

Japanese Local Governance and Management (JaLoGoMa) Training Program

Community Leadership Development Program

About the Program

JaLoGoMa (Japanese Local Governance and Management Training Program) is for Japanese practitioners and students to develop skills and confidence in community engagement and community-centered governance. Participants include local government managers, nonprofit employees, citizen activists, elected officials, students, and academics from across Japan who share an interest in community engagement and learning best practices from Portland and Oregon.

The goal of this program is to provide Japanese participants with the opportunity to explore innovative approaches to local governance, inspire them to implement new strategies for building inclusive communities, and strengthen their problem-solving skills.

This seven-day program incorporates city exploration, site visits, guest speaker presentations, and a social poster session, while facilitating discussions through a carefully designed curriculum that enhances participants' learning.



Organized by

Dr. Masami Nishishiba
Director, Hatfield School of Government

Contact

CPSJAPAN@pdx.edu



Key Program Features

JaLoGoMa has the following unique features:

Cross-Cultural Comparison Between Japan and the U.S.

To maximize learning in an international context, the program includes dedicated sessions that deepen participants' understanding of underlying cultural values, social norms, and differences in governmental and societal systems between Japan and the U.S. This comparative approach helps participants reflect critically on their own systems and practices.

Stimulate Innovation Through Intercultural Interactions

Innovation often begins with thinking outside the box. JaLoGoMa facilitates active dialogue and relationship-building between Japanese and U.S. practitioners and community partners, exposing participants to new ideas and perspectives they may not encounter in their home countries. These intercultural exchanges spark fresh thinking and creative problem-solving.

Theoretical Frameworks for Practical Application

Exposure to promising community engagement practices in Portland and Oregon is only the first step. The program introduces theoretical frameworks and structured case analysis to help participants translate what they learn into actionable strategies. This approach supports them in applying new knowledge effectively within the Japanese context to promote community engagement and citizen-centered governance.

2026 Program Information

Dates

Sunday, August 2 – Friday, August 7, 2026

Registration Deadline

Friday, May 1st, 2026

Expected number of participants

20

Participation fee

Program Fee \$2,500 (Not including airfare, lodging, and other expenses)
Interpretation is provided for the program participants.



Masami Nishishiba Ph.D.
JaLoGoMa Program Director

Director of the Hatfield School of Government
Professor in the Department of Public Administration

Dr. Nishishiba has taught graduate courses in civic capacity, engaging with responsibility, community development, organizational theory, and research methods. Her research interests include civic capacity, government-citizen interface, and comparative local government.

Dr. Nishishiba has been engaged in wide range of community-based research such as:

- Evaluation of the 4-day work week pilot program for Clackamas County, Oregon.
- Employee and stakeholder survey for the Department of Administrative Services, State of Oregon.
- Diversity and cultural assessment for Portland Fire and Rescue, Clackamas County, Oregon and City of Longview, Washington.
- Multicultural outreach for City of Beaverton, Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District, and Portland Parks and Recreation.
- Program evaluation for Center for Equity and Inclusion.

Program Impact in 22 Years

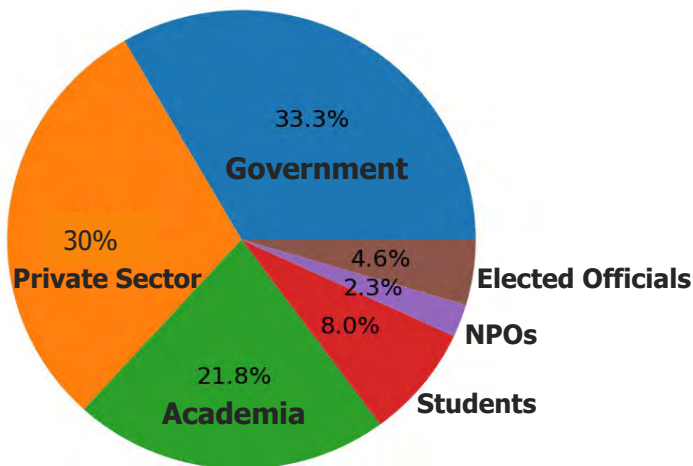
Participants: 517

Budget: Approx. 2 million USD

Bilingual staff/volunteers: Over 500

Community partners: Over 200

Participant Affiliation Breakdown



JaLoGoMa History

How did JaLoGoMa begin?

