

# NIA LETTER

Vol. **24**  
2022.9

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Niigata International Association (NIA)



NIA Official Facebook



## On the Cover

Top Left  
Korean Corner inside the Niigata International Plaza  
Top Right  
General Meeting to Commemorate the  
Establishment of the Niigata Philippine Society  
Bottom Left  
Exchange Student Representatives make  
Sasadango (Kashiwazaki City)

Introducing our FRCN  
Mascot 「Yakkoi」  
Check out page 4 !



## NIA LETTER uses the UD Digital Textbook Typeface

What is the UD Digital Textbook Typeface?

It is a typeface that has been developed to have balanced lines that are easier to read and understand for those with disabilities, the elderly, and non-native readers.

UD Digital Textbook Typeface	ABCDE/abcde
MS Gothic	ABCDE/abcde
MS Mincho	ABCDE/abcde

## Contents

### Feature

### Foreign Resident Communities in Niigata ~Our Relationships with Niigata~

Introducing Foreign Communities Living and Working in the Prefecture!

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Currently, there are 16,936 foreign residents living in Niigata Prefecture (according to the MOFA Census of Foreign Residents in December, 2021). As more foreign residents come to live here, communities have sprung up where people from the same country can help each other and exchange information. There are a number of these communities in Niigata Prefecture, and they are actively interacting and cooperating not only with individuals from their own countries, but also with Japanese citizens, so that they can live comfortably in their local regions. In this issue, we'll introduce 4 of those communities, their activities, and what they want for their local areas.



## Niigata Philippine Society

President Stevenson Allosa

### Our Community

We are a non-profit organization of Filipinos, Japanese and non-Filipinos, registered as a Registered Filipino Community Organization (RFCO) with the Philippine Consulate General in Nagoya, Japan, with the aim of promoting and deepening social and cultural experiences in Niigata. Our organization seeks to provide periodic and prompt information and advice from the Consulate to Filipinos in Japan, especially on topics related to disaster preparedness and emergency assistance. We also aim to participate in official Consulate activities, network with other Filipino community organizations associations, and establish Niigata as a second home for Filipinos.

### Our Activities

- General Meeting to Commemorate the Establishment of the Niigata Philippine Society
- Visit to the Philippine Consulate General in Nagoya
- Charity event for disaster relief in the Philippines
- Volunteer activities in the Philippines
- Consultation services for Filipinos living in the prefecture
- Local Exchange Events
  - Sponsorship and participation in the Filipino trainee basketball tournament, summer barbeque, Niigata Prefectural Student English Speech Contest, Philippines Independence Day, Christmas Party, etc.



### Our Relationship with Niigata Prefecture

Through the establishment of the Niigata Philippine Society, we hope to foster a better relationship between the citizens of Niigata Prefecture and Filipinos living in the prefecture. Through our members' events and activities, we will strive to engage more Filipinos, prefectural residents and other **foreign nationals** to promote the social and cultural experiences of the people of Niigata Prefecture.

We also hope to attract more residents of the prefecture who are interested in the country and people of the Philippines, so we would like to create more people-to-people cultural exchanges.



## Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA)

Accountant Sunar Dipak

### Our Community

We are a non-profit organization authorized by the government of Nepal. We offer various forms of support for Nepalese people that face difficulties living in Japan. We also hold activities such as exchange meetings which serve to deepen the friendship between our countries.

### Our Activities

- (For Nepalese citizens)
- Support and assistance to reduce the burden on citizen's daily lives
  - Immigration process assistance
  - Responding when a citizen passes away
  - Exchange meetings, etc. (For the people of Niigata)
  - Community service activities such as donating blood at our organization



### Our Relationship with Niigata Prefecture

There are many Nepalese people living in the prefecture, and their numbers are increasing year by year. Currently, of all the foreign nationalities living in Niigata, Nepalese are #6 (with just under 450 people ※), and they are studying and working at various places all throughout the prefecture.

