

CLAIR

Council of Local Authorities for
International Relations



財団法人 自治体国際化協会



Joint Platform for Internationalization of Japanese Local Governments

In 1988, all prefectures and designated cities of Japan consensually established CLAIR to encourage and support international activities of local governments.

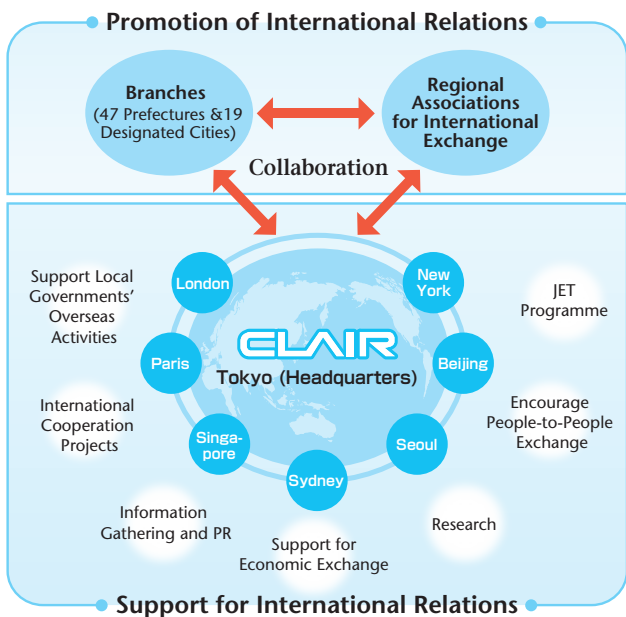
Nowadays, these activities encompass a broadening range:

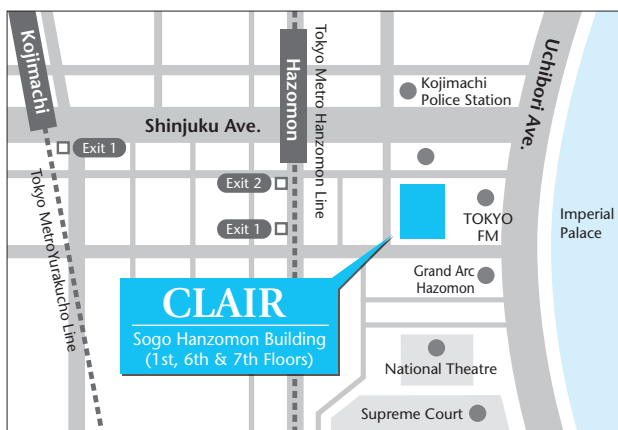
- grass-roots international exchange adds color and contributes to regional dynamism;
- teaching foreign languages and raising the international awareness of younger generations is more important than ever;
- an internationally minded strategy is indispensable to stimulate regional economies, whether by attracting foreign tourists or developing new markets for local products;
- fostering multiculturalism, or harmonious coexistence with foreign residents, is also a national issue.

CLAIR supports local authorities in all these areas. We use our extensive network to help local government become active on the international stage and meet the challenges of a global future.

The Four Pillars of CLAIR

1. Overseas Offices
2. The JET Programme
3. International Activities
4. Multiculturalism





- Hanzomon Line: 1 min. walk from Exit 1 of Hanzomon Station
- Yurakucho Line: 8 min. walk from Exit 1 of Kojimachi Station



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1 Overseas Offices

■ Seven Major Locations

Located in New York, London, Paris, Beijing, Seoul, Singapore and Sydney, CLAIR's offices are overseas platforms for local governments' activities. They are operated by Japanese local government employees and local staff.

■ Information on Local Governance

Our overseas offices take all opportunities to disseminate up-to-date and relevant information on Japanese local governments and the challenges they face: organizing lectures or seminars, participating in exhibitions and fairs, etc.

■ Policy Research

We investigate policy and practice overseas to provide guidance for actions taken by Japanese local governments. For example, our survey of smoking bans in foreign countries resulted in an ordinance to prevent secondhand smoking.



Supporting a local government during a market research



Disseminating information about Japanese local governments

Former CLAIR Staff Testimonial

Hitoshi Iikawa,

Assistant Director, International Affairs Division,
Miyagi Prefectural Government

- 1994 Planning Division, CLAIR Tokyo Headquarters
- 1995-1996 Assistant Director, CLAIR New York



CLAIR is fascinating because it connects people. In Tokyo, I met local government employees from all over Japan and while in New York, we all worked very hard with the local staff. Eventually, I returned to my community, but the bonds remain. As a matter of fact, I am still using this worldwide network in my work.

2 The JET Programme

■ One of the World's Largest Exchange Programs

Each year, the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme has more than 4,000 participants from over 30 countries. Living and working in local communities, they promote grass-roots cross-cultural understanding.

■ Job Types

JET participants work either as an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT), a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) or a Sports Exchange Advisor (SEA).

■ Connoisseurs of Japan Abroad

There are now 52,000 former JET participants present in 54 countries. The JET Alumni Association boasts 51 chapters around the globe. These networks foster ongoing ties between Japanese regions and many other countries.



ALT teaching at an elementary school



JET participants at a local festival



CIR interpreting during a courtesy call

3 International Activities

International Exchange

We encourage Japanese local governments to become active on the international stage. CLAIR provides assistance and information regarding sister city relations and support for international conferences organized by Japanese and foreign local governments.

Economic Exchange

We support the overseas economic activities of local governments, such as by promoting exports, attracting foreign tourists, etc.

International Cooperation

We assist Japanese local governments to provide technical know-how to other countries. This can help solve regional issues in areas such as the environment, agriculture, water supply, fire fighting, disaster reconstruction, healthcare, etc.

- **Over 900 trainees hosted**
(from 34 countries and regions, since 1996)
- **94 specialists dispatched to 9 countries** (since 1998)
- **Over 250 innovative projects subsidized** (since 1996)



Support to local governments exhibiting at the International Restaurant and Foodservice Show of New York



Trainee undergoing practical training in agriculture at host local government

4 Multiculturalism

Information in 13 Languages

We provide information to foreign residents relating to life in Japan. We have also developed a computer application for disseminating multilingual information through various media (signs, text messages, recorded messages, etc.) .

Multicultural Training

To date, over 150 managers have been trained to meet the needs of Japan's increasingly diverse society. Those managers significantly assisted foreign victims of the earthquake that struck Northwestern Japan in 2004.

Community Collaboration

We encourage cooperation amongst international exchange associations throughout Japan. In addition, CLAIR and the Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC) jointly operate the Citizens' International Plaza to promote collaboration between local governments and internationally-oriented community groups: NGOs, NPOs, etc.



Lecture on disaster prevention for foreign residents



Multilingual living information website