

2023 Activity Report

JACOP



Stichting Japanese Communities Platform

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1. Activity Overview 2023

Our main activities during 2023 were as follows:

1. Children's Center ("Jidokan")
2. ABBA Dance
3. Adult Study Salon ("Otonano Manabiba")
4. Supporting NGO's
5. Japanese Style Festival ("Bunkasai")
6. Community Lounge: NEMO Sabo
7. Online Activities (Website and Facebook)
8. Collaboration with SKAB
9. International Activities

In the next section, we describe each activity.

2. Activity Details 2023

2.1. Children's Center ("Jidokan")



Jidokan is a children's center where Japanese children up to around 10 years old can play. The children are accompanied by their mothers. Most of the visitors to Jidokan are expat children and their mothers who have recently arrived in the Netherlands. Therefore, Jidokan also serves as a community place for the mothers, where they can exchange information about living in the Netherlands. We believe that Jidokan is an important place not only for children but also for mothers.

Our volunteers provide various activities, such as book reading, drawing, and seasonal events. Jidokan is gradually becoming one of our major and well-known activities. Jidokan is started March 2022 and it opens every Wednesday from 14:00 – 16:00 (from September 2023, 10:00 - 12:00). Entrance fee is EUR 2. The average number of participants per month in 2023 was 16 (2022 was 15).

2.2. ABBA Dance

After Jidokan, it is a time for elderly people. ABBA Dance is a group of elderly people, who want to enjoy doing physical exercise with ABBA music. ABBA Dance is started in March 2023, It opens every Wednesday from 16:00 – 17:00. The average number of participants per month in 2023 was 5.

2.3. Adult Study Salon (“Otonano Manabiba”)

Following the success of Jidokan, we wanted to provide a communication opportunity for adults as well. We have noted that the working generation also wishes to have a place where they can communicate with people outside of their work environment and get inspired by others. This led to the creation of the Adult Study Salon, called “Otonano Manabiba.” We organize Otonano Manabiba once a month, inviting a lecturer to talk about a specific theme and facilitate group discussions. Each salon features a different theme, such as philosophy, art, religion, and culture. On average, there are 10 participants per salon.



2.4. Supporting Japanese NGOs

We have been promoting space rental at SAKB to make it a central community place for the Japanese community in the Netherlands. In 2022, JACOP focused on supporting cultural and educational workshops and activities organized by Japanese individuals and non-profit organizations. Having achieved this goal, in 2023, we strengthened our support for Japanese non-profit organizations by covering the rental costs of the SAKB rooms and promoting their activities on JACOP's social media. Various Japanese NGOs have used the rooms at SAKB for their meetings and events. Below is an overview of the rental space usage by Japanese NGOs.

Overview of the activities organized by Japanese NGOs

Name of the Organisation	Time of use of SAKB Room	Website
Stichting Nalc Holland	1	http://nalcholland.nl/
Kamome no Kai	1	https://sites.google.com/view/kamomenokai/home
Stichting Furusato Huis Project	1	https://www.furusatohuis.nl/
Stichting Nichiran Net	3	https://www.nichiran-silvernet.site/english
Chorus Sora	7	https://sorashorus.wixsite.com/my-site
Japan Women's Club in Nederland	10	https://jwc nederland.wordpress.com/
Others	3	

Notably, starting from June 2023, the Japan Women's Club in Nederland (JWC) has been organizing Japanese conversation classes for foreigners. These classes occur twice a month, each time attracting more than a dozen participants, including Dutch individuals.

We also extend support to NGOs holding activities outside of SAKB if their initiatives serve the public interest and/or promote cultural exchange or contribute to Dutch society. For example, the Japanese and Dutch chorus group ‘Sora’, affiliated with Stichting Nichiran Net, held its solo concert at Het Apostolisch Genootschap Amstelveen in November 2023. This concert was made possible through our contact with Stadorp ELSRIJK."

2.5. Japanese Style Festival (“Bunkasai”)



On October 21, 2023, JACOP organized Bunkasai, a Japan-related cultural event, at SAKB, as we did last year. The entire SAKB building was bustling with various activities, including a bazaar, workshops, presentations, lectures, and food tents.

A total of 32 individuals/groups participated in Bunkasai. The first festival in FY2022 attracted more than 600 visitors, while the second festival this year drew approximately 900 people, marking a 150% increase in visitors compared to FY2022.

