

Center for Research Development

The Center for Research Development was established in 2004 to help develop strategies for the Museum's core research projects and other research activities. Overseas visiting faculty are hosted by the Center.

Plan for 2009

Development of Research Strategies

Survey of Trends in Anthropological and Ethnological Research and Publication of the Results

As a core research institute of cultural anthropology and ethnology in Japan, the Center is responsible for collecting information on the latest research trends in Japan and abroad, and making the information available to the Museum staff and the general public.

Currently, the Center is carrying out a research project entitled "A Survey of the Trends in Cultural Anthropology and Ethnology Research, How Such Research Can Meet the Needs of Academic and Non-academic Communities, and the Best Ways to Build Cooperative Relationships with Other Research Institutions." The Center now employs research assistants who are working on this project. The results of the project will be reported in "Report on the Activities of the Center for Research Development" to be issued at the end of every academic year.

Study of the Academic and Social Demands for Ethnological and Anthropological Research

The Center for Research Development accumulates information on the academic interest and demand for the Museum's core research, joint research, and inter-university research projects, in addition to the public interest shown at fieldwork sites, in order to investigate what types of ethnological and anthropological research should be considered.

Development of Research Strategies

The Center determines mid-term objectives and formulates research strategies based on analyses of the data coming from the above studies. The Center also explores research systems that might be suitable for the research programs and research fellow systems to facilitate it, and examines the development of methods for essential resources such as reference and archive materials

Planning of Academic Exchange Salon Meetings

In order to help create research strategies, academic exchange meetings have been hosted at Minpaku since 2007, aiming to foster greater understanding of research trends in academic fields outside anthropology and ethnology. Following a lecture from a guest speaker whose study area is relevant to anthropology and ethnology, the salon is opened for all those attending to exchange ideas. In 2009, we conducted the event four times under the common theme of "Reconsidering Interdisciplinarity".

1 st	TATEIWA Shinya (Ritsumeikan University)	"The Design of Survival Science"
2 nd	AKIYAMA Satoshi (Tokyo University)	"Why Art Historians Research Sacred Relics"
3 rd	HIRATA Oriza (Osaka University)	"The Theater as a Public Forum"
4 th	TANABE Akio (Kyoto University)	"The Potential for Interdisciplinary Research towards Construction of a Continuous Survival Foundation Paradigm"

Planning, Design and Implementation of Research Projects

Promotion of Core Research Projects, and Support for the Operation and Planning Designs of National Joint Research Projects of the Institutes for the Humanities, and Other Large Research Projects

The Center will support the implementation of the Museum's core research projects, while giving advice on the redesign and operation of projects to help to enhance the efficiency of the projects.

Evaluation of Research Structure and Research Projects

Development and Use of Evaluation Systems, and Inspection and Evaluation of Ongoing Research Projects

Reference materials are prepared for mid-term and final evaluations of the drafts of the National Institutes for the Humanities' annual achievement reports and the progress of their mid-term goals and plans. The Center also seeks further improvement of its research systems and activities through self inspection, considering the comments of external evaluation committees, and evaluations based on the mid-term goals and plans of the National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation. By summarizing annual reports and mid-term reports of ongoing core research and joint projects, the Center supervises their activities and provides support.

Research Coordination and Collaboration

Promotion of Research Collaboration with Universities and Other Research Institutes

In order to promote research collaboration with other research institutes, core research projects and research fellow systems are continuously examined to identify areas for improvement.

Projects for Junior Researchers

Since 2006, we have hosted the “Young Researchers Meeting on Joint Use of the National Museum of Ethnology”, seeking participation from members of the public. In 2009, we hosted the “Minpaku Young Researchers Promotion Seminar” over three days, and trialed the introduction of an awards system in which outstanding speakers are awarded the “Minpaku Young Seminar Award”.

The seminar was attended by 12 graduate students from national, public, and private universities all over Japan. We also began trialing the “Joint Research by Young Researchers” project in November 2008 based on the opinions of young researchers, and selected two projects in 2008 and one project in 2009 after seeking applications from the public as listed below. The project was formally established in 2010 and we have been seeking public applications in a similar manner to general joint research (see p. 14).

