

# UNWTO International Conference on Tourism and Snow Culture

“Snow Experiences and Winter Traditions

as Assets for Tourism Destinations”

2 - 3 February 2018, Yamagata, Japan



## General Information Note

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# UNWTO International Conference on Tourism and Snow Culture

Yamagata, Japan, 2-3 February 2018

## General Information Note

### 1. Conference

#### 1.1 About the Conference

The UNWTO International Conference on Tourism and Snow Culture will be held in Yamagata Prefecture, Japan on 2-3 February 2018, co-organized by Yamagata Prefectural Government and UNWTO.

#### 1.2 Venue of the Conference

The Yamagata International Convention Center “BIG WING” is located in the north of Yamagata City, with Mt. Zao to the south and Mt. Gassan to the northwest, the Yamagata International Convention Center “BIG WING” holds various kinds of events such as academic conferences, conventions, trade fairs, exhibitions, and others.

There is a large exhibition room where you can hold an international meeting or trade fair. If it's a smaller-scale event, there are various sized meeting rooms or workshop rooms perfect for any group size. Trying it all together is the conference hall. Outside of the core facilities, there is an outdoor event space and garden.

Yamagata International Convention Center “BIG WING”



#### 1.3 Onsite Registration and Badges

We kindly ask all delegates to confirm your participation to the Conference [here](#). (Online registration closed.)

Badges will be available for collection prior to the Conference at the registration desk on 1st and 2nd February, 2018. Participants will be required to wear the identification badges in the area for the Conference. They will also be required for entry to the dining areas.

Badges and information kits will be distributed to all registered participants on arrival at the registration desk at Yamagata Int'l Convention Center “BIG WING”.

\*01 February 2018: (Venue & Time for the registration: TBC)

\*02 February 2018: From 08:00-12:00 at Yamagata International Convention Center BIG WING

#### 1.4 Conference Website



Delegates can stay connected with up-to-date information on the conference, through the official website. Delegates can access all relevant information including the conference programme, venue, accommodation, transportation, visa assistance, online registration and technical tour.

#### 1.5 Participant Note

- All invitees or participants are required to wear the badges and take the designated car/bus arranged by the host during the conference.



(Notice) The details on the following events are to be confirmed shortly.

Event and Date	Time	Venue
<b>01 February 2018</b> Pre-Conference Reception (Dinner) <u>*Online registration closed.</u>	16:30 (TBC) Depart from official hotels 17:15-18:00 Visiting the courtyard of Bunshokan (former prefectural government office building)  At the courtyard, we will experience *Japanese Snow Igloo *Snow Lantern  18:00-20:00 Welcome Reception hosted by Yamagata Prefectural Governor 20:00 Return to official hotels	<u>Bunshokan</u> Address: 3-4-51, Hatagomachi, Yamagata City, Yamagata 990-0047, Japan Phone: +81-(0)23-635-5500   
<b>02 February 2018</b> (Lunch) <u>*Online registration closed.</u>	12:10-13:40	<u>Yamagata Int'l Convention Center "BIG WING"</u> Address: 100, Hirakubo, Yamagata City, Yamagata 990-0076, Japan Phone: +81-(0)23-635-3100
<b>02 February 2018</b> Farewell Reception (Dinner) hosted by Japan Tourism Agency <u>*By Invitation only</u>	19:00-21:00 *Timeline (TBC)	<u>Yamagata Museum of Art</u> Address: 1-63, Otemachi, Yamagata City, Yamagata 990-0046, Japan Phone: +81-(0)23-622-3090

## 2. Access to Yamagata from other cities of Japan

For detailed information on how to travel to Yamagata, please check the website below.

<http://www.convention.or.jp/english/access.html>

## 3. Accommodation (Online Booking Closed.)

Participants are highly recommended to reserve accommodation at their earliest possible.

If you would like to book your accommodation in Yamagata, it could be booked on the same webpage of the Online Registration.

