

[Featured Article]

Development to International Exchange 2.0

Yamanashi enters a new stage

Yamanashi Prefecture aims for a form of open international exchange that is suitable for the coming era. From Yamanashi to the world, a new model of international exchange in which each and every citizen of the prefecture is a leader in all fields of culture, economy, and education, "International Exchange 2.0" is beginning to move.

The relationship between sister cities, which had been limited to government-led exchanges, is now evolving to a new stage where each and every citizen of the prefecture plays a leading role.

Yamanashi Prefecture has long aimed to realize a society where everyone can freely choose and take on challenges. International exchange is one of the important pillars of international exchange, which allows people with different cultures and values to come into contact and learn, and as of 2025, Yamanashi Prefecture has established sister relations with six cities around the world.

As an initiative to look further to the future, the prefecture is reviewing the existing sister city relationship and upgrading it to a new "International Exchange 2.0" that adds six "strategic mutually beneficial cities".

Q. Why is international exchange important?

A. To solve the problems surrounding Yamanashi Prefecture

Not only in Yamanashi Prefecture, but also in Japan, the domestic market is shrinking and labor shortages are currently being seen as problems due to the declining birthrate and aging population. By promoting international exchange, we will be able to expand into the growing huge overseas market and secure IT and nursing care personnel who are in short supply in the prefecture, which will be a great help in solving these issues.

Q. The reason why other countries want to join hands with Yamanashi Prefecture

A. Japan and Yamanashi Prefecture is because they need the know-how and products of

Japan is a country that has overcome disasters. Therefore, Yamanashi has accumulated a large number of technologies related to infrastructure and disaster prevention. In addition, many countries are seeking "green hydrogen" made using renewable energy, which Yamanashi Prefecture is proud of, and providing information possessed by the prefecture may be able to solve the problems of other countries.

Q. How is "International Exchange 2.0" different from the past?

A. The baton of international exchange is handed over from the government to the residents of the prefecture

Exchanges between sister cities, in which specific cities are connected for the purpose of cultural exchange, friendship, and goodwill, have been mainly carried out between governments. In the future, based on the relationship of trust we have cultivated so far, we will develop exchanges that bring practical benefits to the private sector in fields such as culture, economy, and education.

By utilizing Yamanashi Prefecture's resources to contribute to solving international issues, we aim to improve the value of Yamanashi Prefecture in the world.

Nurturing future leaders through international exchange × art

"The ability to control oneself", "the ability to understand others", and "the ability to cooperate with others". We will develop the next generation of leaders with three "human

powers". The prefecture appointed a total of eight high school students, vocational school students, and university students as ambassadors and dispatched them to California. "Student Art Exchange California Dispatch Project" begins.

The ambassador is scheduled to travel to the United States in November 2025. During the four-day trip, students will visit local galleries and interact with students.

The main event is to interact with local artists through the art exhibited in the Cool Japan Center. After creating concepts based on themes such as "climate change and sustainability," "world peace and cooperation," and "racial and gender equality," we will create works and cultivate the three skills necessary for the next generation of leaders through various local exchanges.

We have signed an agreement with the city of Laguna Beach, California, in 2024 to promote cultural exchange. In October, the "Fuji California Leaders Summit" is scheduled to be held, inviting local government officials from California. The summit will utilize local ingredients to create a new food culture that fuses the cuisines of both sides, fostering international connections through food.



Bringing the vitality of India's rapidly growing country to Yamanashi in collaboration with UP State, which has a population of 300 times!

India, the world's most populous and rapidly growing country. Yamanashi Prefecture and

Yamanashi Prefecture, which is a country where companies from all over the world are looking to the future, will deepen their cooperation.

Characteristics of India

- The world's largest population
- Rapid GDP growth
- The age of the whole country is young
- Abundant tourism resources

The future of Yamanashi is connected to the young superpower

Currently, India has the largest population in the world and is projected to be the third largest in the world in terms of GDP in the near future. The median age is 28 years old, which is a high proportion of the working-age population, and the middle-income group is expected to expand rapidly, making it a truly "young superpower".

Exchanges between Yamanashi Prefecture and India began in earnest in December 2024 with the Basic Agreement signed between Yamanashi Prefecture and Uttar Pradesh (UP). The population of UP Province reaches about 2.4 billion people, which is about 300 times that of Yamanashi Prefecture. It is rich in agricultural and tourism resources, and is a culturally deep area dotted with the World Heritage Site "Taj Mahal" and Buddhist and Hindu sacred sites. World Heritage Site.... Yes, there is also "Mt. Fuji" in Yamanashi Prefecture. Therefore, the prefecture is also aiming to attract new tourists by mutually encouraging each other with UP State. We are also working to create a flow of people visiting India from within the prefecture through the development of tourism plans for religious sacred sites and the implementation of cultural exchange projects, and we are trying to promote both inbound and outbound tourism.

While the proportion of the working-age population is high, India currently lacks sufficient employment opportunities. Therefore, Yamanashi Prefecture would like to accept technical intern trainees and highly skilled human resources, which will also lead to solving the shortage of workers in the region.

