

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2015 OF THE SJCC SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

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**Pro Memoria: Since its establishment in 1988 our Scholarship Fund has granted scholarships to over 220 qualified candidates amounting to approx. CHF 2'850'000.**

### **1. Introduction**

Today, our Scholarship Fund is firmly established as an unique pillar activity of our Chamber making a lasting contribution towards bilateral understanding and cooperation between Japan and Switzerland. Likewise, it is well received by Swiss educational institutions and its students providing them with international experience and competence in building bridges across cultural and social differences.

In retrospect, we wish to thank our former sponsors, "Stiftung Mercator Schweiz" and its Chairman for their generous financial support during the decisive developing stages of our Scholarship Fund from 2001 until 2006. Subsequently, donations from Hilti Foundation (incl. offering regular internships in Japan), Credit Suisse, Julius Bär, UBS, most recently from SIKA and, not the least, our Chamber together with many of its individual members who have contributed towards the progress of our Scholarship Fund. It is their continuous support that has laid the financial foundation to realise this important investment into future Swiss-Japan business relations!

## 2. Scholarship Enquiries and Applications

<b>Summary 2015:</b>	- Scholarships approved:	7
	- Open enquiries / applications:	7
	- Rejected or cancelled applications:	<u>3</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>

## 3. Profiles of Scholarship Candidates / Recipients in 2015

### **Pro Memoria: Typical Profile of a Scholarship Candidate**

- Female or male graduate from university or qualified professional with apprenticeship
- Age less than 32 years, resident of Switzerland
- Has already acquired good basic knowledge of spoken and written Japanese preparing for his/her Japan training
- Highly motivated and committed to a “Japan Year” consisting of 3-6 m intensive Japanese language study and 6-9 m internship in a Japanese or international company
- Has well balanced and positive personality with clear goals and willingness to adapt to different customs and culture
- Displays an entrepreneurial spirit and risk tolerance

7 scholarship recipients in 2015. Their personalities, educational qualifications and, notably, motivation have been verified at personal interviews. The respective conclusions and recommendations were then discussed in the Scholarship Committee which ultimately decided on scholarships. As a consequence, this procedure has over the years ensured a minimal failure rate, i.e. only 6 scholarship recipients (out of 225) have not completed their "SJCC Japan Year".

**Update on companies in Japan which have offered internships during the last few years:**

*International Companies*

- AstraZeneca
- BMW Technology Office
- Bosch
- Hilti
- Mercedes-Benz
- Kaba
- Novartis
- Sika
- Swiss Embassy & Business Hub
- Syngenta
- TÜV Rheinland Group
- Zurich Financial Services

*Japanese Companies*

- Architectural Atelier Bow Wow
- Bijutsu Daigaku, University of Art & Design
- Mitsubishi Electric
- Mitutoyo
- Nissan
- Rakuten (large IT company)
- Riken Genomic Sciences Center
- STS Forum (Science & Technology in Society)
- Sunstar
- Tokyo Biolinks
- Toyo Shutter
- Urban Connections, Tokyo

**4. Finances**

Our Balance Sheet remained healthy with an accumulated surplus (cash at banks) of CHF 109'656 at yearend. Contingent Liabilities, i.e. outstanding but committed scholarship payments amounted to JPY 1'750'000 to be carried forward to 2016. Donations received from SIKA amounted to CHF 10'000 and SJCC amounted to CHF 20'000.

As from 2016 we expect an additional donation from the Swiss Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Japan in support of our efforts to respond more positively to demand for scholarships. This would also be the first ever cooperation between the two Chambers in regards to the Scholarship Fund.

## **6. Alumni Association**

Our Alumni Association founded in April 2002 with activities in Switzerland and Japan primarily serves scholarship recipients as a platform for further developing their knowledge and experience of Japan. Equally important is its aim to strengthen friendship and common purpose among members. In the process, the Association has also been building a network of contacts with Swiss and Japanese companies and institutions, primarily serving the needs of its members. In Japan it is also a "home away from home" supporting new arrivals in various administrative procedures, recommending internship opportunities, contacts with the Embassy of Switzerland, the Swiss Business Hub Japan, the Swiss Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Japan etc.

Upon return to Switzerland all registered Alumni are offered a free initial membership in the Chamber. Thus, both institutions can share and benefit from each other's experience, knowledge and competence. I may also mention here that the President of the Alumni Association serves on the BOD of the Chamber.

## 7. Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Swiss-Japanese Chamber, its Scholarship Fund and myself I wish to extend our gratitude to

- the Japanese Embassy in Bern, H.E. Ambassador Ryuhei Maeda
- the Swiss Embassy in Tokyo, H.E. Ambassador Urs Bucher
- the Swiss Business Hub, Roger Zbinden
- our sponsor, Sika AG, CH-6340 Baar, and all former donators
- the BOD of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Tokyo and its President, Michael Mroczek
- the BOD of the Swiss-Japanese Chamber in Zurich and its new President, Martin Herb
- the Alumni Associations in Switzerland and Japan and their President, Nicole Schütz
- my colleagues of the SJCC BOD

for their continued interest in our activities, their support and guidance. As previously mentioned, the SJCC Scholarship Fund is solely dependent on its sponsors for financing its scholarships. All donations without deductions are exclusively being used for funding scholarships, thus, helping to develop a growing pool of well-educated young professionals with an international mindset, a strong rooting in the Japanese business environment and, likewise, a familiarity with Japan's culture, social and business practices. They serve the needs of our industry (Japan being the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest export market for Switzerland), educational institutions and government administration with their professional qualifications and enthusiasm.

SWISS- JAPANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
Chairman of the Scholarship Fund  
Martin Stricker