



# JSPS SAN FRANCISCO NEWSLETTER

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*University of California, Berkeley*

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# Recent Activities

## 01 Workshop for Japanese University Administrative Staff in the U.S. November 8th - 9th, 2023

The Workshop for Japanese University Administrative Staff in the U.S. 2023 was conducted in person on November 8th and 9th, 2023.

This is a staff development event organized by JSPS San Francisco Office aimed at raising the motivation of Japanese university staff currently residing in the U.S. and enhancing their comprehension of U.S. universities. This year, we welcomed a total of 10 participants, including 3 International Program Associates from the JSPS Washington Office and the San Francisco Office.

On the first day of our seminar, we had the honor of hosting Mr. Koichiro Aoshima (Assistant Director, International Student Services & Outreach, Office of International Programs, San Francisco State University) and Ms. Naoko Dunnigan (Lead, Global Corporate & Foundation Programs, Institute of International Education (IIE)). They graciously shared their journeys leading up to their time in the United States, their experiences thus far, and insights into the American work environment.

During the afternoon discussion session, participants candidly shared their observations post-arrival in the US, differences in work culture between Japan and the US, challenges faced, and concerns. Looking ahead to the after part of the training and post-return to Japan, attendees made pledges on how they intend to leverage their American experiences in their professional endeavors.



*1st Day of the Workshop*



*Campus Tour at University of California, Berkeley*

On the morning of the second day, we were joined by Mr. Christopher Reed (Global Engagement Coordinator, Global Engagement Office, University of California, Berkeley) and three other staff members from the University of California, Berkeley, all of whom had previous experience with the JET Program in Japan. They engaged in a panel discussion regarding working at the University of California, Berkeley.

Following the discussion, Mr. Reed guided us on a campus tour of the University of California, Berkeley, and in the afternoon, we visited the C. V. Starr East Asian Library.

Throughout the two days, there was lively interaction between speakers and participants, and the seminar concluded successfully amidst enthusiasm and engagement.

# 02 Winter Japanese Researcher Gathering

January 27th, 2024

The Winter Japanese Researcher Gathering, organized by JSPS San Francisco Office, took place on January 27th, 2024 at David Brower Center in Berkeley.

This gathering aims to facilitate cross-disciplinary interactions among Japanese researchers thriving in the United States, fostering information exchange and strengthening friendships to enhance research activities. This year's event marked the 20th anniversary of the JSPS San Francisco Office's establishment and saw approximately 102 participants, including researchers, visiting scholars, university faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students, and industry researchers.

The keynote speeches commenced with a presentation titled "Science and Technology Diplomacy Strategy for Japan's Revitalization" by Dr. Yoichiro Matsumoto (Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Dr. Matsumoto elaborated on the current state, challenges, and initiatives in Japanese science and technology, followed by an engaging Q&A session fostering discussions on Japan's future in science and technology.

Following this, Dr. Takuo Sugaya (Associate Professor at Stanford Graduate School of Business) delivered a speech

titled "Adapting to Economics' Empirical Turn and Personal Life Changes" sharing insights into his own career and research in the U.S. academia, accompanied by a lively exchange of questions and answers with the participants. Attendees appreciated the accessible nature of the discussion, with remarks such as "enhanced understanding of economic research" and "highly intriguing insights" echoing throughout the session.

In addition to the keynote speeches, this edition of the meeting introduced Flash Talks and Poster Sessions by the participants for the first time. Despite being a new initiative, it facilitated interdisciplinary exchanges among researchers, proving to be a valuable addition to the event.

Finally, the meeting concluded with presentations on JSPS and introductions of three Japanese researchers' communities in the Bay Area.

Following the conclusion of the meeting, a reception provided an opportunity for researchers to engage in further discussions and network building.

Although held only in-person after several years, with the cooperation of all attendees, the event surpassed expectations, fostering a vibrant exchange gathering of over 100 participants.



