

ANNUAL REPORT 2021 OF THE SJCC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

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Executive Summary

- Since its establishment in 1988 our Scholarship Fund has granted scholarships to 233 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 2021, 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 familiarizing themselves with the requirements. Due to the Japan entry restrictions, no applications from Swiss candidates were taken in September 2021.
- The Scholarship Fund had an accumulated surplus of CHF 209,044 at year end.
- The Corona pandemic continued to have an impact on the scholarship recipients, but did not stop the program.
- In 2021, we awarded three scholarships to recipients from Japan spending a year in Switzerland

1. Introduction

When writing the 2020 edition of this report in February 2021, I did not think that I would have to mention the pandemic again in the 2021 report. However, Corona and the travel restrictions coming with it affected the program in 2021 strongly as well. Several recipients of 2020 could still not start the year in Japan and in autumn 2021, we decided to cancel the interview round for Swiss candidates.

We continued to have good applications from Japanese candidates and still awarded four scholarships in 2021 (3 for the Year in Switzerland; 1 for the Year in Japan).

It's impressive to see how the Japanese recipients are building their life in Switzerland. Many of the challenges they face are similar to the Swiss recipients in Japan: learning the language, building a professional network, finding an apartment, opening a bank account, and finding new friends. However, some things seem to be more difficult in Switzerland compared to Japan: Obtaining a visa is complicated and slightly different in each canton, and when searching for a job or internship, the candidates are facing strong competition and do not have the same niche of international business as Swiss recipients in Japan. We are looking forward to the next arrivals and are here to support where we can.

We wish to thank our sponsors who are making all this possible and remained at our side during these difficult times. A special thank goes to our partner school JSL and the two chambers and all its members! It is their continuous support that has laid the financial foundation to realize this important investment into future Swiss-Japan business relations!

2. Scholarship Applications

Summary 2021

11 formal applications

4 scholarships granted

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

3. Profiles of Scholarship Candidates / Recipients in 2021

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 or Japan
- Has already acquired good basic knowledge of spoken and written Japanese preparing for his/her Japan training. Candidates from Japan have acquired a good level of an official Swiss language.
- Highly motivated and committed to a year abroad in Japan or Switzerland consisting of 3-6 m intensive language study and 6-9 months internship in a l 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

Four individuals were newly chosen for the scholarship program in 2021. Their personalities, educational qualifications and, notably, motivation have been verified in two personal interviews. The respective conclusions and recommendations were then discussed in the Scholarship Committee which ultimately decided on scholarships. This procedure has over the years ensured a minimal failure rate, i.e. only 7 scholarship recipients (out of 233) have not completed their "SJCC Japan Year".

4. Finances

Our Balance Sheet remained very healthy with an accumulated surplus (cash at banks) of CHF 209,044 CHF at year-end. Contingent Liabilities, i.e. outstanding but committed scholarship payments amounted to the following amounts (split between Year in Japan and Year in Switzerland):

- Year in Japan: JPY 4'500'000 to be carried forward to 2022
- Year in Switzerland: CHF 25'000 to be carried forward to 2022

The total contingent liabilities in CHF are 59'200.

We are very glad and encouraged by the continued support of our 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.

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 Shraishi
- the Swiss Embassy in Tokyo, H.E. Ambassador Dr. Andreas Baum
- the Swiss Business Hub, Claudio Mazzucchelli
- 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

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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

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.

SWISS-JAPANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (SJCC)
Chairman of the Scholarship Fund
Philipp Saurer