



Inspiring singing voices, resonating to the true skies

The 8th Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition 2015

March 19 – March 23, 2015
Fukushima, Japan

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The 8th Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition 2015

“Inspiring singing voices, Resonating to the true skies”

March 19 – March 23, 2015

Fukushima, Japan

The Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition is the biggest choral competition for small vocal ensemble groups (2-16 singers) in Japan. Every year we invite more than 120 top level choirs selected from all over Japan. And now the competition is open internationally to share the joy of singing with people from all around the world.

Fukushima is known as the “Kingdom of Choirs” in Japan, which has a big population of music fans and award-winning choirs. You are cordially invited to experience the fascinating atmosphere of our music cities, and let your singing voices ring out together under the sky, which a 19-century poet once described as the “True Sky.”

- Hosted by**
- Fukushima Prefecture
 - Fukushima Prefectural Board of Education
 - Executive Committee of the Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition

Co-hosted by Japan Choral Association, Japan Choral Association Tohoku Branch, Fukushima Chorus League, Fukushima City, Fukushima City Board of Education

Sponsored by Agency for Cultural Affairs(expected), All Japan Senior High School Cultural Federation, Fukushima Prefecture Senior High School Cultural Federation, Fukushima Prefectural Association of Junior High School Principals, Fukushima Prefectural Association of Elementary School Principals, Fukushima International Association, Fukushima-Minpo Co., Ltd., The Fukushima Minyu, The Asahi Shimbun Fukushima Bureau, The Mainichi Newspapers Fukushima Branch, The Yomiuri Shimbun, The Sankei Shimbun Co. Ltd., Fukushima Branch Office, The Kahoku Shimpō, Nikkei Inc. Fukushima Bureau, Jiji Press Ltd., Fukushima Bureau, Kyodo News Fukushima Bureau, NHK Fukushima, Radio Fukushima, Fukushima Television Broadcasting Co., Ltd., Fukushima Central Television, Fukushima Broadcasting Co., Ltd., TV-U Fukushima, Inc., FM Fukushima

Venue Fukushima City Music Hall, Grand Hall
1-1 Irie Town, Fukushima City, Fukushima Prefecture, 960-8117 Japan

Tentative Schedule

Time	March 18 Wed.	March 19 Thu.	March 20 Fri.	March 21 Sat.	March 22 Sun.	March 23 Mon.
10:00					Grand Champion Competition	Workshop
14:00		Category I	Category II	Category III	Friendship Concert	
16:00	Award Ceremony					
18:00	(Hall Visit)	(Hall Visit)	(Hall Visit)	(Meeting) for tomorrow	Welcome Party	

*Open at 9:30a.m. Start at 10:00a.m. on March 19 – 22. / This schedule is subject to change by the committee.

Program

- Category Competition
- Grand Champion Competition
Competed by Gold titled choirs (top 5 choirs) in each category
- Friendship Concert
Special concert performed by overseas choirs and an invited guest singer.
- Welcome Party with local choirs
- Workshop
Presentation on traditional music and culture by overseas choirs and local choirs.

*Overseas choirs will be asked to perform at the Category Competition, Workshop, Friendship Concert and/or Welcome Party.



Competition Rules

- Category
- Category I : Ages 12 – 15
 - Category II : Ages 15 – 18
 - Category III :
 - Group 1 : Ages 6 – 12
 - Group 2 : Other than Category I, II and Group 1

*Ages are determined as the age of the participant on the day of March 22, 2015.

*Some singers of ages 12-15 (Category I) and ages 15-18 (Category II) can participate in Group 1, only if the number of ages 6-12 is biggest compared to ages 12-15 and ages 15-18 respectively.

*The singers of ages 12-15 (Category I) and ages 15-18 (Category II) must sing as a children's choir, when in Group 1.

*Overseas choirs are highly recommended to enter Category III, Group 1 or 2. Your accommodation fee for March 20-22 will be covered by the organizer. Please refer to the section of Accommodation and Financial Assistance.

Entry Qualification

- a. The number of singers should be 2-16 (no fewer than 2 and no more than 16) and member changes for musical pieces will be approved only within the registered members.
- b. No singer shall compete as a member of more than one choir, regardless of the categories. A conductor and an accompanist will not be included in this regulation.
- c. For Japan-based choirs, the number of school choirs shall be limited to one from each school in either Category I or II.
- d. No qualification is required for a conductor or an accompanist. For Japan-based choirs, a principal shall approve a conductor or an accompanist for Category I or II.
- e. A conductor and an accompanist will be included in the singers when they sing in the choir.
- f. The Gold titled choirs (Top 5 choirs in each category) shall proceed to the Grand Champion Competition on the last day.
- g. In principle, a singer who have not registered in the category competition will not be able to perform in the Grand Champion Competition.