In addition, we support the promotion of inter-university exchange programs and the attraction of Indian films famous as "Bollywood" to the prefecture.

There is a reason why we are actively solving not only the problems of Yamanashi Prefecture but also the problems that India is facing. By building a cooperative relationship, Yamanashi Prefecture can be trusted in the future. This is because it aims to function as a "window".

The key to the continuous engagement between this energetic and huge country and Yamanashi Prefecture is the "Indian Version of the Gateway Initiative".

Yamanashi Prefecture becomes a key player in "face-to-face exchange"

This initiative is not a one-on-one relationship between Yamanashi Prefecture and India, but a "face-to-face exchange" involving other prefectures. Specifically, the vision is for Yamanashi Prefecture to become a "door = gateway" connecting India and Japan, and to form a wider and more flexible international network in cooperation with local governments across Japan, including other prefectures and the Tokyo metropolitan area. For example, when other municipalities inquire about whether there are organizations or companies that want to expand into UP Province or are interested in human resources in UP State, Yamanashi Prefecture will act as a bridge and promote diverse connections with UP State. The same is true when there is a request from the UP state.

In order to promote this initiative, Yamanashi Prefecture will further strengthen cooperation between local governments in the future. UP Prime Minister Yogi Adityanath is scheduled to visit Yamanashi Prefecture later this year. It is expected that this visit will further deepen human and economic ties and advance relations with India to a new stage.

Recently, private-sector exchanges have become more active. In August 2025, the Yamanashi Prefecture-India Friendship and Exchange Association was established mainly by the managers of companies in the prefecture, and Indian Ambassador to Japan Sibi George also expressed his expectations for expanding into India and exchanging human resources.

"Yamanashi's green hydrogen is a big step" Indian Ambassador to Japan Sibi George is also willing to strengthen Japan-India cooperation

In August 2025, at the "India Economic Seminar" held in Yamanashi Prefecture, Indian Ambassador to Japan Sibi George delivered a keynote speech. After the lecture, the ambassador was interviewed by the Fureai editorial department.

Q. In your keynote speech, the Ambassador announced that Japan and India are working together to promote the use of green hydrogen, and that they are promoting the establishment of a "Center of Excellence (an organization that gathers excellent human resources and aims to create innovation = CoE)" in UP. What kind of organization will it be?

A. The implementation is yet to come, but if it is realized, it will be the first case in which Japan and India have jointly established a CoE.

Q. Yamanashi has excellent agricultural products and technologies to produce wine. In order to promote future human resource exchanges, what kind of technologies are the ambassadors interested in Yamanashi?

A. It is still a hydrogen-related technology. Addressing climate change is an urgent issue. I think green hydrogen will be a very big step as a means to do so.

Q. Please give a message to the people of Yamanashi Prefecture.

A. Actually, after taking office as the Indian Ambassador to Japan, I felt a connection with Yamanashi Prefecture for the first time I visited. Yamanashi Prefecture is full of new ideas and potential. Let's further deepen exchanges in the future.



Bonds with Vietnam are strengthened through fruits and people-to-people exchanges

The relationship between Yamanashi Prefecture and Vietnam is expanding significantly. Bonds through agricultural products, international exchange among high school students, and support for foreign workers and their families. What can be seen beyond fruitful exchanges is a relationship that builds the future together.

Characteristics of Vietnam

- Stable economic growth
- Abundant young workers
- More than 50 years of diplomatic relations with Japan
- Rich food culture

Friendship between fruit and high school students

Holding a bunch of Shine Muscat in their hands and relaxing their cheeks at its sweetness, it was a delegation from Quang Tri Province (formerly Quang Binh Province) who visited Yamanashi Prefecture from as far away as Vietnam.

In 2023, Yamanashi Prefecture signed a sister province of friendship with Quang Tri province located in central Vietnam. In the following 24 years, a memorandum of international exchange was signed with Lao Cai province (formerly Yen Bai province) in the north, and a new relationship is currently being built with Tay Ninh province (formerly Long An province) in the south. If we connect with the North, Central, and South regions, we can expect further exchanges with Vietnam in the future.

Supporting these diplomatic movements are the two axes that are unique to Yamanashi: "agricultural products" and "people."

In February 2024, 20 high school students in Yamanashi province visited Quang Tri province to interact with students from Vo Nguyen Giap High School in the area. They introduced each other's cultures through English, and one of the participants said, "We are still in touch through social media."

This visit was made possible in the wake of an agreement reached during Governor Kotaro Nagasaki's visit to Vietnam in May 2023. At this time, the local people discussed cooperation in the fields of agriculture, human resource exchange, and energy.

In September of the same year, a delegation from Quang Tri Province visited a grape farm in Kosu City and the Next Generation Energy System Research and Development Village (commonly known as Nestrad), a hydrogen energy research facility in Komekurayama, Kofu City. Quang Chi Province is focusing on wind power generation in the field of renewable energy development to achieve carbon neutrality, so Yamanashi Prefecture has shown a strong interest in Yamanashi Prefecture's power-to-gas (P2G) system to utilize surplus electricity.

