will experience, first hand, Japanese culture, advanced technologies, the historical heritage and natural environment unique to Japan and exchanges with Japanese students. Upon their return to the U.S., participants are expected to answer follow up questionnaires.

In return, 2,300 Japanese students in total will head for different destinations across the U.S. to participate in homestay and exchange programs to introduce Japan’s strengths and attractiveness.

We sincerely hope that this project can contribute to deepening mutual understanding among U.S. and Japanese students, and to nurture future leaders who will take the initiative in advancing Japan-U.S. exchanges.

The Japan Foundation
Japan International Cooperation Center
The Laurasian Institution