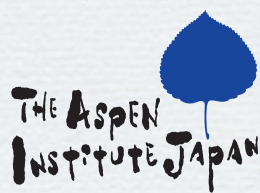

Deepening and strengthening
the roots of our values
and the backbone of our humanity
by absorbing the soil of eternal wisdom

A S P E N



The Aspen Institute Japan



The Jomon Sugi (a long-lived cedar tree) has come to have strong, thick roots reaching firmly into the soil of Yakushima, a granite island in Kagoshima Prefecture which nutrients are very sparse. These roots are the reason the Jomon Sugi has survived for over two-thousand years and continues to thrive today. The branches and leaves stretch out, filling the big, blue sky. Let's root ourselves in our values and strengthen the backbone of humanity. These strong branches and leaves can reach out even further toward tomorrow by understanding the unchanging, universal values, just as the Jomon Sugi lives on eternally.

A S P E N

What is Aspen?

Global efforts founded in recognizing problems related to specialization and efficiency principles

"The overall picture is being lost as we occupy our efforts in specialized fields." As this has become an alarm in modern society, the Aspen Institute was born to provide the opportunities for intellectual exchange. The Aspen Institute Japan has inherited this mentality while building its own unique programs in addition to classic literatures from Japan and East Asia. The Aspen Institute Japan cultivates leadership skills which can bring hope to the future through materials from "classic" works and the means of "dialogues".

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Origins of Aspen

Alarm of Trivialization Rings Starting from a speech delivered by Robert Hutchins

The origin of Aspen dates back to a speech delivered by Robert Hutchins (President of the University of Chicago) in 1949 at the celebration of the 200th birthday of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe* which was held in the United States at Aspen, Colorado. In his speech entitled, "Seeking A Civilization of Dialogue," Robert Hutchins said, "The danger of uneducated specialists is the greatest danger that our civilization faces." He pointed out the crisis of trivialization related to the way in which people live. Robert Hutchins appealed to the importance of dialogs based on the necessity of character building education as well as mutual understanding and respect.

The challenges he had brought forward regarding "the way in which to restructure basic human values, communication, and community which have been lost due to specialization, segmentation, occupational principles, efficiency principles, and short-run profitability principles" evoked an awareness of these problems in many people. Thereafter, the Aspen Institute was founded in 1950 as an organization aiming to free academics, artists, and business leaders from their daily lives and offer an ideal place for leisurely dialogues and speculation.

* 200th birthday celebration of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The celebration was planned by Robert Hutchins, Mortimer Adler, and Walter P. Paepcke to use Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's thirst for humanity in his life as an example of the human spirit at a time when the cold war was advancing and commercialism was showing its adverse effects. More than 2,000 cultural figures from academics and philosophers to artists including Albert Schweitzer (philosopher/doctor) and José Ortega y Gasset (philosopher) had participated.

The Aspen Executive Seminars started the year after the Aspen Institute was founded. Mortimer Adler (University of Chicago professor/philosopher) led the development of the methodology and abridged the *Great Books of the Western World*, which he himself had been editing for the seminar text used.

Birth of The Aspen Institute Japan to Realize Full-fledged Executive Seminars

The desire to realize a full-fledged executive seminar quickly gained momentum in Japan and The Aspen Institute Japan came into existence in April 1998. Thereafter, more than 5,000 leaders have participated in these seminars. The Aspen Institute Japan provides opportunities for dialogues and speculation for the leaders of Japan who are continually active in a broad-range of fields.



April 3, 1998 The Aspen Institute Japan is born

Seeking Inspiration from the Classics

In 1949, the Goethe Bicentennial Convocation was held in Aspen, Colorado, in the United States. That event had been inspired by a desire to explore the nature of the human spirit, and fostered broad dialogue by the many thinkers, artists, and literary scholars in attendance, among them philosopher José Ortega y Gasset and humanitarian philosopher Albert Schweitzer.

Following World War II, economic progress and advances in science and technology were accompanied by the endless pursuit of specialization, segmentation, functionalism, efficiency, and short-term profit. The Goethe birthday celebration in Aspen was held to explore ways of restructuring the basic human values, communication, and community that in some ways had been lost as a result of these trends.

Among the convocation speeches, the presentation entitled "Seeking a Civilization of Dialogue" given by Robert M. Hutchins, then chancellor of the University of Chicago, had a strong impact on the audience.