"A new system that also supports families."

What takes exchange one step further is the connection between working people. Currently, there are more than 4,000 Vietnamese living in Yamanashi Prefecture, accounting for about 30% of foreign workers in Yamanashi Prefecture.

Many companies that employ Vietnamese staff in the prefecture say that they are enthusiastic and diligent in studying Japanese and that they care about their families. A new system to support their employment, the "Medical Accident Insurance System for Families of Foreign Workers," began in June 2024.

This system is a private insurance service (provided by Tokyo Marine Vietnam) for Vietnamese people working in the prefecture to support the medical care of their family members who remain in their home countries. Specifically, if a company subsidizes more than three-quarters of the insurance premiums paid by Vietnamese employees (about 26,000 yen per person per year for family members aged 5~59), the prefecture will subsidize the amount equivalent to one-half of that amount as support to the employing company. "Thanks to the system, I can protect my family even if I am apart," Vietnamese people working in the prefecture have expressed their joy.

In January 2024, the "Yamanashi Prefecture Vietnam Friendship and Exchange Association" was launched. Approximately 50 companies and organizations participate in the association, and the network of private companies and organizations is also expanding.

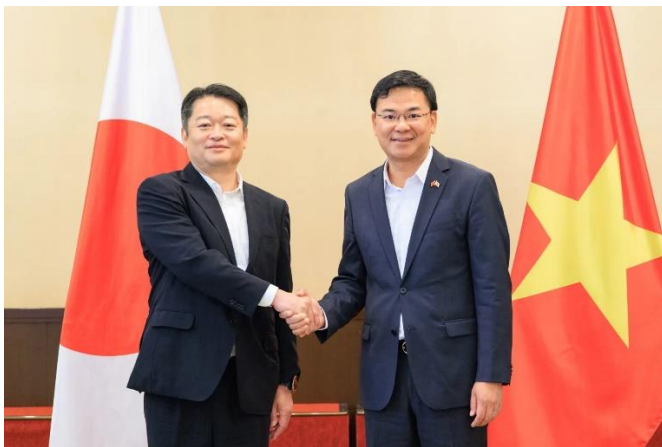
Yamanashi has been chosen as the "second hometown", and as a result, it will lead to the

revitalization of the local economy and the realization of a multicultural society."Kai no kuni" is here.

Message from Vietnamese Ambassador to Japan Pham Quang Hieu

I hope that the relationship between Vietnam and Yamanashi Prefecture will move to the stage of "two-way", "multi-layered" and "sustainable" cooperation. "Two-way" refers to learning, economic exchange, and cultural exchange through people-to-business exchanges, "multi-layered" refers to a wide range of exchanges from the government to residents, and "sustainable" refers to long-term development based on trust and profit sharing.

Currently, Yamanashi Prefecture has about 4600 Vietnamese people, which is the largest foreign community in the prefecture and a living bridge of friendship between the two countries. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the government and people of Yamanashi Prefecture for their constant interest and support for the Vietnamese community.



Disseminating from Yamanashi Prefecture to the world for the realization of a hydrogen society

Climate change, energy crisis, air pollution. Our lives are facing various challenges today. Among them, hydrogen is attracting attention as a trump card for a decarbonized society. Yamanashi Prefecture is one of Japan's leading hydrogen advanced regions and is also looking to the world.

The "Yamanashi model" that the world is paying attention to

Yamanashi Prefecture began developing a power-to-gas (P2G) system to produce hydrogen using renewable energy in 2018. In June 21, we started full-scale supply of green hydrogen*1 produced by this system for the first time in Japan. Yamanashi hydrogen is used in various places inside and outside the prefecture.

Yamanashi Prefecture's keen attention on green hydrogen is also being directed from overseas. India, which began exchanges in 2024, is highly interested in Yamanashi Prefecture's P2G system due to the growing air pollution problem. In Vietnam, engineers from Yamanashi Prefecture visited Quang Tri province to exchange opinions. In addition, we continue to actively engage in exchanges with the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais and other states to promote cooperation on green hydrogen.

In addition, in California, USA, we have reached an agreement on a cooperative relationship with Renewables 100*2, an organization working on the production and utilization of clean hydrogen, and SGH2*3, the company with the world's largest green hydrogen production facility, and the development of the Yamanashi model is expected around the world.



From the foot of Mt. Fuji

The Future Begins.

In 2022, Yamanashi Prefecture launched the Fuji Five Lakes Natural Metropolitan Area Forum, a collaborative organization that develops the Fuji Five Lakes region, which spreads out at the foot of Mt. Fuji, into a natural metropolitan area required in the new era. The

forum is developing international projects with overseas municipalities and companies under three axes: "Establishing a sustainable economy through green hydrogen," "Establishing advanced government through collaboration with social entrepreneurs," and "Realizing a vibrant society through the younger generation and art."