Some Nepalese living in Japan have problems with Japanese rules and manners, such as how to properly dispose of garbage. The Japanese language—and kanji in particular—is very difficult for us, so there are many people who struggle with reading documents sent from government offices and other institutions, making it difficult to complete procedures. Because of that, we think it would be good to have an organization on hand where you can request a translator or interpreter. Going forward, it is important for not only Nepalese, but also other foreigners, to deepen communication with people in Niigata in order to better know each other. There are exchange meetings with foreigners in Niigata Prefecture, and our organization also holds such meetings. We hope to promote multicultural coexistence by strengthening our cooperation and partnership with Niigata Prefecture and its municipalities.

※ (MOFA Census, December 2021)





## Vietnamese Association in Niigata

President Pham Phuong Linh

### Our Community

Vietnam has the largest number of foreign workers by nationality in all of Niigata Prefecture※, and Vietnamese contribute massively to Niigata's economic development. We might be small compared to Vietnamese communities in other prefectures, but we are a very tight-knit group. In 2021, we were commended by the Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in Japan for our contributions to the promotion of international exchange.

※ Niigata Department of Labor: Status of Employment of Foreign Residents in Niigata Prefecture (As of October 2021)

### Our Activities

- Mutual aid
- Activities to improve Japanese proficiency and specialist knowledge
- Exchange events for Vietnamese and Niigata Residents
- Cultural, economic and technical exchange between regions in Vietnam and Niigata Prefecture

### Our Relationship with Niigata Prefecture

Our organization, which was created under the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, is overflowing with compassion and unity, and we regularly provide food aid and other assistances to Vietnamese people in need.

In order to promote cultural understanding and realize a multicultural coexisting society, we provide places for exchange between Vietnamese and people from Niigata, and host "café talks" and webinars to share information between Vietnamese that are active in various fields. Furthermore, we would like to introduce the diversity of Vietnam to people in the prefecture, and convey the charms of Niigata to Vietnam, while promoting mutual cultural, economic and technological exchanges. We believe that the development of global human resources is essential for Niigata Prefecture in the future, and we believe that this will be promoted through the participation of many residents of Niigata, regardless of nationality, in training programs at various organizations and companies in the prefecture. For that reason, we would like to ask for cooperation from all relevant organizations in Niigata Prefecture.



## Niigata-Mongolia Association (NIMO)

President Dr. Batbadral Enkhbold

### Our Community

The Niigata-Mongolia Association (NIMO) is an organization made up of Mongolian citizens that live or previously lived in Niigata Prefecture. In recent years, Japan and Mongolia have deepened their connections, and with an increase of young Mongolians coming to Niigata to study abroad, our organization was founded in January of 2015. Our goal is to exchange information and mutual assistance to Mongolians living in Niigata, including exchange students, plan events related to Mongolia, and act as a bridge between Niigata and Mongolia.

### Our Activities

- Community building and providing supports to Mongolian nationals residing in Niigata Prefecture by information exchange, organizing events, advice and help to settle for the newcomers
- Engage in activities for expansion and strengthening of economic relations and cooperation between Niigata prefecture and Mongolia
- Organize events to publicize culture, economy, and life of Mongolia in Niigata prefecture
- Contribute to matchmaking between Mongolian and Japanese SMEs (small and medium enterprises)
- Support and contribute to humanitarian and public activities in Mongolia

### Our Relationship with Niigata Prefecture

We believe that mutual understanding among various nations and nationalities are fundamental for peace and prosperity of all the humankind and socializing and community building activities are an integral part of it. Therefore, NIMO members are trying to contribute to this mutual understanding by voluntarily organizing various events in Niigata prefecture, such as Mongolia Fair, to introduce Mongolia's culture, livelihood and the economy to the local residents. We hope the people and businesses in Niigata will have a better understanding about Mongolia at such events and become interested in developing various cooperation with Mongolia.





# From the Foreign Resident Consultation Center: Connecting Niigata

~ Improved Consultation System in 2022! ~

## Foreign Resident Consultation Center of Niigata (FRCN)

Monday - Friday 10:00 ~ 17:00

Niigata-shi, Chuo-ku,

Bandaijima 5-1,

Bandaijima Bldg. 2F

☎ 025-241-1881

✉ nia10@niigata-ia.or.jp



In order to promptly respond to complex issues about multiculturalism and to make it easier for prefectural and foreign residents to consult with our center, the Foreign Resident Consultation Center of Niigata (FRCN) has strengthened our consultation system from April 2022.