Noting that "the most unexpected characteristic of our time is the universal trivialization of life," Hutchins underlined the importance of efforts to recover the art of human communication and encourage sustained dialogue. These ideas were the impetus behind the creation of the Aspen Institute in the United States as an organization devoted to providing an ideal setting for scholars, artists, and businesspersons to free themselves from the complexities of everyday life and engage in relaxed dialogue and reflection.

In the over 60 years that have elapsed since then, its leadership seminars have assembled with the same, timeless commitment to thought and dialogue rooted in universal human values for a deeper understanding of issues facing humanity, culture, society, nature, and the world, and encouraging attendees to reframe those issues within the modern context.

In 1998, Japanese business executives were so inspired by these seminars that they established the Aspen Institute Japan. Thanks to a Japan-focused



Teisuke Kitayama

President
The Aspen Institute Japan

program and support from a team of highly qualified instructors from academia, the Japan branch has continued to thrive and expand to this day.

Indeed, with a program that has grown to around 40 seminars a year, the Aspen Institute Japan now serves target audiences ranging from corporate executives and government officials to high school students and appears to have a steadily larger role to play.

One of the key features of Aspen seminars is their focus on building a dialogue rooted in the classics, and through that process, encouraging a comparative perspective that leads to new things and new ideas. In an age of ongoing globalization, demand has grown for talented people who can perform on the world stage. In particular, human resources that can readily adapt to diverse value systems through an understanding of different cultures, religions, and social settings will gain even more importance in the years ahead.

Moving forward, I am determined to promote the widespread popularity of Aspen seminars within the Japanese business and industrial communities, strengthen our ties of cooperation with sister Aspen Institute branches worldwide, and contribute to the ongoing advancement of the Aspen Institute Japan.

About the Aspen Seminars

The Aspen Seminars aim to achieve the following by deepening thoughts through dialogues based on classic works, which contain universal values of issues directly confronted by the world, from humanity and culture to society and nature.

Objectives of the seminars

- Shake up each individuals way of thinking, understand how others think, and discover new perspectives and ideas.
- Deepen insights and discover one's own value axis by confronting and deeply probe diverse values through dialogues.
- Formulate the broad viewpoint required of true leadership and cultivate knowledge supporting character.

Promote Deeper Thought and Introspection by Combining Dialogues with Classic Works

Participants proceed through the seminar based on dialogues through the humble discussion of their thoughts and feelings as they read the same classic work. Rather than being taught how to read and understand these classic works by a specialist such as a lecture at college, each participant is free to come to their own conclusions. And through the repeated dialogues with the author, other participants and themselves, the objective is to urge introspection and to broaden their perspective to various worlds.

Utilize Strictly Selected Texts Combining Six Themes

The program is composed of six vital themes from the "World and Japan" to "nature and life," "awareness," "beauty and belief," "humanity," and "democracy" to spark thought about humanity and society. The texts which have been abridged and edited specifically for Japan are selected from East Asian and Western classics as well as modern literature.

Intellectual Dialogues Supported by Moderators and Resource Persons

Each section is supported by teaching staff that are richly versed in scholarly knowledge, bureaucracy, and the corporate world. The moderators intensify dialogues between participants while simultaneously leading the flow of discussions in the appropriate direction. Furthermore, the resource persons increase the quality of dialogues from the standpoint of their particular specialties while offering moderate encouragement to reach something fruitful.



The splendor of "Re-developing Yourself" upon having various experiences

Yoichiro Murakami

The Aspen Institute Japan, Deputy President
Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo
Professor Emeritus at International Christian University

The activities of The Aspen Institute Japan have gradually expanded. We started with two kinds of seminars, executive and youth, but recently junior seminars for high school students have been introduced in several forms. Consequently, the number of the texts used in seminars is also growing.

I have taught at universities for many years. In and outside my fields, I have required myself to read a long list of classical works. To be frank, some works listed as seminar texts were not on my list. So when I started to join the seminars as a moderator or resource person, I had to struggle—as well as be delighted—just as most seminar participants did. Even now, every seminar gives me some fresh intellectual insight.

The original meaning of the German word Bildung was almost the same as building in English, but now it means to figuratively build and cultivate oneself. The most appropriate time for Bildung must be during adolescence, but even in the midst of one's career, rebuilding or re-cultivating oneself by tackling with the classical works must be a remarkable challenge.