Yamanashi Prefecture defines this framework as a "forum for social experiments" that creates new value beyond simple regional revitalization, and is engaged in various initiatives. "Student Art Exchange California Dispatch Program" (page 3) is an example.

In March 2026, we plan to hold the Fuji Hydrogen Summit 2026 (International Hydrogen Summit) to further accelerate the realization of a green hydrogen society.

In hosting the International Hydrogen Summit, Yamanashi Prefecture has set the following three goals.

- ❶ Achieving carbon neutrality by promoting the use of green hydrogen energy
- ❷ Yamanashi Prefecture, an advanced green hydrogen region, will lead the hydrogen revolution by setting up a forum for international discussions on the social implementation of hydrogen
- ❸ Based on specific and future-oriented themes, we will promote exchanges with more diverse countries than ever before

On the day of the event, stakeholders responsible for the global hydrogen strategy will gather together to share the latest technologies and knowledge, and preparations are underway for the issuance of a "Joint Declaration" in which countries will work together to realize a hydrogen society. Some people from Brazil have said, "I would like you to share examples of the use of green hydrogen in Yamanashi Prefecture."

The prefecture has begun a new challenge of "International Exchange 2.0", in which each and every citizen of the prefecture plays a leading role. Please look forward to the future of Yamanashi Prefecture as a global player.

*1: Hydrogen produced using renewable energy without emitting any CO₂ during the manufacturing process. It is said to be the ultimate clean energy.

*2: Renewables 100 is the core organization of the ARCHES (Renewable and Clean Hydrogen Energy Systems Coalition), a public-private joint organization that promotes the spread of hydrogen energy in the United States. Established in 2007.

*3: SGH2 Produces 3,800 tons of green hydrogen per year in collaboration with the city of Lancaster, California.

Fuji Hydrogen Summit 2026

Leading the international community in the field of green hydrogen by widely disseminating Yamanashi Prefecture's green hydrogen strategy, diverse public-private projects, and global reach

1 Yamanashi Model P2G System

- Cutting-edge decarbonization technology to produce, store, and utilize green hydrogen with local renewable energy power
- Manufactured and supplied green hydrogen for more than 4 years since 2021

2 Social implementation of green hydrogen is progressing

- The world's top hydrogen supply chain was born around Suntory's Hakushu Plant

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[Feature 2]

Yamanashi's hydrogen-related technology will be used in Japan

Yamanashi Prefecture will hold the International Hydrogen Summit in March next year. In Japan, hydrogen-related technologies developed by the prefecture are being used one after another. As a frontrunner in carbon neutrality, we continue to move forward.

One of the largest green hydrogen production bases in Japan

Suntory Natural Water Southern Alps Hakushu Factory in Hokuto City. In a corner of the vast site of approximately 820,000 square meters, a groundbreaking facility is about to be born*.

The "Yamanashi Model P2G System" developed by the prefecture in collaboration with a private company is a device that produces hydrogen using electricity derived from renewable energy. This system, which is installed adjacent to the Suntory plant, supplies hydrogen to Suntory. If it is put into operation, it will be one of the largest green hydrogen production bases in Japan.

The hydrogen produced by the P2G system is sent into the plant by piping to become boiler fuel. The high-temperature steam heated by the boiler is used as a heat source for the sterilization process of Suntory natural water.

Hydrogen production still has cost issues. Nevertheless, Suntory decided to introduce green hydrogen because of its environmental value. The purpose of Suntory's corporate activities is to "create a rich lifestyle culture that resonates with people and nature, and aims to 'shine human life.'" For Suntory, which has been engaged in various environmental conservation activities, it is of great significance to use green hydrogen at its factories, which leads to CO₂ reduction.

*Subsidy project of the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO)



Hydrogen is "cargoped" and supplied to various places

Suntory plans to supply the green hydrogen produced not only in the factory, but also inside and outside the prefecture.

Specifically, in collaboration with gas trading company Tomoe Shokai Co., Ltd. (Ota-ku, Tokyo), we are building a green hydrogen model for local production and local consumption in the prefecture and planning to ship it to neighboring Tokyo.

In the course of the experiment, the goal is to "burden" hydrogen.

Typically, hydrogen is transported in specialized trailers. Although it is suitable for transporting a certain amount to a fixed location, there was a problem that it was difficult to deliver it immediately when needed due to traffic regulations.

Therefore, in anticipation of the expansion of hydrogen demand, Suntory and Tomoe Shokai are developing a new high-pressure hydrogen gas transportation equipment. Several cylindrical gas containers about 3 meters long are fixed together in a collection container called a "cardle". The plan is to increase the efficiency of unloading operations and send hydrogen from Hakushu to various places as "cargo".

We also use "cards" when shipping green hydrogen from Mt. Komekura in Kofu City, but the ones under development can be transported at higher pressures, so a large amount of hydrogen can be supplied in one transport. "Cardle" seems to be looking for a design that is familiar to many people. The day will not be far off when we will see hydrogen being transported in a stylish design container.



Utilizing hydrogen from Yamanashi Prefecture for coffee production!