Group Photo of the Participants

# 03 The Allied Genetics Conference 2024

March 8th, 2024

On March 8th, Director Yusaku Nakabeppu and Liaison Officer Abigail Hughes attended the Grants and Funding Panel at The Allied Genetics Conference 2024 in Washington, D.C. Director Nakabeppu was one of the speakers of the panel and was joined by the moderator Joanna Wardwell-Ozgo, Kennesaw State University, and other panelists Cliff Weil, National Science Foundation; Mandy Simcox, National Science Foundation; Mollie Manier, National Institute of Health; and Simone Soso, MSI (Minority Serving Institutions) STEM Research and Development Consortium. Around 100 interested scholars participated in the panel, eager to learn about funding opportunities for their field. Each panelist introduced themselves and their organization, and how they might be able to provide funding for potential applicants. Following the introductions, many questions were asked of the panelists. NSF and NIH have slightly more complicated grant application procedures; many of the questions of the audience were directed towards these organizations' representatives. San Francisco Office is proud to be able to represent JSPS in such gatherings and will be looking out for more opportunities to encourage researchers to conduct research in Japan.



Following this event, Liaison Officer Abigail Hughes was invited by the Engagement Professional Development Program Coordinator of the Genetics Society of America, Balint Kacsoh, to have an interview speaking specifically about the JSPS fellowships. This interview was streamed live on the GeneticsGSA Twitch (streaming service) channel, and questions from the live chat were answered in real-time. Mr. Kacsoh asked questions about the eligibility, length, flexibility, and appeal of JSPS fellowships. At least 50 people were able to see the interview as it occurred. More people can see this interview as the video is still up and is planned to be published on their YouTube channel.

The interview can be found [here](https://www.twitch.tv/videos/2084950637?filter=archives&sort=time) (https://www.twitch.tv/videos/2084950637?filter=archives&sort=time).

# 04 Information Sessions & Booth Exhibition

OCTOBER 11-12  
 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO  
 UC SAN DIEGO & KYOTO UNIVERSITY KSAC JOINT RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

DECEMBER 7  
 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

JANUARY 17  
 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN FRANCISCO

FEBRUARY 1  
 UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (ONLINE)

FEBRUARY 8  
 IV INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CELLULAR AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY,  
 NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF TRUJILLO(PERU) (ONLINE)

MARCH 5  
 CJS, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT MĀNOA (ONLINE)



University of California, San Francisco



University of California, Santa Cruz



## Booth Exhibition

OCTOBER 5  
 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS GLOBAL LEARNING FAIR

DECEMBER 11-14  
 AGU (American Geophysical Union) Annual Meeting 2023

FEBRUARY 15-17  
 2024 AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science) Annual Meeting

## HELPFUL LINKS

- **JSPS INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS FOR RESEARCH IN JAPAN** <https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-fellow/index.html>
- **JSPS FELLOWS PLAZA** <https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-plaza/index.html>
- **US AND CANADA JSPS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION** <http://www.jspsusaalumni.org/>
- **FAQ** <https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-fellow/faq.html>

For more information about upcoming info sessions, please visit our [website](https://www.jspsusa-sf.org/) or contact us directly.

<https://www.jspsusa-sf.org/>



# 05 Recent Activities from JSPS Washington Office

## Summer Program

JSPS Washington Office announces the open applications call for the Summer Program (Postdoctoral Fellowships for Research in Japan). This is the first time the fellowship has been opened in seven years. This program was formerly known as the “East Asian and Pacific Summer Institutes” (EASPI) by the NSF.

This page introduces the Summer Program, for which applications have recently closed; applications for 2025 will also be accepted in the summer and fall of this year, so if you are interested, please start preparing for the program!

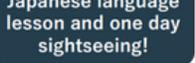
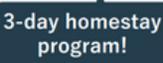
The JSPS Summer Program is a component of the JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowships for Research in Japan. Conducted in partnership with The Graduate University for Advanced Studies (SOKENDAI), the program offers young pre- and postdoctoral researchers from North America and Europe the opportunity to receive an orientation to Japanese culture and research systems and to conduct research under the guidance of host scientists at a Japanese university or research institute for a period of two months during the summer.

- ▶All fields in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences are eligible.
- ▶The candidate must either have a major in or be a researcher in a related field.
- ▶Applicants must also find their own host researchers.
- ▶Please refer [here](#) for other application requirements.

### Overview of the Program

				
2 months in summer	Round-trip air ticket	Maintenance allowance of ¥534,000	Research support allowance of ¥158,500	Overseas travel insurance

### Schedule details of this program [FY2023]

Apr 26	▶	June 12	▶	June 13-15	▶	June 16-17 Aug 17	▶	Aug 18	▶	Aug 19
Pre-Orientation (Online)		Arrival In Japan		Orientation Programs		Research In Host Institution		Research report presentation In Tokyo		Departure from Japan
				 Japanese language lesson and one day sightseeing!		 3-day homestay program!				



