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会見

INTERVIEW

JETRO Geneva welcomes a new director

Interview with Ms Kaoru Fukaya who joined our office on July 20th

Ms Kaoru Fukaya joined JETRO Geneva as Director on July 20th, 2022. We asked her to introduce herself and explain her role in our office. It is also a good opportunity to explain what JETRO's priorities are in Switzerland and how they can vary from one office to another.

Could you introduce your professional background?

I joined JETRO after graduating. I have worked in both the research department and the Invest Japan department.

In the research department, I was a country desk officer for UK, Spain, and Portugal. I supported overseas offices to publish articles about the markets they covered.

I sometimes travelled to Europe as well as regional parts of Japan to have face-to-face interviews to write articles on a specific theme.

I also had the opportunity to work on two of the largest economic agreements in history. First the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement), as a member of the special cross-department unit. We wrote a guidebook and held seminars in every Japanese prefecture to



Ms Fukaya during an event in Poland

inform companies on how to benefit from it.

Later, I wrote an article about preferential tariffs on the EU Japan Economic Partnership Agreement which entered into force in 2019.

I worked for the Invest Japan division for three years, mostly covering Europe. An interesting aspect is that we follow companies over the years. Sharing their struggles and successes helps us to be more effective.

Is this your first assignment overseas?

I joined JETRO Warsaw as a one-year trainee from July 2018 to 2019. The Warsaw office has an extensive area to cover as it oversees Poland, the Baltic countries and Ukraine.

It was a very good experience. Poland is a rapidly growing economy. Many Japanese companies are interested to enter this market, not only as a place of manufacturing, but also as a place for a market with 38 million inhabitants.

As said before, I had the opportunity to travel a few times a year. There are two experiences I would like to share. The first was a visit to New Zealand regarding the TPP. We really could have fruitful discussions at the government/industry group level but also on practical aspects with the local custom agency.

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The second experience was in Portugal. In 2018, when it is still the beginning of JETRO started to focus on innovation, I visited Portugal to write an article on the startup ecosystem. It was useful as we had no such article in Japanese. This helped Japanese companies to see the potential of Portugal.

What are your main tasks as Director at JETRO Geneva?

Switzerland is a well-developed market. Many Japanese companies entered it a long time ago. Hence, our mission here is different from what I experienced in Poland. We focus on three pillars: Invest Japan, Export Promotion, and Research.

With Invest Japan, we support Swiss companies that want to set up an entity in Japan or Swiss companies willing to collaborate with

Japanese companies for open innovation.

With Export Promotion, we want to increase the awareness regarding Japanese products. We have many programs regarding food and beverage. For instance, we do business matching events in which we invite potential buyers to Japan (or online) to meet local producers.

We also occasionally hold local promotional events. Plus, we receive enquiries from Japanese companies on the Swiss market and local regulations.

With our Research activity, we publish articles and reports on the Swiss market that are relevant to Japanese companies.

As Director, I cover the three pillars in collaboration with the local staffs. I also work with the Director General on management of the office.

What are JETRO's priorities in Europe and Switzerland?

The priorities are very similar between our office in Switzerland and the other European offices with some local differences depending on each country specificities. In most cases, we focus on those three pillars. An important part of our activities is related to innovation. In this regard, Switzerland has great potential. The country often ranks at the top of innovation-related rankings. I would like to create a better connection with the local startups' ecosystem.

What are your hobbies?

I like climbing and hiking. During the pandemic, I often went to the Japanese Alps. Switzerland is a wonderful place for mountain hiking. I want to take advantage of being here as much as possible.

I also like to travel. In my previous experiences, I had the opportunity to visit 24 EU countries. The remaining three are Luxembourg, Cyprus, and Malta. I would like to visit them during my stay here.

Indonesia ratifies the RCEP

動向

TREND

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is the largest trade agreement in the world signed by 15 countries, Japan, Australia, China, South Korea, New Zealand and the 10 ASEAN countries.

It entered into force on January 1,

2022 between most countries but Indonesia and Myanmar. Indonesia has now ratified the agreement which will expand to Indonesia from this January.

Trade between those countries will be easier thanks to tariff concessions and common rules.

You can read more on the RCEP in our previous issues [138](#) and [151](#)

Source: [Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry](#)

Hundreds of people have enjoyed Japanese food in Bern

JETRO and the Embassy of Japan held a food tasting event in Bern during the Fernweh festival.

Over two days (Oct. 29 and 30), hundreds of people were able to try many Japanese specialties at the embassy.

The first day was dedicated to professionals, while the second day was open to the public.

Wagyu was a big hit as usual.



Wagyu is always popular

Many people called it the best meat they ever tried.

People also appreciated the miso, which was offered in various forms. One of them involved using a miso-based deep sauce which has become popular in Japan over recent years.

Warabimochi was another success. Less known than mochi, with which it shares some similarities, the warabimochi is plant-based instead of rice-based.

It was a positive surprise for many happy tasters.

Different Japanese beverages were also on offer, such as a refreshing and light yuzu-based liqueur. People could also try amasake, a fermented rice sweet beverage that is said to be good for one's health.

Of course, different sake were also served. Hot sake was appreciated as an original alternative to hot wine.



A selection of Japanese sweets

活動

ACTIVITY

JETRO's search engine for companies interested in foreign professionals

Last month, we introduced JETRO's "Open for Professionals" page, a page dedicated to gathering all information for foreign professionals willing to work in Japan.

This month, we present a specific tool that is useful for those interested in pursuing a career in Japan (or having a working experience in Japan). JETRO now provides a search engine that lists companies

in Japan that are looking for foreign professionals or interns.

It is possible to filter by field of expertise, language requirement, expected role, prefectures, country of interest, and sectors.

Currently, over 300 companies are listed, covering multiples industries and Japanese prefectures.

For every company, a brief presentation, as well as additional details

on their needs and how to contact them, are available.

For many companies, an important aspect is to build bridges between Japan and overseas markets. Foreign professionals can help with this while learning a lot about the Japanese market.

JETRO [Open for Professionals list](#)

活動

ACTIVITY

革新

INNOVATION

SCAP acceleration program, meet 126 Japanese brilliant startups

With the support of the Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), JETRO started a Startup City Acceleration Program (SCAP) in sequential order in mid-September to help domestic startups expand their business overseas. Initially targeting startups active in eight startup ecosystem hub cities across the country, the program has gradually expanded its coverage becoming nationwide and selected 126 startups which will participate in all five courses of the program.

In this program, world-class accelerators affiliated with JETRO will provide specialized courses by leveraging their strengths and individual support to Japanese startups

wanting to expand business overseas while closely working with them. The program will end in March 2023 and participation is free of charge.

This fiscal year, the third for the program, a portion will be conducted in a hybrid format combining in-person and online sessions. It will include face-to-face mentoring, tours of local ecosystems and interviews with potential business partners at the US bases of accelerators, leading to more realistic networking and contact with international investors and business partners.

An opportunity to learn about some of the most promising Japanese startups

The 126 startups have gone through a strict selection process. They are among the most innovative Japanese startups and the most likely to succeed overseas. They cover many areas - from robotics to drones, AI, deep tech, IoT and MedTech.

Source: [JETRO](#)



JETRO SCAP has many partners abroad

Agenda

活動

AGENDA

✓ Stay tuned!

JETRO is a government-related organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO's core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping small to medium size Japanese firms maximize their global export potential.

The JETRO Switzerland Newsletter can also be viewed and/or downloaded online: <http://www.jetro.go.jp/switzerland/newsletter>

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