Coffee roasting with green hydrogen

UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd. (Kobe City, Hyogo Prefecture) has introduced a large-scale roasting machine using hydrogen as a heat source at the UCC Fuji Factory (Fuji City, Shizuoka Prefecture), a major plant for regular coffee production. The green hydrogen used is produced using a P2G system at the Komekurayama Electric Power Storage Technology Research Site in the prefecture. It is said that this is one of the UCC's guidelines for "achieving carbon neutrality by 2040".

While natural gas is generally used as the heat source for the coffee roasting process, UCC has been developing and implementing roasting machines and hydrogen burners that use hydrogen as a heat source that does not emit carbon dioxide during combustion. Hydrogen expands the temperature range and has its own unique characteristics in taste. UCC is also studying taste differences with conventional heat sources.



What should be a "hydrogen society"? To make international rules

The main aim of the International Hydrogen Summit to be held by the prefecture next year is to make international rules around hydrogen. The prefecture will promote hydrogen-related measures based on "global standards". We have set such goals and have begun formulating the "Hydrogen Society Realization Strategy."

When formulating a strategy, it is important to conduct basic research. We will explore what kind of interest companies in the prefecture are showing in hydrogen-related fields and what are the prospects for entering the market. The Next-Generation Energy System Research and Development Village (commonly known as NESRAD) located in Komekurayama, Kofu City, is home to hydrogen and fuel cell-related companies, and we will accumulate knowledge to expand this base through research and analysis.

In addition, we will examine the challenges and possibilities for deploying P2G systems both domestically and internationally. We will collect examples of advanced hydrogen use cases and determine whether there is room for P2G deployment. We plan to complete the survey within this fiscal year, listen to the opinions of experts, and finally compile a "strategy".

This is how it is made! Yamanashi Hydrogen Society Realization Strategy

1. First of all, the situation survey

We plan to conduct questionnaires and hearings on the status of businesses in the hydrogen and fuel cell-related fields of companies in the prefecture (sales, number of employees, etc.), and plans to introduce fuel cells, hydrogen boilers, FCVs, etc.

2. What is the market outlook for hydrogen and fuel cell-related industries?

We examine and analyze the latest market trends and future prospects by products and services related to hydrogen and fuel cells. The prefecture is also actively working on the overseas expansion of the "Yamanashi Model P2G", so overseas markets are also subject to investigation.

3. Draft strategy and roadmap

Draft a strategy based on research analysis. We will create a roadmap until 2050 that concretely represents the future hydrogen society and looks at various ways of utilizing it in the lives of prefectural residents.

Examples of products and services

- Mobility (passenger cars, trucks, forklifts, etc.), stationary fuel cells, hydrogen boilers, hydrogen burners, water electrolyzers, etc.
- Manufacturing equipment, analyzers, inspection equipment, etc. related to mass production of products
- Civil engineering, construction, plumbing work, maintenance, etc. related to hydrogen infrastructure

"Hydrogen Society" Timeline

2018.3 Formulation of the "Roadmap for Realizing a Hydrogen Energy Society"

2020.10 The government declares carbon neutrality by 2050

2023.3 Revision of the "Yamanashi Prefecture Global Warming Countermeasures Action Plan"

2023.5 GX Promotion Act enacted

2024.5 Hydrogen Society Promotion Act enacted

2025 Yamanashi Prefecture Begins Formulation of the "Yamanashi Hydrogen Society Realization Strategy"

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"No one is left behind" support measures are being developed!

A space where you can spend your time with peace of mind

Despite the fact that the number of children continues to decrease, the number of truant students continues to increase. The prefecture aims to "leave no one behind" and guarantees learning to all children. To this end, we are developing various support measures.

Key Support Programs Recently Introduced

Reducing the financial burden through the free school use subsidy project

In Reiwa 5, the number of truant students in Yamanashi Prefecture reached 2,327, including 788 elementary schools, 1,401 junior high schools, and 138 high schools. The causes of school truancy are varied, but we cannot shake the ability to provide learning opportunities for students.

From this fiscal year, we started a subsidy project for the use of free schools for the first time in the prefecture. This system is subsidized by the prefecture and municipalities for free school usage fees for families in need (households receiving school attendance assistance and livelihood assistance).

The prefectural subsidy limit is 15,000 yen per person per month, and the financial burden on parents can be greatly reduced because the subsidy from the municipality is added.

This project also has the aspect of preventing parents from being forced to quit their jobs or change jobs due to school truancy as much as possible. In addition, children should not be left at home without being connected to any institution, and maintain a connection with some kind of learning place during the compulsory education stage.

Significantly increase the number of school social workers

School Social Workers (SSWs) play an important role in connecting homes with medical and welfare institutions. There are currently 15 SSWs in the prefecture, but the prefecture will significantly increase the number of employees. What is the purpose of the placement?

The background of students' problematic behaviors such as bullying and violent behavior and school truancy is intricately intertwined with the family environment such as child abuse and poverty. The number of cases that are difficult to solve with these schools alone is only increasing. If the burden on schools is lightened by the increase in SSW, teachers can focus on detailed instruction.