### (1) Added a Russian Language Interpreter

To support Ukrainian refugees, our Center has started offering consultations in Russian, available every day. We also use translation machines to respond to consultations in Ukrainian.

### (2) Started Online Consultations & Reservations

As Niigata Prefecture is so large, it can be difficult for many people to come directly to our center for consultations. To help solve this, we have started offering online consultations using Zoom. You can talk face-to-face with our consultants and specialists while looking at documents, so you can have the same experience as an in-person consultation.

From our homepage, you can also make a reservation to talk with specialists such as an administrative scrivener (gyousei-shoshi), a lawyer, or a staff member from the Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau. Just select the day you want to have your consultation and enter the necessary information. Of course, you can also make a reservation by calling or emailing us, so please feel free to make the use of our services!

#### オンライン相談予約 申し込み内容入力

申し込み内容を入力の上、「入力内容確認」ボタンをクリックしてください。  
※このフォームでの予約は1週間前まで行なってください。  
※2週間以内の相談予約を希望する場合は、連絡先（TEL:025-241-1881）までお問い合わせください。

タイトル	日時	曜日	言語	予約
外国人相談窓口	09:15	10:00~10:30	JA	予約済
外国人相談窓口	09:15	10:00~10:30	JA	予約済
外国人相談窓口	09:15	10:00~10:30	JA	予約済
外国人相談窓口	09:15	10:00~10:30	JA	予約済
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外国人相談窓口	09:15	10:00~10:30	JA	予約済
外国人相談窓口	09:15	10:00~10:30	JA	予約済

Reserve Here



Reservation form on our homepage

### (3) Introducing our Mascot Character: Yakkoi!

In order to introduce more citizens of Niigata and foreign residents to our center, we created a loveable mascot character. We asked the Animation School at Kaishi Professional University to create our character, and after a screening by the Review Committee, Sato Hitomi's design was adopted.

This character's name is "Yakkoi," which means "soft" (yawarakai) in Niigata's dialect. The accent is on the "ya" sound! The soft design and name of the character were selected to encourage people to feel free to consult with us. We plan to use Yakkoi in various situations, so please keep an eye out for it!

Mascot Character - Yakkoi



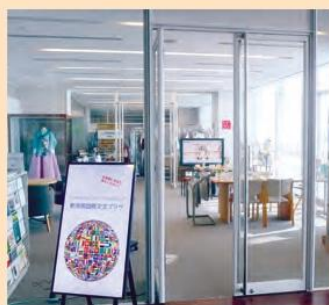
A word from Yakkoi's creator, Sato Hitomi

I'm so glad that my design was chosen. I sincerely hope that it will be a character that is loved by all!



## From the International Plaza

### The Niigata International Plaza has been renovated!



Spacious and Comfortable

The Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in Niigata graciously donated Korean national costumes and a panel of traditional patterns to our organization, which we now have on display in our Korean Corner.

Please come see the brilliant and beautifully embroidered traditional clothes for yourself.



Traditional Clothing

## We have a Lending Library!

We have a lending library inside of the International Plaza. In order to reach more people, we are expanding our range, so now anyone who lives in Niigata Prefecture can borrow books and media.



- Who can use the Lending Library?  
⇒ People who live in Niigata Prefecture that can come to our Plaza to fill out the lending paperwork

Library Info





# From the JICA Niigata Desk

Nice to meet you!  
I am Nakamura Fumi.  
I started working at the JICA Niigata Desk from May of this year.



Over my summer vacation in my 3<sup>rd</sup> year of university, after participating in a summer school at Thammasat University in Thailand, I was able to fulfill one of my dreams and did a home-stay with a minority group from Chiang Mai in a traditional stilt house. I saw shocking internal disparities with my own eyes in Thailand, which made me interested in international cooperation.

