

Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar 2023

~ Shirakawa City's Efforts in the Creation and Promotion of Regional Appeal based on Existing Local Resources ~

This year's Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar was conducted from 12 to 18 November 2023. A total of 9 officials participated from 6 countries, namely Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Cambodia.

Held annually in Japan, this seminar functions as a platform for senior government officials from countries covered by J.CLAIR Singapore to gain insights on Japan's local government system and to discuss about common issues faced by local governments. The purpose is to deepen mutual understanding of each other's regions and to promote networking among the delegates and Japanese local officials.

Our office served as a liaison between the delegates, CLAIR HQ and the host city of Shirakawa in Fukushima Prefecture. In addition, J.CLAIR Singapore's Deputy Director Mr. Hiraku Miyata, who is coincidentally dispatched from Shirakawa City, also accompanied the participants throughout the seminar to provide invaluable support to the overall operations.

The seminar consisted of two parts. The first part was made up of a lecture about the Japanese local government system and site visits in Tokyo, while the second part took place in Shirakawa City in Fukushima Prefecture where the delegates were able to hold in-depth exchange with the local officials in the city.

Program

Date	Itinerary	Accommodation
11/12 (Sunday)	Participants arrive in Japan and orientation	Tokyo
11/13 (Monday)	Lecture on the Japanese Local Government System Site visits in Tokyo Welcome reception hosted by CLAIR	Tokyo
11/14 (Tuesday)	Site visits in Tokyo Travel from Tokyo to Shirakawa City Courtesy visit to Mayor of Shirakawa and lecture on Shirakawa's administrative policies and initiatives Welcome reception hosted by Shirakawa City	Shirakawa City
11/15 (Wednesday)	Site visits in Shirakawa City	Shirakawa City
11/16 (Thursday)	Site visits in Aizu-Wakamatsu City Farewell dinner reception	Shirakawa City
11/17 (Friday)	Site visits in Shirakawa City Travel from Shirakawa City to Tokyo	Tokyo
11/18 (Saturday)	Participants depart from Japan	

The "Local Exchange Program" held in Shirakawa City included site visits to traditional cultural industries, historically significant tourist attractions and thriving manufacturing facilities under the broad theme of "Shirakawa City's Efforts in the Creation and Promotion of Regional Appeal based on Existing Local Resources." There was lively exchange of opinion between the delegates and the hosts mainly from the perspectives of expanding sales channels, inbound tourism promotion and attracting more companies to the local area.

In addition, thanks to the close cooperation between Shirakawa City and Fukushima Prefectural Government, the delegation was also able to visit neighboring Aizu-Wakamatsu City which is working on the "Smart City Aizu-Wakamatsu" project that utilizes ICT (information and communication technology) and environmental technology in various fields, and the University of Aizu which specializes in ICT. The delegates were impressed by how each entity is trying to develop the region by making the most of their unique qualities and local resources. All of them affirmed that they would like to share their experiences in Japan with people at their workplaces after returning to their home countries.

J.CLAIR Singapore will continue to support the organization of this seminar in order to make it a fruitful experience for both the host city and the delegates from each country.



Tokyo Seminar (lecture on Japanese local government system)



Courtesy visit to Mayor of Shirakawa City



Traditional Daruma painting experience



Briefing on "Smart City Aizu-Wakamatsu" project