Performance

- a. There is no compulsory work in any category. All music pieces performed will be determined by the competitors. Any change will not be allowed after registration.
- b. For each category, the overall duration of performance time from the beginning of the first piece until the end of the last piece (including time between songs) must not exceed 10 minutes.
- c. For the Grand Champion Competition, the overall duration of performance time from the beginning of the first piece until the end of the last piece (including time between songs) must not exceed 15 minutes.
- d. Tuning musical instruments on stage is included in the performance time.
- e. Failure to comply with the above rules will result in disqualification.

Order of Performance

- a. The order of performance in each category shall be determined by lottery, drawn by representatives from each choir on a specified date. Choirs that cannot attend the sortition shall leave the selection to the organizer.
- b. In the 8th annual competition, the performance of Group 2 will be followed by Group 1 in Category III.
- c. When a conductor or an accompanist performs in more than one choir, and their schedule in the venue is in conflict with others, the lottery will be held again to resolve the conflict.
- d. The order of performance for the Grand Champion Competition shall be determined by lot, drawn by the organizer, and will be announced at a later date.

- Accompaniment**
- The instruments and style of accompaniment shall be up to each competing choir.
 - A piano (Steinway & Sons), a cembalo (J.C.Neupert), a positive organ and a pipe organ (Marcussen & Sons) will be provided by the organizer. The pitch of the piano will be A=442Hz.
 - If the contestants use musical instruments other than the above, they are expected to carry their own instruments, and will be responsible for the required expenses.
 - If the contestants require a person to turn the pages of notes, each choir shall prepare for it.
- Judging and Evaluation**
- The following judges will evaluate the competition.
Gunnar Eriksson (Composer), Shinsuke Kishi (Chorus Master),
Tsutomu Matsumura (Chorus Master), Masahiro Sato (Conductor),
Fumiya Amamori (Chorus Master), Akira Nishimura (Composer), Akane Nakanishi (Composer)
 - Each competition is evaluated according to a round system specified separately.
 - Results of the category competition and judges' comments will be mailed to each participating choir after the competition.
- Prizes and Awards**
- The competition will be evaluated in each category, and Gold (Top 5 choirs in each category), Silver, Bronze or Excellence prizes will be awarded to every participating choir in each category.
 - Even if they are not selected as one of the top 5 choirs, at least one choir from either group shall qualify for the Grand Champion Competition as an extra Gold winner in Category III, provided that the number of participating choirs in that group is no fewer than 6.
 - In the Grand Champion Competition, JPY 500,000 will be awarded to the best choir, JPY 300,000 to the 2nd winner, JPY 100,000 to the 3rd winner and JPY 30,000 to other finalists.
 - In addition, the "Governor of Fukushima" Award will be awarded to the best choir, "Mayor of Fukushima" Award to the 2nd winner, "Superintendent of Education" Award to the 3rd winner.
- Rehearsal**
- On the day of the performance, the participating choir will be able to do a rehearsal twice at the venue.
 - Also, the travel agency authorized by the organizer will book a rehearsal room in the city.
 - Up to 2 members of the participating choirs can look over the competition hall on the day before the performance.
- Copyright**
- Copyright royalties for the pieces managed by the Japanese Society for Rights of Authors, Composers and Publishers (JASRAC) will be paid by the organizer.
 - If the competitors partially omit or rearrange the piece, they have to gain an approval from the copyright holder in advance.
- Information**
- The information provided by the participating choirs will be used for organizing the competition, such as posting on websites, printing in publications, recording to CDs or DVDs, and provided to the mass media and parties related to management of the competition.
 - The organizers or the companies authorized by the organizer may use pictures, sound recordings and video recordings on the Internet, in publications and broadcasting, and provide the information to the mass media. The companies authorized by the organizer will sell pictures and recordings in the form of photos, CDs or DVDs.





Conditions of Participation

Preliminary Screening

Japan-based choirs

Applicants have to be recommended by the choral association of each prefecture or approved by the organizer through the preliminary screening. Some choirs could be qualified by recommendation by the organizer.