After that, I received my master's degree in agricultural economics in the UK, and after my job in commerce in India, I worked for JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) for 17 years.

I left JICA in 2020, and began my dream life in a thatched-roof home in Niigata. While fighting against the everyday weeds and bugs, I started working at JICA's Niigata Desk from May, 2022.



Graduate School Commencement Ceremony

JICA is the executing agency of the government of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA). In order to realize human security and high quality growth in



Meeting in Peru

developing countries, we work to improve education, healthcare, agriculture and infrastructure, among other fields, in over 150 countries across Asia, Africa, Central and South America. Following our vision of "Leading the World with Trust," we aspire for a free, peaceful and prosperous world where people can hope for a better future and explore their diverse potentials.

JICA Niigata Desk is a consultation window in Niigata Prefecture that is here to spread the word about the kind of efforts JICA is making to the people of the prefecture, and to help connect those who are interested in international cooperation with action.

Until now, I have been involved in a reconstruction assistance project led by the late former JICA President Ogata Sadako, in which ethnic groups that were at odds with each other during their civil war worked together with Japanese third parties to restore agricultural production bases and technologies damaged by the war, with the aim of restoring economic activity and fostering mutual trust among the ethnic groups. In Peru, where I was posted overseas, I also provided emergency assistance during the major earthquake that occurred off the coast of Peru shortly after my arrival, and I worked with the then-newly established Peruvian Ministry of Environment on waste management issues. At the same time, I was engaged in a project to introduce integrated waste management to local cities to improve waste collection systems and increase recycling, while building 31 new sanitary landfills nationwide, up from four.



Inspection trip to Uzbekistan

I sometimes wonder if international cooperation is hypocritical, as what I can do is very small in response to the diverse and complicated problems of the world. Then I think of the words of my friend from school who fought in the Eritrean civil war for independence: "The fact that people want to know about us gives me strength;" and I remember my Peruvian coworkers, who were positive to no end, saying "It's gotta get done!" This makes me challenge myself to do what I can.

Developing countries are full of fascinating cultures and people who have more to offer than just the challenges they face, and working with them can enrich and soften your thinking and feelings. International cooperation may seem a bit complicated, but why don't we start by "thinking" about the things we "know" we learned?



Top : Ms. Nakamura and her coworkers at the Ministry of the Environment in Peru



Right : Baby alpacas in the Andes

## Republic of Peru

**Capital** : Lima

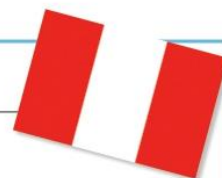
**Population** : Around 32,970,000

**Area** : Around 1.29 million km<sup>2</sup>  
(3.4 x the size of Japan)

**Official Language** : Spanish  
(Also Quechua, Aymara, etc.)

< Source >

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/peru/index.html>





# NIA Activities Report

## Brainstorming Session on Supporting Children with Foreign Roots

On March 12, 2022, we held a hybrid seminar from Toki Messe (in Niigata City's Chuo-ku) on the topic of "What should we do? Communicating with Foreign Resident Guardians."

Professor Utsumi Yumiko, a professor at the Institute of Arts and Sciences at Yamagata University, led the workshop and talked about responding to the particular problems often faced by foreign residents that are guardians of babies and small children. Using the site run by the professor, "Writing in the Renrakucho" participants thought about topics on multicultural childcare and education.

Then, Miyakoshi Mieko, the principal of Minamigawa Nursery School in Joetsu, where many students have foreign nationalities, gave a talk about actual situations at the school and responses taken.

We were able to have a lively workshop and opinion exchange with participants both online and in-person.



Brainstorming Workshop

## Medical Support for Foreign Residents Seminar

Each year, we host a joint Seminar with the Committee on Medical Interpreters for Niigata on topics relating to medical support for foreign residents. This year's seminar was held online on Saturday, March 26, 2022.

Kinoshita Takao, the representative of the Elderly Foreign Resident and Caregivers Bridge Project, was invited to present on this year's theme: "Beyond a Multicultural Coexisting Society, the Reality of Cross-Cultural Caregiving." Mr. Kinoshita talked about the problems that are faced by elderly foreign residents, as well as connections and organizations that offer better support for these issues, among other topics.

