

ANNUAL REPORT 2019 OF THE SJCC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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Executive Summary

- Since its establishment in 1988 our Scholarship Fund has granted scholarships to 229 qualified candidates amounting to approx. CHF 3'000'000.
- In 2018, a new partnership agreement for the Scholarship Fund was concluded with the Swiss Chamber Commerce & Industry in Japan (SCCIJ). The partnership with SCCIJ over the last few years has been very good and beneficial for the Scholarship Fund and its recipients, enabling this big milestone. From now on the Fund will be referred to as “Swiss-Japan Scholarship Fund - powered by SCCIJ and SJCC.”
- In 2018, 11 individuals submitted the extensive formal documents required to apply for a scholarship. 4 were finally chosen to receive scholarships. The actual number of interested individuals is always much higher. However, many individuals refrain from applying after familiarising themselves with the requirements.
- Scholarship Fund had an accumulated surplus of CHF 169'035 at yearend.
- On October 1, 2018 the Scholarship Fund celebrated the 30th year of its establishment. The event was attended by over 70 enthusiastic participants, travelling all the way from Munich, Seoul, Shanghai or Tokyo.

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 were received from Hilti Foundation (incl. offering regular internships in Japan), Credit Suisse, Julius Bär, UBS, Sika, the Swiss Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Japan (SCCIJ), GC Corporation, most recently from MM Automobile Schweiz AG and JSL Academy, and, not the least, from 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 Applications

Summary 2019

14 formal applications

4 scholarships granted

The actual number of interested individuals is always much higher. However, many individuals refrain from applying after familiarising themselves with the requirements and all the documents that need to be prepared for this purpose.

3. Profiles of Scholarship Candidates

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 months internship in a Japanese or international company
- Well balanced and positive personality with clear goals and willingness to adapt to different customs and culture
- Displays an entrepreneurial spirit and risk tolerance

4. Finances

Our Balance Sheet remained very healthy with an accumulated surplus (cash at banks) of CHF 189'313 at year-end. Contingent Liabilities, i.e. outstanding but committed scholarship payments amounted to JPY 4'000'000 to be carried forward to 2020.

We have been very fortunate to have received donations from the following companies: MM Automobile Schweiz AG CHF 7'500; JSL Academy CHF 3'000. Additionally significant contributions were received from the Swiss Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Japan (SCCIJ) amounting to CHF 17'246 and SJCC amounting to CHF 20'000.

We are very glad and encouraged by the steady increase in sponsors and the strong partnership with the SCCIJ.

5. SJCC Young Professionals (formerly SJCC 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. On December 5th 2016, the SJCC Alumni Organisation association has been renamed to "SJCC Young Professionals". Foremost to welcome and include young people who may not (yet) be scholarship recipients but have professional interest in Japan or simply would like to network with like-minded people.

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.

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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 Executive Committee of the Chamber.

6. Strong partnership with SCCIJ

Due to the excellent cooperation between the SCCIJ and SJCC, it was decided in 2017 to create a joint working committee to come up with a working proposal to establish a joint fund. This work was successfully concluded in 2018 and a new partnership agreement has come into effect. The partnership with SCCIJ over the last few years has been very good and beneficial for the Scholarship Fund and its recipients enabling this big milestone. From now on the Fund will be referred to as “Swiss-Japan Scholarship Fund - powered by SCCIJ and SJCC.”

The SCCIJ provides excellent personal support to the new arriving scholarship recipients and even offers a free membership as well. Two Board Members represent the SCCIJ in the Scholarship Committee and actively participate in the work and discussions.

7. Acknowledgements

On behalf of the SJCC, the Scholarship Fund and myself I wish to extend our gratitude to

- the Japanese Embassy in Bern, H.E. Ambassador Kojiro Shiraishi
- the Swiss Embassy in Tokyo, H.E. Ambassador Jean-François Paroz
- the Swiss Business Hub, Claudio Mazzucchelli
- our sponsor, Sika AG, Baar
- our sponsor, GC Corporation, Tokyo
- our sponsor, MM Automobile Schweiz AG, Härkingen
- our sponsor, JSL Academy, Tokyo & Okinawa
- our strong, joint partner the Swiss Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Japan (SCCIJ) in Tokyo, its BOD and its former President Michael Mroczek and its new President André Zimmermann. Dieter Sommerhalder and Luca Orduna from the SCCIJ have made outstanding contributions to the successful partnership through participation in the joint working committee, interview process, and implementing a very professional support program for recipients once they arrive in Japan
- and all former donors
- the BOD of the Swiss-Japanese Chamber of Commerce (SJCC) in Zurich, its President, Martin Herb and its Managing Director Dominique Ursprung
- the SJCC Young Professionals in Switzerland and their President, Jacqueline Tschumi
- Martin Stricker, who brought the scholarship fund during his tenure as a chairman to a new level and did an excellent job in handing over his activities in 2019

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- last but definitely not least, Paul Dudler, the former Chairman of the Scholarship Fund who has built out the Scholarship Fund over 15 years to make it to the successful and respected program it is known for today

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 3rd largest export market for Switzerland), educational institutions and government administration with their professional qualifications and enthusiasm.

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