Project Management By Tokyo Foundation x Waseda x PSU

In 2002, Tokyo Foundation's Board of Directors requested that the foundation's Scholarship Division create a program to meet the needs of municipalities (in more than 3,000 cities, towns and villages) throughout Japan in line with the central government's decentralization reform. The foundation had a vision but no in-house skills, knowledge and experience to implement a professional training program that was substantive and delivered in an informed manner. Thus, it was important to engage academic institutions who had demonstrated enthusiasm, knowledge and the ability to organize professional education programs. Both Waseda University and Portland State University's



Hatfield School of Government, Center for Public Service met the criteria and became partners with the foundation. The 7-week program at Portland, Oregon began in 2004 and provided Project Management based contents. The goal was to provide substantive learning and highly relevant experiential opportunities in Japan and abroad to selected participants in order to increase their knowledge, strengthen their existing skills and acquire new perspectives that are directly applicable to their roles in municipal government.

Program shift in 2009

Citizen-Centered Governance By Tokyo Foundation x PSU

Based on an evaluation on the 7-week program, the foundation decided to change the Portland program format to 1 week, and increased the number of participants to more than 30, significantly increasing the average number of participants from about 10 during the first five years of the program. The focus of the program shifted from Project Management to "Citizen-Centered Governance." PSU provided case studies, site visits, synthesis sessions, and reception within a week. It became an intensive training program, but received tremendous support from Portland metropolitan area's community members who became content providers to the program.



PSU organized “open” format began in 2017

Public Engagement By PSU

The Tokyo Foundation discontinued all the training programs at the end of 2016 as they shifted their focus to policy research. PSU continued to provide the program in Portland even after the partnership ended with the Tokyo Foundation in 2016. The program maintained the 1 week duration format and the general emphasis on “Citizen-Centered Governance.” The program, however, became open to anyone from Japan who is interested in community engagement, and started to incorporate perspectives on civic engagement not only from the local governments, but also from the non-profit organizations, citizen activists, and private sector social entrepreneurs points of views. Approximately 20 people participated in the program each year during 2017 and 2019. With no sponsorship from the Tokyo Foundation, participants are charged with the program fees.



The program introduces current on-going civic engagement cases from the Portland metropolitan area and organizes site visits and discussions with those who are engaged in the featured cases. Through facilitated reflective discussions, the participants also take time to think how Portland cases are applicable to their civic engagement challenges in Japan.

In addition, for 2018 and 2019 program, JaLoGoMa collaborated with Mitsu Yamazaki (President/CEO | Mitsu Yamazaki, LLC) and provided an optional “Creative Business Workshop,” where JaLoGoMa participants learned about innovative approaches in social entrepreneurship.

E-JaLoGoMa in 2020 –Experience Portland while in Japan–

Public Engagement By PSU

In August 2020, due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, it became impossible to offer the JaLoGoMa program in-person in Portland. Consequently, PSU decided to offer the JaLoGoMa program using an online format. Participants received video materials prior to each online remote session, and met with the Portland staff and other participants over 4 Saturday mornings. Though this was the first attempt for JaLoGoMa to attempt offering the program in the online format, the program turned out to be quite successful. Over 60 participants from all over Japan connected virtually learned the “Portland way” community engagement while staying in Japan.

Program Impact in 17 years

Budget: \$2.5 Million

Participants : 400 (Over 200 cities / towns / villages)

Bilingual staff/students/volunteers : 400



JaLoGoMa Program Characters

Mr. JaLoGoMa - Created by the 2013 alumni Ms. Ohara

Mr. JaLoGoMa is a dog, dedicated and committed to public service, just like many Japanese public servants. He kept walking on the same path every day, with his nose on the ground, never to deviate from his daily routines. One day he came across a bike on his path. It was a nice day, and there were other people who were on the bike and they looked like they were having fun. Mr. JaLoGoMa was intrigued. So, he decided that he could try it and find out what it is like. He hopped on a bike.

Once on the bike, he was high off the ground. Mr. JaLoGoMa for the first time in his life, got to see the magnificent view of the world that extends beyond the horizons. It opened his eyes to many other new things that he was not able to see before. Mr. JaLoGoMa felt free and this experience gave him a sense of transformation. It popped open his rigid square mind. He felt the fresh breeze and the warm sunlight. Once Mr. JaLoGoMa's mind opened up, the seed he had always carried in his mind bloomed into a beautiful rose – the flower of the City of Portland.



Ben & Len – Created by the 2015 alumni Mr. Kawakami

When Mr. JaLoGoMa was on a bicycle exploring the City of Portland, he met several goats who had to move out of Belmont to Lents. Mr. JaLoGoMa decided to gather friends and help build the new fence at the new field in Lents. The following year, the goats were able to move to the new location without much trouble. They were so moved by Mr. JaLoGoMa's support even though they were strangers to one another. The goats decided to follow Mr. JaLoGoMa's leadership and become followers and pledged that someday they will repay his favor.



Timeline