Then, Chung Suju of the day service center Hana no Kai, related to the non-profit organization Kobe Foreigners Friendship Center (KFC), gave some case reports about the day-to-day of a multicultural adult day care center.

On this day, besides foreign resident support groups, participants from various fields such as those involved in medical institutions and welfare organizations also joined and showed a high level of interest.



At the Medical Seminar

## International Women's Day Fair

To coincide with International Women's Day (every year on March 8), which is an internationally recognized date set by the United Nations, the Niigata International Association held an International Women's Day Fair on Sunday, May 6, 2022. Katelyn DePalmer, a CIR from the United States of America, presented on basic facts about her country and introduced a number of American women who have had profound impacts on the world.

Then, the many exchange students really livened up the event. They helped set up and manage the entrance, and they even made panels showing "Women Active in the World"!



At the Lecture



Exchange Students at the Fair

## Volunteer Workshop

The Niigata International Association recruited and registered volunteer interpreters and translators to assist at international exchange events.

On Saturday, March 19, 2022, a seminar was held for registered volunteers on how to improve their interpretation techniques. Naito Minoru, an associate professor at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Graduate School of Global Studies, was invited to lead the lecture on "The World of Community Interpreters" and provide interpretation training.

After a lecture on the role of community interpreters in a multicultural coexisting society, the 53 participants broke into groups based on their languages, and were able to practice interpreting in scenarios based on actual situations.



Online Workshop

## Interpretation Support for Ukrainian Refugees

In order to create a system of support for refugees that are fleeing from the situation in Ukraine, the Niigata International Association sent out an urgent call for Russian and Ukrainian interpreters, and has registered 25 volunteer interpreters as of the end of June.

On Saturday, June 11, 2022, an explanatory session and workshop for the registered volunteers. We explained the national and prefectural state of accepting refugees, and followed by an explanation of our volunteer dispatch system. After that, Nii Midori from the Citizen's Network for Global Activities (CINGA) presented a lecture on the topic of "Words can be a Bridge for Refugees: The Role of Volunteer Interpreters," and gave some tips on how to support refugees through interpretation.

## Donation from Daiwa Securities Co. Ltd.

On June 20, 2022, we received a donation of 300,000 JPY from Daiwa Securities Group as part of their "Group 120th Anniversary Children's Future Project." This donation will be used towards international understanding education for children.



Left :  
Daiwa Securities Co. Ltd.  
Niigata Branch Manager  
Tachibana Toshiaki

Right:  
Niigata International Association  
Chairperson Nakayama Teruya



# Announcement ① from NIA

For all questions and inquiries, please see below.

## International Understanding Seminar: Discover the World from Asia!

Seminars for deepening cultural understanding will be held throughout the prefecture, where you can learn about the history, society and culture of countries that have close ties with Niigata Prefecture. So that many people can participate, there are also seminars that are held online, so please feel free to join in.



An event held last FY

Date	Topic	Lecturer	Place
10/15 (Sat.) 13:30~15:00 (Hybrid)	Even More Fun : The Philippines	Niigata Philippine Society President Stevenson Allosa	Mediaship 6F Knowledge Room, A and B
10/22 (Sat.) 10:00~11:30 (Hybrid)	From non-renewable to natural energy ~ Trends of China ~	Niigata Sangyo University Professor Kinugawa Ghenni	Kashiwazaki Civic Plaza Classroom 201 and 202
11/3 (Thurs., holiday) 14:00~15:30 (Hybrid)	Food and Farms of Indonesia	Niigata Agro-Food University Vice President Nakai Yutaka & Indonesian Exchange Students	Niigata Agro-Food University Tainai Campus J Building, 201
11/26 (Sat.) 14:00~15:30 (In-person only)	Migrant Workers Supporting the Economy of Hanoi, Vietnam's Capital	Keiwa College Associate Professor Nagasaka Yasuyo	Shibata City Health and Longevity Active Exchange Center Aori-Kan 1F, Indoor Plaza

## Seeking Teams for the International Understanding Presentation Contest!

Junior and senior high school students are invited to present what they think about "international understanding" in terms of topics such as global problems, multicultural coexistence, or issues between Japan and other countries, and what they want to do about it!