Members of JSPS Washington Office

In additional news, the Washington Office is the Secretariat of the U.S.-Canada JSPS Alumni Association and its regional Chapters. In recent years, the [Capital Chapter](#), The GULF States Chapter, and the [Quebec Chapter](#) have been established. There are plans to form more chapters in various regions in the future.

For more information on the activities of the Washington office, please visit [here](#).



JSPS FELLOW IN AMERICA - 1

# Kota Katsumi

- 2024.1 – present    Assistant professor of physics, New York University (NYU)
- 2022. 9 - 2023. 12    JSPS overseas postdoctoral research fellow
- 2022. 9 - 2023. 12    Postdoctoral researcher Johns Hopkins University
- 2021. 9 - 2022. 8    Postdoctoral researcher, Université de Paris cité
- 2021. 4 - 2021. 9    Postdoctoral researcher, The University of Tokyo, Cryogenic research center
- 2019. 4 - 2021. 3    JSPS Research Fellow (DC2)
- 2018. 4 - 2021. 3    Ph.D., Department of Physics, The University of Tokyo



I am an assistant professor of physics at New York University (NYU). The NYU campus is located in the center of lower Manhattan, shown with its symbolic flags (Pic.1). In my research lab at NYU, I will explore the light-induced exotic phenomena in quantum materials on ultrafast time scales (<https://wp.nyu.edu/katsumi/>).

**Q1. Why did you decide to research in the U.S.?**

The primary reason is that I found a fascinating lab in the U.S. My research interest is elucidating the light-matter interaction in quantum materials, which is crucial to understanding the material properties and the future device application of those materials. Prof. Peter Armitage’s group at Johns Hopkins University is one of the leading labs exploring the light-matter interaction in various materials using cutting-edge techniques. As a graduate student in Prof. Ryo Shimano’s lab at the University of Tokyo, I studied the Higgs mode in superconductors, the condensed-matter analog of the Higgs boson in particle physics. After finishing my PhD, I started to think about better understanding the Higgs mode using a different approach. I found that the so-called “multi-dimensional spectroscopy,” recently developed in the Armitage lab, has the potential to elucidate the physics of the Higgs mode in various types of superconductors.

Another reason is that the backgrounds of researchers and students in the U.S. are generally very broad. The intimate interactions with them will enable me to cultivate new ideas that I would never come up with



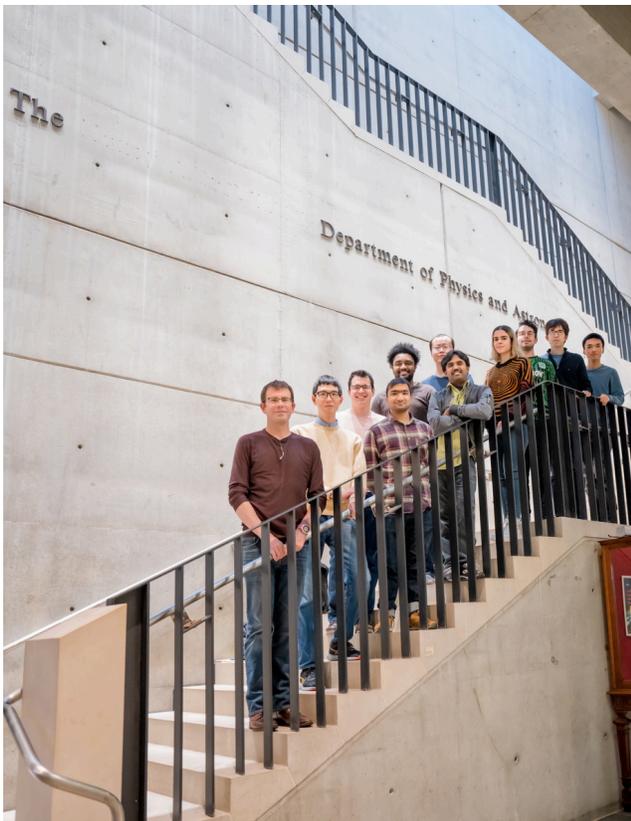
*Pic.1 Buildings of New York University (NYU)*

otherwise. Picture 2 shows the Armitage lab members coming from all over the world. In addition to research ideas or discussions, I learned about various cultures in the U.S. and other countries.

