

Providing support for researchers working in fields related to Japanese culture overseas

You may be wondering why Kuraray is supporting humanities research. In short, we believe that technology should help people lead fulfilling and comfortable lives while also taking into consideration the natural environment. As such, it is of great significance to Kuraray to explore the human condition and society. With this in mind, the Kuraray Foundation has partnered with the National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU) to sponsor the International Prize in Japanese Studies.

About NIHU

NIHU was established in 2004 as an organization that brings together six institutes, including the National Museum of Japanese History and the National Institute of Japanese Literature, with the aim of further developing research in the humanities.

Shining a spotlight on researchers working in Japan-related fields overseas through the International Prize in Japanese Studies

The International Prize in Japanese Studies was established by NIHU with cooperation from the Kuraray Foundation. The prize is awarded to researchers based outside of Japan who have made outstanding academic achievements in Japanese literature, language, history, folklore, society, environment, and other fields in the humanities, and who have made a significant contribution to the international development of Japanese studies. Kuraray executives also sit on the selection committee.



Previous prize winners

*The affiliations and job titles of the award winners are listed as they were at the time of receipt of the award.



2019

Haruo Shirane

Professor of Japanese Literature and Culture and Chair of the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Columbia University

Main research themes

- Japanese classics (*The Tale of Genji*, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, etc.)
- Proposal of new literary and cultural research methodologies, such as theories on canon formation, environmental criticism, etc.



2020

Andrew Gordon

Lee and Juliet Folger Fund Professor of History at Harvard University
Professor of the Edwin O. Reischauer Institute for Japanese Studies at Harvard University

Main research themes

- Modern Japanese labor history
- Modern and contemporary Japanese history, etc.



2021

Jean-Noël Robert

Professor of Collège de France

Main research themes

- Japanese Buddhism
- Hieroglossia, which compares the roles of Chinese and Latin texts in religious understanding, etc.



2022

Josef Kreiner

Professor Emeritus of University of Bonn
Visiting Researcher of Hosei University Research Center for International Japanese Studies

Main research themes

- Cultural anthropology
- Japanese studies, etc.



2023

Masayoshi Shibatani

Deedee McMurtry Chair Professor of Humanities and Professor of Linguistics Emeritus at Rice University
Professor Emeritus of Kobe University

Main research themes

- General linguistics
- Linguistic theory
- Linguistics of Asian languages, etc.



2024

Carol Gluck

George Sansom Professor of History at Columbia University

Main research themes

- Modern and contemporary Japanese history, etc.