**Date :** December 17, 2022 (Sat.)

**Place :** Toki Messe, International  
Conference Hall (Marine Hall)

**How to Apply :**

Sign up for either JHS or HS Division,  
with 3 to 5 students and 1 adult  
leader per group.

**Deadline :** Friday, September 30, 2022

※ For details, please visit our homepage using the QR code

Contest  
Homepage



2021's Presentation Contest

## Exchange Student Employment Support Seminar

Learn about job hunting in Japan and work-related statuses of residence!

**Date :** November 9, 2022 (Wed.)

**Place :** Toki Messe, Main Hall B

**Contents:**

- ① Learn about Statuses of Residence for Work  
Tokyo Regional Immigration Services Bureau,  
Status of Residence Division,  
Chief Examiner for Resident Support,  
Lecturer Yasumoto Daisuke
- ② Job Hunting Stories from our Seniors  
We'll introduce companies that are hiring  
exchange students, and hear some  
experiences from graduates working there

※ Please contact us for details and registration info

## Yasashii Nihongo Workshop for Administrative Office Employees

There will be a workshop for administrative office employees to better understand "Yasashii Nihongo," a communication method that makes it easy for anyone to access information, and to improve resident services by providing smoother responses at administrative offices, which are visited by many foreign residents.

Date	Place	Lecturer
10/7 (Fri.) Niigata City 13:30~16:00	CrossPal Niigata, 5F, Exchange Hall	Hitotsubashi University Mori Arinori Institute for Higher Education and Global Mobility Associate Professor Yanagida Naomi
11/10 (Thurs.) Kashiwazaki City 13:00~15:30	Kashiwazaki City Hall, 1F, Multipurpose Room 1 and 2	

For all questions  
and inquiries

Niigata International Association <https://www.niigata-ia.or.jp/>  
TEL : 025-290-5650 Email : nia21c@niigata-ia.or.jp



## Announcement ② from NIA

### We updated our homepage!

We have updated our entire website with a new design that is easy for anyone to see and use.

Homepage



#### New Features

- Multilingual Translation and Furigana Functions
- Reservation System for Online Consultations using Zoom
- Smartphone friendly

and more



### We added more to our Mail Magazine!



The multilingual translation function on our website allows you to view the contents of municipal disaster prevention emails, and those who have already registered for our newsletter can now also register for disaster prevention emails!

### We created a LINE account!

< Niigata International Association

NIA has made a LINE account. You can get notifications from our homepage and mail magazine right away on LINE!

What we send on LINE:

- Mail Magazine
- Updates to the NIA homepage
- Info on events in Niigata Pref. and more!

You can add us with this QR code!



## Please make use of our Exchange Student Representatives !

We have 29 registered Exchange Student Representatives active in 2022.

Exchange students in Niigata Prefecture that are interested in international exchange activities are dispatched to international exchange, international cooperation, and multicultural coexistence events at private organizations, municipalities and schools throughout the prefecture as "Exchange Student Representatives." These exchange students, who are rich in individuality and possess a variety of abilities and special skills in addition to Japanese language communication, are cooperating to promote an increase in international exchange and create a multicultural coexisting society in Niigata Prefecture. We hope you will make use of the Exchange Student Representatives!



Exchange Student Representatives



Exchange Student Representatives participated in a cultural experience event at the Kashiwazaki Area International Association



## Comic

Episodes about life in Japan from foreign residents, in comic form!

#9

### "Spooky Season"

Pen name:  
Ookii



### ~ Message from the Artist ~

I'm a person living in Niigata who likes cartoons. Recently I've been enjoying the latest Pixar films. Continuing from last year, I'm glad to have the chance to make more comics about great episodes! I hope you'll like it!

◇ Ookii ◇ Japan Animation & Manga College - Visual Design Graduate School, 1st year