These motivations brought me to decide to do research in the U.S.

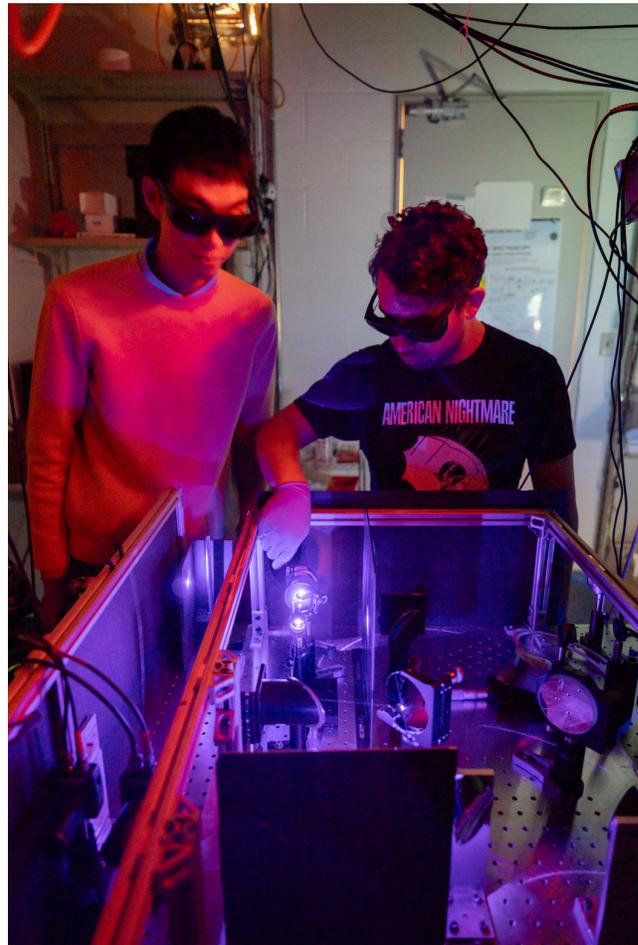
**Q2. What is your impression of the research environment in the U.S.?**

My first opportunity to visit the U.S. was when I was a 4th-year undergraduate student and joined the TOMODACHI STEM program at Rice University. From my limited observations at Rice, Johns Hopkins, and New York University, I got three main impressions. First, the undergraduate students are really energetic about research. Even sophomores join the lab and learn a lot about experiments. The young power is one of the most significant driving forces of U.S. universities. This also helps graduate students mentor undergraduate students, sharpening their understanding of research. Second, the universities invite various people from all over the world for colloquiums. This active interaction with multiple researchers opens up new possibilities for research collaborations, understanding the research trend, and reaching the work outside the university. Third, in general, people are optimistic about failure. I learned one of my favorite proverbs; “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” Since lemons are sour, they imply sourness or difficulty in life. Then, making lemonade means turning them into something positive or desirable.



*Pic. 2 Lab picture at Johns Hopkins University.*

Although this may be a famous English proverb, this well describes the optimistic way of thinking by people in the U.S. and is an essential attitude toward research in general.



*Pic. 3 Setting up an experiment with a graduate student.*

**Q3. How do you take advantage of your experience in the U.S. and apply it to your research or career?**

During my stay at Johns Hopkins University, I achieved my initial goal of learning new experimental methods and physics of different classes of materials. Furthermore, I did a lot of experiments with the students, which significantly improved my mentorship and understanding of the experiments (Pic. 3). I also had many chances to visit research meetings or conferences in Las Vegas, Montreal, Paris, and Vienna and research collaborations at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. These opportunities enabled me to make new connections to researchers worldwide. Using all these experiences, I will build a great lab at NYU as a principal investigator. (I am looking for motivated graduate students and postdoctoral fellows!)



## HU proposal obtains funding via MEXT's 'J-PEAKS: Program for Forming Japan's Peak Research Universities'

***HU secures funding for proposal to integrate semiconductors, meta matter, and biotechnology with synchrotron radiation, driving joint research with Japanese and US universities.***

Hiroshima University (HU) obtained funding from the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology's (MEXT) "J-PEAKS: Program for Forming Japan's Peak Research Universities" for a proposal seeking the "Realization of an industrial cluster ecosystem integrating semiconductors, meta matter, and biotechnology with visualization technology using synchrotron radiation."