Early Detection and Response Initiatives

Each school is working to ensure that children are educated so that they can send SOS, and that teachers and staff can recognize the SOS and respond politely.

Many schools in the prefecture have introduced mental health observation apps that utilize one device per person. This is a system that allows you to express things such as "how do you feel today" or "I want to talk to your teacher" at the touch of a button in the morning, and we respond carefully so that you don't miss anything.

Strengthening support systems through public-private partnerships

The prefecture holds a collaboration meeting between government officials and free school officials three times a year. From this year, the previously held separate meetings will be integrated and the system will be changed to exchange information in the same place. We discuss the state of the children and how to cooperate with the school, and seek more effective support.

Creating New Spaces for Learning

Learning support using ICT is also being considered.

The prefecture will also conduct a survey project to pilot problem-solving learning using ICT (information and communication technology) at free schools and other institutions. Through programming learning, we will examine effective learning methods for truant students in order to create new learning opportunities and discover their interests.

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After-school cafélab, a place for junior high and high school students, opens

There are not many places where junior high and high school students can spend their time with peace of mind after school. Game centers and karaoke are fun but expensive. On the other hand, it's lonely to go home alone. In response to such voices, the prefecture opened an "after-school cafélab" in Showa Town as a model business. It is a "place" where you can interact with many friends.

In June 2023, the prefecture conducted a questionnaire survey among children and young people. Regarding places where junior high and high school students can spend a calm time, 7% of junior high school students answered that they were "local facilities such as libraries", and 3% of high school students answered that the numbers were very low. Based on this, in order to increase the number of places for junior high and high school students in the community, the prefecture has established an "after-school café lab".

The kick-off event held at AEON MALL Kofu Showa in July attracted eight high school students living in the prefecture.

Mitsunori Okada of the AI company "STANDARD" in Tokyo became a lecturer and taught how to use AI, and suggested, "Let's all create a logo for 'After-School Cafe Lab'." The eight high school students were divided into three groups, and each of them wrote "keywords for a

comfortable place" on sticky notes. "I wish there were manga," "a place with games," and "a place where you can study," I put the written keywords into the AI app to create an illustration logo.

A first-year high school male student who participated said, "I don't have a place to gather with my friends, so now I have no choice but to go home after school. A third-year high school girl who was invited by a friend to participate said, "I can talk to people from other schools who I don't usually have the opportunity to talk to, and I'm excited to be able to create a place for everyone to belong."

The "After-School Cafe Lab" will be held at two locations: AEON MALL Kofu Showa and "Myofukuji", a 5-minute walk from Jonaga Station on the JR Minobu Line. There is a space for learning and interaction, Wi-Fi facilities, and a video shooting corner using smartphones, and junior high and high school students living in the prefecture can use it free of charge.

Junior high and high school students themselves are involved in management and planning, and children themselves create how to use it and rules while thinking about what kind of place they want to make.

Social Temple, a general incorporated association that operates children's cafeteria "Temple GO Rice" and other organizations, will be in charge of management, and Bricoluse LLC, which creates various communities, will support children in terms of planning and educational design.

Genjun Kondo, a representative of Social Temple and a monk at Myofukuji Temple, said, "There is a nationwide policy to create a place for children to belong, but it is a rare attempt to give them 'learning'.

The "After School Cafe Lab" is staffed by organizations that support the operation and university student volunteers. Mr. Kondo says, "The reason why junior high and high school students can exchange opinions with older people is because of the 'After-School Cafe Lab'.

"After-school café lab" is a model business. The knowledge and results obtained from the operation of the two locations will be shared with municipalities in the prefecture, and the prefecture intends to spread "creating a place where junior high and high school students can spend their time with peace of mind" throughout the prefecture in the future.



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Interview with Yamanashi Prefecture residents who are aspiring to the future

[Series] Yamanashi Kenjin

Eat Together and Connect with the Community

Operating a children's cafeteria in Minami Alps City

Keiko Suzuki



The wild herb "shrimp root" that the woman planted in her garden blooms pretty flowers once a year. To the children who gather at the "Children's Cafeteria Ebine" that he presides over, he says, "Shrimp are beautiful because they bloom with small seasonal flowers and plants," and "The same goes for people who are kept alive by nature. It's not just about serving delicious food. Reach out when someone is in trouble. These small accumulations are expanding the connections between the local community.

Here's a hint

There are 59* children's cafeterias in the prefecture, and the prefecture supports places where local residents can interact through food. This is because children and the elderly, foreigners, and single mothers in difficult situations need an environment where they can build relationships of trust and consult with local residents. The prefecture is working with municipalities to spread community places such as children's cafeterias throughout the prefecture to quickly connect people with problems to support.

I live with happiness

On the evening of the third Friday of every month, local children and the elderly gather at the Momogaoka Housing Complex Community Center in Minami Alps City to eat together. The menu consists of curry, salad, and dessert. The facility's kitchen, which fills up with three adults, prepares 80~100 meals each time. The staff is busy visiting multiple supermarkets to collect ingredients from a week before the event date, and preparing from the morning of the event.