Classics are a Necessary Sustenance for True Leaders

Takenori Inoki

The Aspen Institute Japan, Trustee
Professor Emeritus at Osaka University

The understanding of humanity is broadened and deepened through the act of reading the classics alongside others. One will learn the mentality of bravery and fairness while cultivating superior judgment by seeking out the vibrancy of knowledge. The leadership seminars of Aspen which embody this philosophy has begun a "dojo" to hone practical skills to assess the importance of matters, which is not more than simple knowledge or information, by confronting the intellectual legacy of those who have come before us while combining dialogues with other participants.

We must look to the past to learn the reality of what remains unchanged for us as humans to even scratch the surface of things for the future. The secrets of humanity and society discovered by the greats are discussed in these classics. The classics can be considered a necessary sustenance for true leaders who are able to put themselves in someone else's shoes and take an overall forward looking perspective without clouding themselves with their own desires.



Executive Seminars and Young Executive Seminars

The Aspen Institute Japan holds primarily two types of seminars.

The Executive Seminar is a leadership program for executives in a wide-range of fields who have various different qualities and have diverse backgrounds. In the current times of advancing internationalization and complications, high-level decision making is demanded of executives in each industry. In addition to the dialogue sessions for these types of executives, these seminars offer rewarding experiences through forums and cultural programs.

The Young Executive Seminars have been developed as a foundation of the executive seminars for managers who aim to be board members or executives in the future. These seminars offer an opportunity for dialogues through the involvement in classic literature at an early stage for this generation of people, who are to be the driving force of the future Japanese society. Aspen Japan also holds the Science, Technology and Humanity Seminar and the Aspen Seminar on Today's Society, both aiming to provide an opportunity for executives in various sectors to think fundamentally about current issues.

Executive Seminar

- These seminars are for chairpersons/executives of corporations, senior public officers, academics, researchers, politicians, and those related to NPOs or NGOs.
- 15-20 participants per seminar

Held over four nights and five days

Please also feel free to attend with your husband/wife (your escort will be an observer).

Young Executive Seminar

- Young Executive Seminars are for management level employees of corporations in their 30s and 40s.
- 15-20 participants per seminar

Held over two nights and three days.



The moderators and resource persons for these seminars will primarily be the following persons:

Yoichiro Murakami

Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo
Professor Emeritus at International Christian University

Takenori Inoki

Professor Emeritus at Osaka University

Seizo Sekine

Professor Emeritus at the University of Tokyo

Takashi Oshimura

Professor at Aoyama Gakuin University

Ohashi Yoichiro

Professor Emeritus at Sophia University

Hiroiyuki Ogino

Professor at Sophia University

Takuo Dome

Professor at Osaka University

Ichiro Taki

Professor at Osaka Kyoiku University

Tadashi Karube

Professor at the University of Tokyo

Brilliant people from each industry assume the role of moderators and resource persons. (Names in no particular order)

S E M I N A R

Importance of providing opportunities for young people to be exposed to liberal arts

16th Executive Seminar Participant

Shuzo Sumi

Senior Executive Advisor, Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance Co., Ltd.

I was almost lost in amazement through the preparation and the participation of the seminar. The excitement lingered long after the seminar, and I was delighted to find that I still had the brain cells and the thinking process to get excited with an experience such as this Executive Seminar. On the other hand, it was unfortunate that I did not have a chance to have similar opportunities during my youth. I believe that it is necessary in Today's Japanese education to provide opportunities to young people to be thoroughly exposed to liberal arts, which is essential to live proudly and globally as an independent person.



Aspen Provides Wisdom Increasing Intellectual Resilience

16th Executive Seminar Participant

Takayuki Hashimoto

Honorary Executive Advisor, IBM Japan, Ltd

I vividly remember even today the exhilaration I felt when I found something new while fully exerting both my right and left brain in my daily work in the summer of 2003. Globalization in the world is accelerating with the advancements of ICT and new value creation is at hand, but increasing resilience rooted in universal values is needed to win at this "intellectual boxing". This wisdom is available at Aspen. In addition to expertise, I discovered the ability to take a broader perspective of matters as well as gain communication skills capable of impact to people. Thinking back now, that one week was a prelude to many of the challenges I experienced in my corporate life thereafter.