Organizer	Research theme	Research period
ICHIKAWA Tetsu	An Anthropological Study of Place, Space, and Landscape	October 2008–September 2010
ISHIDA Shinichiro	Alternative Justice and Legal Pluralism in Asia and Africa	October 2008–September 2010
NAITO Naoki	Anthropological Studies on “Asylum Spaces”; Rethinking Development and Welfare Paradigms for Social Inclusion	October 2009–September 2011

Promotion of Research Collaboration with User Communities such as the Japanese Society of Cultural Anthropology

On February 27 2008, Minpaku signed an agreement with the Japanese Society of Cultural Anthropology (JASCA), the closest affiliated society within our user community. We plan to work with JASCA to construct a cultural anthropology reference database, and to process and store JASCA's cultural anthropology video archives. We have also established an executive committee for practical anthropology joint research projects. In February 2010, we hosted a research forum entitled “Scope for Supporting Anthropology.”

Minpaku hosted the 43rd Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society of Cultural Anthropology on May 30–31, 2009 at International House, Osaka. The day before the meeting, Minpaku co-hosted a joint symposium of the Association of Anthropological Societies in our lecture hall entitled “Our Insatiable Desire for Food.”

Coordination with the Japan Consortium for Area Studies

The Japan Consortium for Area Studies (JCAS) is an active group of academic communities sharing the common theme of global research. Minpaku became JCAS' 70th member organization in May 2006 and a member of its executive group in 2008.

On November 8, 2008, an annual meeting was held, co-hosted by the Museum, and an open symposium was offered on “Practical Use of Area Studies: Reports from the Field at Development, Disaster, and Medical Sites.”

Promotion of Research Coordination and Collaboration with Overseas Research Institutes

The Center is undertaking preparations for agreements with overseas research institutes in efforts to obtain research coordination and collaboration. Minpaku concluded agreements with the Taipei National University of the Arts in May 2009 and China's National Palace Museum in October of the same year.

The National University of San Marcos (Peru)

June 14, 2005

We conduct joint surveys in the field of archeology and promote academic exchange of the findings obtained. In 2009, the joint survey team conducted an excavation at the Pacopampa site in Peru and discovered the tomb of a woman believed to have been a religious leader, as well as gold artifacts that are among the oldest found in the Americas.

Shung Ye Museum of Formosan Aborigines (Taiwan)

July 1, 2006

Collaboration includes conducting anthropological, linguistic, and historical studies of the current status of Formosan aboriginal peoples, alongside studies regarding reference materials about Formosan aborigines which are housed at the National Museum of Ethnology and other museums, and publishing reports and an academic journal.

Minpaku hosted two research seminars and the international collaborative exhibition “Contemplating the Past Hundred Years” in 2009 at the Shung Ye Museum of Formosan Aborigines in Taipei.

The National Folk Museum of Korea

July 11, 2007

Collaboration included organizing scholar exchange programs, collaborative research projects, and academic meetings; coordinating museum exhibitions and educational activities; and exchanging academic information and publications.

In 2009, discussion was held to build a new system for the collection of video footage on the “Culture of the Korean Peninsula,” and joint research was undertaken to compile the Ethnography of Ulsan.

Inner Mongolia University (China)

September 22, 2008

Exchanges between teaching faculty and researchers, development of research projects, cooperation on museum exhibitions and education, exchange of academic documents and publications, etc.

Taipei National University of the Arts (Taiwan)

May 15, 2009

Academic exchange, development of research projects, cooperation on museum exhibitions and educational initiatives, exchange of academic information and publications, etc.

In 2009, Minpaku and TNUA co-hosted a workshop on the collection of documents pertaining to ethnology and ethnic cultural heritage.

National Palace Museum (China)

October 16, 2009

Academic exchange, development of research projects, cooperation on museum exhibitions and educational initiatives, exchange of academic information and publications, etc.

Collection of Research Information and Publication of Research Results

Collection of Information on Research Activities and Compilation of the 2009 Annual Research Report

The Center collects, digitizes, and stores information about all of the research activities conducted at the Museum, including core, joint, and individual research projects as well as externally-funded research projects such as those conducted with JSPS Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research. The Center is also compiling the annual research report of the Museum for AY2009.

Supporting the Publication of Research Results through the Research Dissemination Program

In efforts to open research results to the public more effectively for the good of society, we expanded the “Promotion of the Research Forum Program” established in 2002 into the “Research Dissemination Program” in 2003. Through this program, the Museum’s joint research and individual research projects are made available to the public in various forms, such as symposia, research forums, and academic lectures. In 2009, six symposia and four research forums were held through the program. In addition, academic lectures are organized every year in Tokyo and Osaka, helping to disseminate research results throughout society (see page 21).