The project aims to improve, internationalize, and accelerate the social implementation of research activities in collaboration with other universities. It will be implemented using a management strategy centered on core strengths and distinctive research capabilities in specific fields. Twelve universities nationwide, including HU, were selected for this initiative.

HU will leverage its internationally outstanding research strengths to promote strategies to enhance its research capabilities, focusing on the interdisciplinary research areas of semiconductors, meta matter, regenerative medicine, cell medicine, and drug discovery, based on visualization using synchrotron radiation in the ultraviolet (UV) region, which is rare in the world. In addition, as a hub of "Virtuous Circulation of People, Knowledge, and Resources," HU will form an ecosystem of interdisciplinary



## HIROSHIMA UNIVERSITY

fusion to promote international brain circulation and industrial clusters.

HU will lead this project in collaboration with Kobe University. Other participating institutions include Tohoku University, Tokyo Medical and Dental University, Tokyo Institute of Technology, Toyohashi University of Technology, and the High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK). Additionally, HU is teaming up with top American universities like Arizona State University and Purdue University, with a focus on developing semiconductor talent.

Last May, HU also joined a landmark U.S.-Japan collaborative partnership launched by Micron and its industry partners to enhance semiconductor research and establish a talent development hub.

By leveraging its research strengths and the environment and resources of Hiroshima and the Setouchi area, and through co-creation with local governments and industry, HU will bring together "knowledge" from around the world to build and deploy an internationally developed regional development model that drives solutions to domestic and international issues from global and local perspectives, including further development of excellence in academic fields, creation of innovation leading to global-scale problem solving and social transformation, productivity improvement of local industry, and job creation.

HU President Mitsuo Ochi expressed enthusiasm for the project's potential impact, emphasizing the importance of diverse talent and international cooperation in driving innovation.

“To realize our vision for the university 10 years from now, we will establish a mechanism for the participation of diverse talent, transcending barriers of age gender, position, country, and region, based on our

management philosophy. We will create an innovation ecosystem 'Hiroshima Research & Innovation Valley (HIRIV)' that is based on collaboration and 'convergence of knowledge,’” he said.

“We aim to be a university loved by the local community and chosen by the world and hope to provide an opportunity to energize Japan from the local community.”

## JSPS FELLOW IN AMERICA - 2

# Yohei Komaru

**Current position:** Postdoctoral Research Associate | Division of Nephrology (Herrlich Lab), Department of Medicine, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, MO, USA

**Education and Experience:**

2006 - 2012 M.D. | Faculty of Medicine, The University of Tokyo

2012 - 2017 Resident/Clinical Fellow | St. Luke’s International Hospital (Internal & Emergency Medicine),

The University of Tokyo Hospital (Intensive Care & Nephrology), Shonan Kamakura General Hospital (Nephrology)

2017 - 2021 Ph.D. | Graduate School of Medicine, The University of Tokyo

2021. 11— Postdoctoral Research Associate | Washington University in St. Louis

2023. 4— Overseas Research Fellow | Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)

**Research Interest:**

Based on my clinical background as a critical care nephrologist (the interdisciplinary field of kidney and intensive care), I have especially focused on elucidating the mechanisms and mediators underlying acute kidney injury (AKI) and its frequently fatal secondary organ complications, including, but not limited to, respiratory failure. The overarching goal is to formulate innovative therapeutic strategies for these clinical challenges.

**Q1: Why did you decide to research in the U.S.?**

First of all, my research objectives matched the expertise of my current Principal Investigator (PI), Dr. Andreas Herrlich, at Washington University in St. Louis. The Herrlich Lab stands out as a unique team in that they incorporate mechanistic approaches in mice and in vitro combined with translational approaches using human samples.

During my PhD, I learned techniques to establish several murine AKI models, as well as methods for clinical studies under the guidance of two esteemed professors at UTokyo, Dr. Masaomi Nangaku (Nephrology) and Dr. Kent Doi (Emergency and Critical Care Medicine). While fortunate to publish several clinical studies out of my PhD projects, I really wanted to further develop and deepen my insights through hands-on experience in basic science.