Discover the Necessity of "Ones Own Axis" by Sharing an Intellectual Thinking Atmosphere

4th Executive Seminar Participant

Yukako Uchinaga

Chairperson and Representative Director, Japan Women's Innovation Network

I was able to think to my fullest extent at the seminar. The dialogues with participants based on the texts was a chance to experience the sharing an intellectual atmosphere created from an invisible jigsaw puzzle, and I felt the necessity to think more deeply about my daily life and living. I came to understand how vital the strength of an axis for my religious as well as philosophical views and my own identity are in my global work and activities. We, as Japanese, have to work to strengthen our own axes. The Aspen seminar helped me discover that need.



Stewardship Seminars

Stewardship Seminars are held every year at the request and with the support of companies and organizations.



National Personnel Authority and Aspen Japan Seminar

A seminar for executive administrative officials was held in September 2003 with the cooperation of the National Personnel Authority. The three night, four day seminar was held for executives of the central government and those who participated raved greatly about the seminar after its conclusion.

Ishikawa and Aspen Japan Seminar

A seminar for executive employees of Ishikawa Prefecture and executives of private enterprises was held in October 2004. The seminar then grew to be a Hokuriku District Seminar with the participation of executive employees of Toyama and Fukui Prefectures.

Seminars for High School Students

The Aspen Junior Seminar and the Aspen Classics Seminar for High School Students are programs targeted to those high school students who will lead the future. Participants consider the challenges in life from “how to live better” to “why learning and working are vital” and “what values are important” while they participate in dialogues concerning classic works. These seminars are sponsored by companies and organizations that support the mission of Aspen Japan.



The Aspen Junior Seminar was founded in 2008 to celebrate Aspen's tenth anniversary and is held every year in Tokyo as a seminar for high school students in the areas around Tokyo.

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Aspen Classic Seminar for High School Students

These seminars are held at high school facilities and also led by local high school teachers with the cooperation of local educators. In the future, Aspen will hold seminars in each of these areas to provide “opportunities for discussion and familiarity with classic works” to as many high school students as possible.

S E M I N A R

To Become a Company for the Global Environment and Human Society

24th Executive Seminar Participant

Tomohiko Fujiyama

Principal Fellow, Center for Research and Development Strategy,
Japan Science and Technology Agency
Former Senior Vice President, Research and Corporate Strategy, Mitsubishi Corporation

The torment of decision-making for companies is becoming more and more apparent. The financial movements exceeding economic theory, the advancements in leading-edge science technologies, and transformations in controversies concerning social justices are all part of this backdrop. Companies not only exist to pursue profit in the short-term but also must exist for the global environment and mankind. Even though these answers are not written in the classic works, I discovered my ability to confront modern challenges and my own humanity improved once I completed the Aspen seminar.



Externally Induced Enlightenment by Meeting With Other Participants

22nd Young Executive Seminar Participant

Hideki Yanagihashi

Director, Hokkaido-Tohoku Regional Wholesaler Department,
Wholesaler Affairs, Merck Sharp & Dohme

The dense education and the meeting of people offered by this seminar caused a large chemical reaction within me. I was able to have “dialogues” not only with other participants but the works and authors based on classical themes with the premise of differing values that I don't usual touch in my daily life. This seminar which allowed us to look at the various values within ourselves while discovering new values could also be said to have provided an “externally induced enlightenment” for me through acquaintance with other participants. I truly recommend these seminars as an amazing chance for us as business people and ordinary people to seriously think about perspectives on life, ethics, and the world.



Overseas Network

The Aspen Institute Japan consists of an international member network throughout 14 countries and regions – Japan, America, Germany, Italy, France, India, Romania, Spain, Central Europe, Mexico, Kiev (Ukraine), New Zealand, UK, and Colombia.



The Aspen Institute (US) (founded 1950)

Aspen Institute Germany (founded 1974)

Institut Aspen France (founded 1983)

Aspen Institute Italia (founded 1984)

Ananta Aspen Centre (founded 2004)

Institute Aspen Romania (founded 2006)

Aspen Institute España (founded 2010)

Aspen Institute Central Europe (founded 2012)

The Aspen Institute Mexico (founded 2014)

The Aspen Institute Kyiv (founded 2015)

The Aspen Institute New Zealand (founded 2019)

The Aspen Institute UK (founded 2021)

The Aspen Institute Colombia (founded 2023)

The Aspen Institute Japan (founded 1998)

Each of the Aspen Institutes operates under their own unique policies.

The Aspen Institute Japan

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