Isn't it really difficult? When I asked that, Keiko Suzuki (68), the representative of "Children's Cafeteria Ebine", shook her head.

"I'm happy that the children are looking forward to it so much that they talk about it in elementary school, saying, 'What is today's dessert?'"

When Suzuki was in trouble with her husband's illness or her parents' care, there were people who gently helped her. That's why I can't leave them alone when I see someone like that.

One day, a man in his 80s stumbled into the children's cafeteria. "I was attracted by the good smell of curry..... The man said he had dementia and ate retort curry at home. Later, before the man entered the welfare facility, he invited him to Ebine and was able to eat curry with a smile.

When passing by the house where the elderly in the neighborhood live, he calls out to him and cares about his situation. This is because they want to connect to local governments and hospitals before major problems occur.

Another day, while Mrs. Suzuki was watching over his children on his way to school in the morning, he saw an elementary school student walking slowly. When I asked him about the situation, he said, "I haven't eaten breakfast." I also noticed that my clothes hadn't changed for a week. Every morning, Mrs. Suzuki made rice balls for the child.

On holidays, I sometimes gather my children and take them to Lake Ecopa Inaga or museums. The children's cafeteria also holds events such as disaster prevention learning and concerts. Suzuki, who has seen children from various family backgrounds up close, quietly says, "I want everyone to have a fun experience, because some children don't realize that their environment is not good....."

I wasn't interested in volunteering from the beginning. She was a very ordinary full-time housewife, but she wanted to convey the importance of childhood eating habits and experiences, so she attended workshops and seminars related to children's problems. In 2019, he established the "Momonooka Children's Watch Association" to create a place for children. This led to the current "Children's Cafeteria Ebine".

"We are able to do this activity because we have a supportive family and staff members. There are farmers who provide vegetables for the sake of shrimp, and there are also people who cooperate with the event. I really have nothing but gratitude. I think I live with happiness from those around me."

Even If It Seems Like Meddling, We Care

If someone is in trouble, I want to lend a hand. Even if you think so, there are times when it doesn't get to the other person. Sometimes it can break my heart when I am told that I am nosy. But there are words that support me at such times.

"Tears are cool again , live and live."

This is a phrase from the fossil of the haiku who fought leprosy. Live your own life without being caught up in deep sorrow. Thanks to this phrase, Mrs. Suzuki says, "Something blew away."

"I believe that one day you will understand, and I won't say anything sad."

People in various situations gather around the same table to foster community connections.

It was also encouraging that the governor of Nagasaki, who sympathized with this philosophy, mentioned Ebine's activities at the prefectural assembly in June this year.

Last year, he also experienced hospitalization. I was weak because I didn't have the physical strength. But he continues his activities with the encouragement of his friends. "I want to be an elderly person who can help others." There must still be things I can do.



FUREAI SQUARE

PHOTO SPACE

Would you like to publish the photos you have taken on "Fureai"?

We look forward to seeing your special photo !

- **This is the original scenery of Japan**

This is one of the photos of the terraced rice fields in Nakano (Minami Alps City) and Mt. Fuji after rice planting. The clear sky made me feel very calm.



- **85-year-old is very active**

On the east side of Kofu City, open-field cultivated Delaware will be shipped from around early July. My 85-year-old mother is the main force in our family. I usually walk with a cane, but it's strange that I can carry a heavy basket in the field without hesitation.



- **A large collection of Yamanashi wine**

Participated in the Yamanashi wine drinking competition event "Kuradashi Wine Bar" held at the Yocchabare Plaza at the north exit of Kofu Station. I was able to drink delicious wine from the daytime and was smiling.



- **Can I catch it?**

I experienced my first lure fishing in the mountain stream of Yujima, Hayakawa Town. I couldn't catch it this time, but it was a fun day to blend in with nature.



- **Aim for J1**

There was a match of the local soccer club "Ventforet Kofu" at JIT Recycled Ink Stadium in Kofu City, and fireworks were launched in front of many spectators. Do your best in the second half for promotion to J1!



• **Soul food in Fuefuki City**

I ate "Raho" at "Kokintei" in Fuefuki City. The soy sauce-based soup is chewy and the noodles are chewy. I want to try other restaurants' raho!



Q & A S P A C E

This section answers your questions and inquiries about prefectural government.

The questions for this issue are here.

〈Answer〉

Hiromichi Saito (Sports Promotion Division chief)



Q. What kind of facility is the Yamanashi Para Sports Center that opened this year?

This facility is equipped with air conditioning and heating that is easy to use for people with disabilities, where you can enjoy parasports. It can also be used by able-bodied people.

Q. What were the points that you devised?

There are barrier-free toilets, changing rooms, and shower rooms that can be used in wheelchairs. You can rest assured that there are audio guidance for people with visual disabilities, braille blocks, and emergency flashlights for people with sensory impairments.