Overseas choirs

Applicants have to be approved through the preliminary screening conducted separately prior to the one for Japan-based choirs. Some choirs could be qualified by recommendation by the organizer.

Applications for the preliminary screening;

- a. An Application form written in English
- b. A recent recording of the choir recorded by 2-16 expected singers, after April 2014.
 - *The screening process will be conducted anonymously. Therefore, the choir's name and any other sounds except the performance must not be recorded on the CD etc.
 - *The time of performance shall be within 10 minutes, and the choral pieces can be different from the ones to be performed in the competition. The each piece must be recorded on separate tracks.
 - *The recording media shall be either a cassette tape, a CD(CD-DA format) or a MD. DVDs are not acceptable. The recording media will not be returned.
- c. One digital photo showing the choir

Deadline: October 31, 2014

*The result of the preliminary screening will be announced by November 30, 2014 at the latest.

Registration

Qualified Choirs should provide the following documents.

Registration Documents;

- a. Fully completed registration forms.
- b. A bank cheque or proof of bank transfer covering the participation fee (only if you select bank transfer).
- c. 7 original scores for the category competition

Deadline: a.b. December 15, 2014 / c. January 15, 2015

*The mailing address will be announced later.

Participation Fee

Japan-based choirs

Ticket fees will be charged when the choirs participate as an audience. The costs for CDs, DVDs and photos will be announced separately later.

Overseas Choirs

For participation in the competition, a non-refundable participation fee of JPY 20,000 has to be paid per choir after being selected through the preliminary screening. Any costs that arise must be paid by the applicant.

The registration fee JPY 20,000 per choir covers;

- a. Free entry to the competitions and Friendship Concert, Welcome Party and Workshop for each choir member including the accompanist and the conductor
- b. Program booklet per choir member
- c. CD recorded by the authorized agent
- d. Photo taken by the authorized agent

Payment Methods;

- a. Credit Card
- b. Bank Transfer *The bank details will be notified later.

Deadline: December 15, 2014

Accommodation /
Meals / Transport

Japan-based choirs

The participating choirs will be responsible for their travel and accommodation costs. The general travel services could be provided by travel agents authorized by the organizer.

Overseas choirs

The organizer provides the following package.

NO.	Package	Room	3 nights per person	Additional day per person
1	Economy Hotel	Twin	JPY 27,000	JPY 9,000
2	Deluxe Hotel	Twin	JPY 30,000	JPY 10,000
3		Single	JPY 33,000	JPY 11,000

This package includes;

- a. Accommodations for 3 nights, March 20-23 (check-out)
- b. 10 Meals
3 × breakfast, 4 × lunch, 3 × dinner (from lunch on March 20 to lunch on March 23)
including dinner at Welcome Party and lunch at Workshop
- c. Local transportation between the hotel and the venue/rehearsal room
- d. Rehearsal rooms
- e. English speaking guide

*The participating choirs will be responsible for their own costs of travel and accommodation. However, the competition has a **fund to support overseas choirs with accommodation costs, JPY 21,000** per person for 3 nights. Please see the section of "Financial assistance."

Payment Methods;

- a. Credit Card
- b. Bank Transfer *The bank details will be notified later.

Deadline: January 15, 2015

Financial
Assistance

Japan-based choirs

Japan-based choirs selected for the Grand Champion Competition will have financial assistance of Max JPY 7,000 per stay at hotels after selected for the finals for each choir member, including the accompanist and the conductor. If the choirs should return due to inevitable reasons, such as attending school events, they will be subsidized partial expenses up to 7,000 yen per contestant.

Overseas choirs

- a. Accommodation etc. : Max JPY 21,000 per person for 3 nights

Overseas choirs, who are asked to perform at the Friendship Concert, Welcome Party and Workshop, will receive financial assistance of Max JPY 7,000 per night for 3 nights from March 20 to March 22 for each choir member (up to 18 persons), including the accompanist and the conductor, regardless of whether or not they proceed to the Grand Champion Competition.

- b. Airfare: Max JPY60,000 / person (up to JPY500,000/choir)

Some selected overseas choirs will gain extra assistance of Max JPY60,000 / person for each choir member (up to JPY500,000/choir), who perform at the Friendship Concert, Welcome Party and Workshop as well as the competition. Applicants from a further location will be selected first.

