

## Online Exchange Seminars for University Students in ASEAN Countries

J.CLAIR Singapore

J.CLAIR Singapore held two online seminars for university students during fiscal year 2021. Our staff gave presentations on the best practices of their respective local governments (where they have been dispatched from), and on themes related to Japanese culture and society. Both seminars also ended with a Q&A session with students and professors. These exchange seminars with university students aimed at giving the staff a chance to present in the English language and to deepen interaction with the local younger generation.

On 28 September 2021, J.CLAIR Singapore held an online seminar for students and professors at Universiti Utara Malaysia, which has the only public policy graduate school in Malaysia. This joint-seminar has been held a total of four times in the past, but due to COVID-19, it has not been held since 2018. However, with much appreciation to the coordination of the graduate school of government in the university, we were able to hold a seminar online for the first time. The seminar saw about 80 to 90 attendees of both students and professors.

Four J.CLAIR Singapore members gave presentations in English on the best practices of their respective local governments they were dispatched from, mainly focusing on the measures against COVID-19. They presented on "Measures for countering climate change" (Yamaguchi Prefecture), "Support for foreign residents during COVID-19" (Oyama City, Tochigi Prefecture), "Holding the Tanabata Festival during COVID-19" (Ichinomiya City, Aichi Prefecture), and "The Japanese Government's Initiatives against COVID-19". Participants and presenters also engaged in meaningful exchanges during the Q&A session, and despite certain difficult questions, we were able to respond to the best of our knowledge and experience.



On 9 February 2022, J.CLAIR Singapore held an online seminar for students at Universiti Brunei Darussalam. This seminar has been physically held twice in the past for prospective students who intend to do exchange in Japan, but was cancelled in 2020 due to the outbreak of COVID-19. This time we held it online for the first time, and about 40 students and professors attended.

In order to make this seminar more relevant for the students, we sought advice from the professors in advance regarding Japan-related themes that the students may be interested in. Based on their feedback, three staff members gave presentations in English on "University Education in Japan", "Muslim Community in Tokyo", and "Social Etiquette in Japan". After the presentation, many students asked questions, showing their strong interest in Japan. They were interested in Japan's border measures and isolation requirements, how university life has changed under COVID-19, budget-friendly domestic travel destinations, famous religious events and how to navigate life as a Muslim in the Japanese society.



After these seminars, both universities expressed interest in continuing to strengthen cooperation through such similar exchanges. Through these activities, J.CLAIR Singapore will continue to strive to build and strengthen networks with related organizations in ASEAN, India, and Sri Lanka, and will contribute to overseas activities of Japanese local governments.

