

Mitsui Educational Foundation (MEF)

About MEF

The former Chairman and Managing Director of Mitsui & Co. (Australia) Ltd., Mr Ken Ejiri AC (also awarded the Légion d'honneur amongst other awards by foreign governments) established the Mitsui Educational Foundation (MEF) in 1971 to build stronger ties and promote mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and Australia by introducing Australian university students to Japanese culture, history, business, industry, and contemporary lifestyles through an annual tour of Japan. To date, 404 Australian students have participated in this program which has celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021.

Selection Procedure

MEF selects 8 students from 8 universities per year to participate in an annual tour of Japan. In total 22 Australian universities participate in the MEF program.

This opportunity is offered to all students of the 8 participating universities who:-

1. Are full-time, on-campus undergraduate students, second year or above
2. Are Australian citizens
3. Are academically capable, but selection is not contingent on high academic achievement
4. Can clearly demonstrate a keen interest in learning broadly about Japan, and could most benefit from the MEF experience
5. Will act as outstanding ambassadors for their university, state, and Australia on the tour
6. Study of Japan/Japanese language is not a requirement to be eligible for participating in the program

Upon completion of the study tour in Japan, participants are required to provide a 3000-word report on their experience during the program, as well as a presentation to the trustees and Mitsui employees. Participants will become automatic members of the MEF Alumni Association, which has chapters in each state/territory of Australia.

The Study Tour

The 21-day study tour provides a balanced experience of corporate, traditional and contemporary Japanese culture. All transport, accommodation, insurance and transfer costs are borne by MEF and the students are accompanied by the MEF coordinator from Mitsui Australia.

Below are some of the highlights included in previous programs. We may adjust the contents based on students' interests.

Cities/Towns:

- Nagoya, Kyoto, Nara, Kobe & Hiroshima: Places of historical significance
- Hakone: in the foothills of Mt. Fuji, showcases the natural beauty of Japan
- Tokyo: Various tourist locations including temples, shrines, museums, and gardens

Corporate visits:

- Australian Embassy in Tokyo
- Toyota Motor Corporation
- Nippon Steel Corporation
- Nihonsakari Sake Brewery
- Mitsui & Co., Ltd.
- Vendor Service
- Moon Creative Lab

Cultural Experiences:

- A 3-day Homestay with a Japanese family, allowing a firsthand experience of day-to-day life in Japan
- Weekend with Japanese university students who are due to commence their career at Mitsui next year
- Experience the iconic culture of Japan such as dressing up in Kimono and soaking in natural hot springs

MEF TrusteesInternal Trustees

- **Mr Masato Sugahara** Chair of Trustees; Chairman & CEO, Mitsui & Co. (Australia) Ltd.
- **Ms Wendy Holdenson** EVP and Chief Transformation Officer, Mitsui & Co. (Australia) Ltd.

External Trustees (listed in order of appointment)

- **Mr Ian Williams**, Senior Advisor (formerly Partner), Herbert Smith Freehills; Former Partner, Ashurst
- **Mr Hugh Morgan AC** CEO, First Charnock Pty Ltd; Former CEO of Western Mining Corporation, President of the Business Council of Australia, President of the Australian Japan Business Co-Operation Committee
- **Professor Ann Roberts** Professor in Physics, The University of Melbourne

MEF Secretariat

- **Ms Kaoru Curmi** (Secretary), Sustainability, Corporate Planning, Mitsui & Co. (Australia) Ltd.
- **Ms Sachika Go** (Coordinator), Social Contributions Coordinator, Mitsui & Co. (Australia) Ltd.

MEF Alumni

The MEF Alumni network is incredibly diverse, and includes the following members:-

Year	Name	Title & Organization
1972	Gilbert George	Managing Director, Gilbert George and Associates
1972	Ian Wing	International Business Consultant; Former Regional Director, Europe, Middle East & Africa, Austrade
1974	Prof. Bill Purcell	Former Deputy Vice Chancellor International & Advancement, University of Technology Sydney
1974	Brett Biddington AM	Principal, Biddington Research Pty Ltd
1975	Andrew Pike OAM	Managing Director, Ronin Films
1980	Justin Bourke QC	King's Counsel, The Victorian Bar
1980	Christopher Rees	Manager Indigenous Business Export Program, Supply Nation, Former Consul-General of Australia, Osaka
1982	Justin Gleeson SC	Barrister; Former Solicitor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
1982	Mark Speakman	Member of NSW Parliament / Attorney General
1984	Matthew Coulter	Director, MineVeritas Pty Ltd
1987	Andrew Bell SC	Chief Justice of New South Wales
1987	James Larsen	Senior Advisor and First Assistant Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade; Former Ambassador to Israel & Turkey
1988	Virginia Christie	Company director; Former W.A. Senior Representative Officer, Reserve Bank of Australia
1988	Jonathan O'Dea	Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and Member of NSW Parliament
1989	Adam McCarthy	First Assistant Secretary Legal Division and Chief Legal Officer, former High Commissioner to South Africa, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
1990	Angus Barker	Senior Advisor to Australian Minister of Trade and Investment, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
1991	Cynthia Whelan	Chief Strategy & Business Development Officer, Scentre; Formerly Group Executive New Businesses, Telstra; Chief Executive, Barclays Capital
1993	Michael Fullilove	Executive Director, Lowy Institute
1999	David Faulkner	CEO & Co-founder, Education Changemakers; Former Regional Director, Northern Territory Department of Education & Training
2009	Jonathon Tse	Co-Founder, Zookal and Co-founder & Co-CEO, Karst Stone Paper