All choirs

When the participating choirs arrive at / depart from Fukushima airport, costs of a chartered vehicle from Fukushima airport to the hotel in Fukushima city and back to Fukushima airport will be paid directly to the taxi company. The schedule and type of vehicles will be arranged by the organizer according to the flight schedule and the number of users. (limited availability)

Admission/
Application of Visa

- a. Please kindly note that all applicants will be only admitted as a participant and obtain visa-related documents issued by us, if we received fully-completed registration forms and payments.
- b. Our authorized travel agency, on request basis, will arrange for non-performers' stay and issue the documents for visa applications as a tourist, but only if they received fully-completed applications and payments.

Contact Address

The Executive Committee of the Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition
(Cultural Promotion Division of the Fukushima Prefectural Government)
2-16 Sugitsuma Town, Fukushima City
Fukushima Prefecture
960-8670 Japan

URL <http://www.vocalensemble.jp/en/>
e-mail bunka@pref.fukushima.lg.jp

The 8th Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition 2015
PRELIMINARY SCREENING APPLICATION FORM

Fill in using block letters and put ✓ mark in the chosen boxes.

Choir

Choir Name in English script

Choir Name in Chinese or Korean Characters (if any)

Address

Country

E-mail

Phone

Fax

Country code / Area code / Number

Country code / Area code / Number

Website

Contact Person

Mr. Ms. Mrs. Dr. Prof.

Name in English script

First Name Last Name

Name in Chinese or Korean Characters (if any)

First Name Last Name

Address

Country

E-mail

Phone

Fax

Country code / Area code / Number

Country code / Area code / Number

Participating in

Category I
(ages 12-15)

Category II
(ages 15-18)

Category III – Group 1
(ages 6-12/up to 18)

Category III – Group 2
(others)

List of Choral Pieces – Recording (Max.10min)

No.	Title	Composer	Duration
	Example	W.A.Mozart	3:00
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

Number of Singers on the media recording Male + Female = Total (2-16 singers)

Date of Recording Date Month Year

Profile of the choir

Year of Establishment

Main Annual Activities and Highlights

Award History

List of Documents

Put ✓ mark in the column if the document has been enclosed and fill in the number of copies of the document.

✓	Document	Number of Copies
	Application Form (with signature)	
	A separate CD, MD or tape of sound recording (2-16 expected singers/ recorded after Apr. 2014/ Max 10min)	
	Digital photo of the choir	

All the documents should be submitted no later than October 31, 2014 to:

The Executive Committee of the Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition
 (Cultural Promotion Division of the Fukushima Prefectural Government)
 2 - 16 Sugitsuma Town, Fukushima City, Fukushima Prefecture, 960 - 8670 Japan
 e-mail bunka@pref.fukushima.lg.jp

Agreement

We hereby declare that the information given in this form is correct. We also understand and agree to the competition rules and conditions of participation.

Date Month Year
 - -

Signature

Name

Position



Fukushima

Fukushima is located in the north-east region of Japan and is approximately 200km, 100min by express train from Tokyo. It is called the “Kingdom of Choirs” in Japan, which has a big population of music fans and award-winning choirs. Along with its unique music friendly culture, there you can find abundant natural beauty and traditional samurai culture, which is still being handed down over the generations. You can enjoy renowned hot spring resorts and historical samurai sites before/after the competition. Anyone looking for friendship with true music lovers and real experiences of Japan must not fail to visit Fukushima.

Thanks to the support and encouragement from all over the world, Japan has steadily recovered since the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. The Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition has also received hundreds of messages to encourage people in Fukushima. We will never forget the warm and heart-felt moments that we have shared with participants of the competition.

Now we are sure music has the power to get people together and bring about hope and encouragement. The Fukushima Vocal Ensemble Competition will keep going on to convey the joy of singing together.