Lab photo. The person positioned third from the left is my supervisor (PI), Dr. Andreas Herrlich.

My focus turned towards single-cell methodologies, such as flow cytometry and single-cell transcriptomics. I found that the Herrlich Lab offered a great opportunity for young postdocs to run a project of interorgan crosstalk.

**Q2: What is your impression of the research environment in the U.S.?**

In my opinion, the greatest strength of the US research community is in diversity and vibrant collaborations. PIs, staff scientists, postdocs, and students from diverse backgrounds and global origins come together in the US. People are open-minded and willing to collaborate across specialties and positions. While connecting the dots between ideas from different cultural and disciplinary perspectives may be challenging, I have witnessed moments where such collaborations led to innovation.

Secondly, each lab and PI is more independent; PIs design their research project, secure grants, and hire lab members based on their plan. PIs with M.D. degrees can manage their schedules, sparing dedicated time for research activities alongside clinical work in hospitals. This independence facilitates rapid decision-making and maximizes research output, free from division or hospital constraints. On the other hand, each PI is responsible for continuously acquiring an adequate amount of funding; sometimes an entire lab closes because of financial issues.

Although I have spent most of my career in the Tokyo metropolitan area, I noticed that, with sufficient resources, researchers do not necessarily stay in the most populous regions of a country. St. Louis provides a nice and affordable living environment with a warm and friendly community that embodies the pioneering spirit of the Midwest.



EMBO|FEBS Lecture Course held in Spetses, Greece (2022).



KSN/APSN Joint Symposium on interorgan crosstalk held in Seoul, Korea (2023).

**Q3: How do you take advantage of your experiences in the U.S. and apply it to your research or career?**

My goal is to become an independent physician-scientist in Japan. Hopefully, the experience at WashU will help me to open up a new horizon of a career as an MD/PhD in the following points:

1.Collaboration: In most Japanese university circumstances, we can collaborate with clinical and basic science labs to exchange and share innovative technologies, equipment, and most importantly, precious ideas for advancing research. Moreover, several international academic meetings (see pictures) have reminded me of the value of such opportunities in establishing potential collaborations and keeping track of cutting-edge topics.

2.Critical Thinking: Through the process of writing and reviewing papers with Dr. Herrlich, I have observed his ability to deduce and identify the genuine novelty and scientific contribution of each result and research paper. I would like to continue challenging myself with the question, “What is truly novel and exciting?” at every stage of my research career in Japan.

3.Education: Good research requires teamwork with a well-motivated, talented, and young generation. One of my objectives is to participate in clinical and basic research projects that motivate and inspire younger fellows and students.

I appreciate JSPS for the current opportunity. It is really fortunate that I have plenty of time to think about research projects, my career, and the future of myself, of my family, of our country, in a foreign land.

# OFFICE MEMBER GREETING

## Izumi Tanabe

*International Program Associate  
April, 2023 - March, 2024*

2023 was a challenging year for me. Despite having only four full-time staff members in our office, we managed to organize various events such as Workshop for Japanese University Administrative Staff in the U.S., researchers' gatherings, JUNBA events, and even dealt with the task of office relocation. Managing all these events with limited resources was no easy feat, but we successfully navigated through the year, and I am immensely grateful to all the staff members and supporters who stood by us.

One notable highlight of the year was the establishment of a strong partnership with a sister office in Washington, DC. Collaborating with them was one of the most rewarding experiences of the year, and I hope to see the San Francisco and Washington offices continue to foster this positive relationship.

As I return to Hiroshima University, I aim to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during my time here to my work there. I am deeply appreciative of everyone who assisted and supported me during my stay in Berkeley.



## FY2023 Collaboration of JSPS San Francisco & Washington

- **Montana State University Info Session** @Montana State University June 23
- **Japan-US Research Collaboration Week** @Stanford University July 20-25
- **Workshop for Japanese University Administrative Staff in the U.S.** November 8-9  
@JSPS San Francisco Office
- **NY Japanese Researchers Networking Event** December 1  
@The University of Tokyo New York Office
- **AGU Annual Meeting 2023** @Moscone Center, San Francisco December 11-14
- **2024 AAAS Annual Meeting** @Colorado Convention Center February 15-17
- **JSPS-NIH Forum** @NIH Bethesda Campus March 1