As part of our international exchange efforts, we successfully organized a workshop in collaboration with a Chinese organization, Stichting Interculturele Participatie van Chinese Families (IPCF), which we got to know each other through Amstelveen Connect, organized by the City of Amstelveen.

Additionally, we were honored to host a visit from the Ambassador and Consul from the Embassy of Japan, as well as the wethouder of the City of Amstelveen. They had the opportunity to experience and enjoy the lively atmosphere of the festival. We are very proud of our Bunkasai.

2.6. Community Lounge NEMO Sabo

Our most popular facility is NEMO Sabo, a community lounge for Japanese individuals and anyone interested in Japan. NEMO Sabo offers a variety of small Japanese meals and snacks. It attracts not only Japanese but also many non-Japanese. Students attending classes at SAKB often visit NEMO Sabo after their classes as well. NEMO Sabo operates Monday to Friday from 12:00 to 17:00. The management of NEMO Sabo is outsourced to a third party and supported by volunteers. JACOP receives a share of the profits generated by NEMO Sabo.

The number of visitors to NEMO Sabo in 2023 is summarized as below.

Number of visitors to NEMO Sabo 2023

Month	Jan.	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Number of visitors	344	406	466	406	407	403	433	388	388	377	352	377	4747

In addition, various groups use NEMO Sabo for their activities, such as;

- Handcraft club, every Thursday (Handcraft Club participated to Kunstmarkt Amstelveen held on 4 June 2023, and also trying to find opportunities collaborate with non-Japanese handcraft groups)
- Chat group for elderly people called “Mokuyo-kai”, every Thursday (In May 2024, we visited the City of Amstelveen to discuss the possibility of collaborating on initiatives for elderly people, particularly those affected by dementia).
- Japanese lessons for Dutch people, conducted by JWC (These were initially held at Nemo SABO every Friday. As the classes grew in popularity, starting from July 2023, they were moved to one of the rooms at SAKB to accommodate more participants).

2.7. Online Activities

We have consistently maintained our website, as well as our Facebook page and Facebook group, 'Information Exchange Space for Japanese living in the Netherlands.' As of December 31, 2023, this Facebook group has reached 3,097 registered members. It serves various purposes, including seeking advice and sharing/finding information related to the Netherlands. The number of members continues to grow, with registration requests received daily. This Facebook group has become one of the most well-known information sources in the Netherlands for the Japanese community.

- JACOP Website : jacopholland.nl/
- JACOP Facebook : www.facebook.com/japanesecomunitiesplatform.nl/
- Facebook "Information Exchange Space for Japanese living in the Netherlands": www.facebook.com/groups/226714334145180/

2.8. Collaboration with SAKB

Throughout the year 2023, we actively collaborated with SAKB to contribute to a variety of events and activities, showcasing the richness and diversity of Japanese culture. Our partnership with SAKB allowed us to organize and coordinate workshops and demonstrations, providing attendees with experiences and insights into various aspects of Japanese tradition and artistry.



On 3 June 2023, as part of the 'Amstelveen in 24hrs' event, we hosted a captivating Japanese tea ceremony, inviting participants to indulge in the serene beauty and tranquility of this time-honored ritual.

On 3 September 2023 during the SAKB Open Day, we offered various activities, including Japanese dance performances, kimono dressing sessions, engaging kintsugi workshops, creative clay miniature crafting, and okonomiyaki, Japanese street food.

The partnership with SAKB has been invaluable, enabling us to share Japanese culture with more people and strengthen community bonds. We're deeply thankful for SAKB's support and collaboration, and we're excited to continue exploring culture and community together.

2.9. Activities for the Amstelveen residence and international activities.

We have been exploring opportunities for how JACOP can contribute to the residents of Amstelveen. In 2023, we successfully coordinated a Christmas concert by JWC at an elderly care facility, PARTICIPE WIJKCENTRUM KASTANJELAAN, in Keizer Karelpark. And, the concerts by JWC are continuously occasionally given during 2024.

Additionally, we participated in 'Amstelveen Connect', an event organized by the City of Amstelveen. This led to fruitful connections, particularly with the Amstelveen Police and the Chinese community. Through several meetings with the Amstelveen Police, which is thankfully showing interested in engaging more with the Japanese community. This resulted in the initiation of monthly consultations by the Police for Japanese residents, starting in 2024. As to the Chinese community, as we mentioned in above, IPCF organized the work shop at Bunkasai.