Q. What kind of sports can I enjoy?

In addition to para sports such as wheelchair basketball, boccia, and sound table tennis, you can also play sports such as volleyball, badminton, and table tennis. We also regularly hold events such as parasports experience sessions that people with or without disabilities can participate in, aiming to realize an inclusive society.

Q. Can I use it alone?

Absolutely. There are "para sports instructors" with specialized knowledge stationed in the center, so please call out if you need support. The staff will also be your opponent for badminton.



[Contact information] Childcare and Next Generation Support Division TEL 055-223-1425
FAX: 055-223-1475

Human figure on the cover.

40th anniversary of exchange with Sichuan Province

Students enjoy Yamanashi

Ten junior high and high school students from the youth exchange delegation from Sichuan Province, China, taking a commemorative photo at a fruit farm in Fuefuki City. It is the 40th anniversary of the conclusion of the sister friendship prefecture between Yamanashi Prefecture and Sichuan Province. After enjoying the fruits of Yamanashi, the group visited Koryo High School (Hokuto City) and deepened their exchanges through Japan culture such as tea ceremonies.



Delivering the latest news

YAMANASHI POLICY NEWS

Started demonstration of Japan's first grape sorting machine

Japan's first demonstration machine of a grape sorting machine that combines light sensors and artificial intelligence (AI) has been completed. Accordingly, the "Grape Bunch Selection Fruit Certificate Management Consortium", which includes the prefecture and JA Zennoh Yamanashi and others, held a ceremony on July 15 at the JA Fruit Yamanashi Hikawa Co-selection Office (Yamanashi City), where the fruit sorting machine was installed.

Currently, farmers determine the grade for each box shipped, so there may be variations in quality even within grapes packed in the same box. The fruit sorter measures the sugar content of each bunch with a light sensor, and AI analyzes and sorts the size, color, and shape of the fruit grains. If it is put into practical use, it will be possible to distribute grapes of stable quality to the market.

In the demonstration, grapes are brought from each JA, the sugar content is measured with a light sensor to improve accuracy, and the AI learns from it. For the time being, we will work on a model mainly for export, and aim to put it into practical use in the next 4~5 years.

The prefecture will differentiate itself from other grape producing regions and increase its competitiveness, which will lead to higher incomes for producers.



Influencers rediscover the charm of Yamanashi and hold a meeting

On August 20th, Yamanashi Prefecture held an exchange event "#yamanashi meetup" at the Akasaka Prince Classic Hanous (Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) that invited influencers, companies, and organizations related to the prefecture.

In order to express the appeal of the prefecture through influencers who have a great influence on the thinking and behavior of many people, we set up a booth to introduce the latest information, and provided food and alcohol using ingredients produced in the prefecture.

At the venue, about 100 participants enjoyed dishes made with Japan sake and wine, as well as dishes made with the original variety of grape "Sunshine Red", the encouraged variety of rice "Niji no kirameki", the brand beef "Koshu beef" and the original brand fish "Fujinosuke".

We introduced the "Fuji Tram" and "Yamanashi Model P2G System" promoted by the prefecture, and exhibited the summer clothing "Kairu" using textiles from the county. The governor of Nagasaki called on people to reaffirm the charm of Yamanashi, to love Yamanashi even more, and to speak out about its charm.



23 prefectures unite to strengthen volcanic disaster prevention measures

The Prefectural Federation for the Promotion of Volcanic Disaster Prevention (Federation Representative Secretary, Yamanashi Prefecture), which was formed by Yamanashi Prefecture by calling on the 23 prefectures designated as volcanic disaster warning areas, held this year's general meeting in Aomori Prefecture on July 23 in conjunction with the

National Governors' Association.

At the general meeting, it was confirmed that the government will be asked to strengthen the monitoring and observation system for volcanic eruption prediction and precursor phenomena, support for the development and securing of volcano experts, and specific consideration of measures against large-scale ashfall. In addition, Toshitsugu Fujii, director of the Mt. Fuji Science Research Institute in this prefecture, explained the measures against ashfall associated with large-scale eruptions.

At the general meeting, the Governor of Nagasaki commented, "Volcano disaster prevention measures have finally reached the starting line, and the 23 prefectures will continue to unite and share roles with the national government to vigorously promote initiatives."



Beware of Fraud Related to Furigana Notification in Family Registers

Due to the enforcement of the revised Family Registration Act, a new system has started that adds furigana (phonetic readings) to names in family registers. Your local municipal office will notify you of the furigana that will be recorded. If the furigana is incorrect, you will need to submit a correction. However, please be aware.

- **No fees are required** for submitting corrections.
- **There are no penalties or fines** if you choose not to submit a correction.

If no correction is submitted, the notified furigana will be recorded as-is.

If you have any problems, please contact the following:

Prefectural Counseling and Consumer Affairs Center 055-223-1523

Consumer Hotline 188 (Iya-ya) *Nationwide

(We will guide you to the nearest city, town, village, or prefecture consumer affairs consultation office.)

Prefectural Counseling and Consumer Affairs Center provides information on its website and other means to prevent consumer problems before they occur.