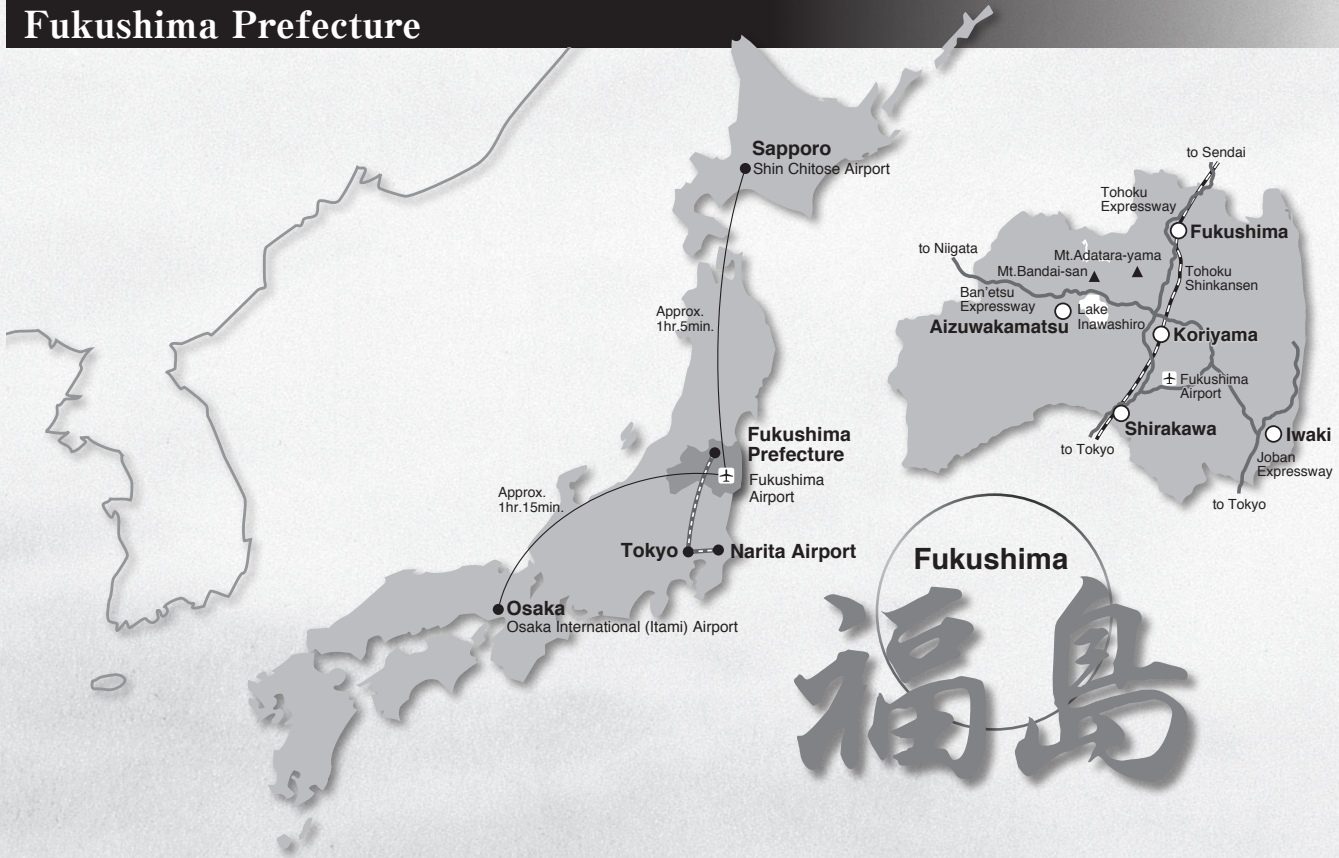
*The “city” of Fukushima is in the middle of the “prefecture” of Fukushima, and the Fukushima Music Hall is more than 60km away from the Fukushima Daiichi Plant. There is no restriction advised on Fukushima City. For more details, please refer to our website.

響

Hibiki



Fukushima Prefecture



Aizu-Wakamatsu, which used to be a castle town during the Edo Period (1603-1867)



Fukushima is an "onsen(hot spring)" kingdom with 139 gushing hot springs.

From Fukushima Airport

Approx. 75min to the hotel in Fukushima city by complimentary taxi

From Narita Airport

- Route1 **Narita Airport** ▶ **Tokyo Station** Approx.1hr - 1hr 30min by Express Train "Narita Express"
Tokyo Station ▶ **Fukushima Station** Approx.1hr.30min by Express Train "Tohoku Shinkansen"
- Route2 **Narita Airport** ▶ **Keisei Ueno Station** Approx.45min - 1hr 50min by Keisei Railway trains
Keisei Ueno Station ▶ **Tokyo Station** Approx. 5min on foot
Tokyo Station ▶ **Fukushima Station** Approx.1hr.30min by Express Train "Tohoku Shinkansen"
- Route3 **Narita Airport** ▶ **Fukushima Station** Approx. 5hrs 20min by Highway Bus (only 2 services a day)





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