Bookings will be made available online through the official accommodation provider (JTB Global Marketing and Travel Inc.) website. Full payment is required at the time of booking.

Online Registration & Hotel booking will be available in the mid-December 2017.

Dates: Jan. 31 check in to Feb. 5 check out

\*Please contact to [unwto\\_yamagata@gmt.jtb.jp](mailto:unwto_yamagata@gmt.jtb.jp) , if you wish to stay longer.

[Official Hotels in Yamagata City]

No.	Hotel Name	Room type	Room size (sqm)	Room rates (Breakfast and taxes included)		Access to the venue (Yamagata Big Wing)	Remarks
				Single occupancy	Double occupancy		
1	Hotel Metropolitan Yamagata	Single	20	JPY 16.000	-	25 min. by taxi	Free Wi-Fi
		Double	20	JPY 24.000	JPY 26.000		
2	Yamagata Grand Hotel	Twin	22,3	JPY 23.000	JPY 26.000	20 min. by taxi	Free Wi-Fi Non smoking rooms only
3	Hotel Castle	Single	16-17	JPY 13.000	-	20 min. by taxi	Free Wi-Fi
		Twin	19-20	JPY 24.000	JPY 26.000		
4	Yamagata Nanokamachi Washington Hotel	Single	12	JPY 10.000	-	20 min. by taxi	Free Wi-Fi
5	Hotel Route Inn Yamagata Ekimae	Single	13	JPY 8.000	-	25 min. by taxi	Free Wi-Fi Smoking rooms only

## 4. Entry Formalities

### Visa Requirements

Participants are requested to refer to the webpage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan in order to obtain information on visa requirements and procedures:

[http://www.mofa.go.jp/j\\_info/visit/visa/short/novisa.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/visit/visa/short/novisa.html)

Nationals of the following countries, DO NOT REQUIRE a visa to enter Japan

\*68 Countries and Regions for Visa Exemptions (as of July 2017)

ASIA	Uruguay	Germany( <a href="#">[Note8]</a> )
Brunei (15 days)	OCEANIA	Greece
Indonesia ( <a href="#">[Note1]</a> )	Australia	Hungary
Malaysia ( <a href="#">[Note2]</a> )	New Zealand	Iceland
Republic of Korea	MIDDLE EAST	Ireland ( <a href="#">[Note8]</a> )
Singapore	Israel	Italy
Thailand ( <a href="#">[Note3]</a> )(15 days)	Turkey( <a href="#">[Note7]</a> )	Latvia
Hong Kong( <a href="#">[Note4]</a> )	United Arab Emirates( <a href="#">[Note9]</a> )	Liechtenstein( <a href="#">[Note8]</a> )
Macao( <a href="#">[Note5]</a> )	AFRICA	Lithuania
Taiwan( <a href="#">[Note6]</a> )	Lesotho( <a href="#">[Note7]</a> )	Luxembourg
NORTH AMERICA	Mauritius	Malta
Canada	Tunisia	Monaco
United States	EUROPE	Netherlands
LATIN AMERICA and THE CARIBBEAN	Andorra	Norway
Argentina	Austria( <a href="#">[Note8]</a> )	Poland
Bahamas	Belgium	Portugal
Barbados( <a href="#">[Note7]</a> )	Bulgaria	Romania
Chile	Croatia	San Marino
Costa Rica	Cyprus	Serbia
Dominican Republic	Czech Republic	Slovakia
El Salvador	Denmark	Slovenia
Guatemala	Estonia	Spain
Honduras	Finland	Sweden
Mexico( <a href="#">[Note8]</a> )	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Switzerland( <a href="#">[Note8]</a> )
Surinam	France	Switzerland( <a href="#">[Note8]</a> )

([\[Note1\]](#)) [For nationals of Indonesia \(since December 1, 2014\), visas are not required only for those who have registered ICAO-compliant ePassport to diplomatic missions of Japan in Indonesia \(the embassy, consulates-general, or the consulate\). Validity of the registration is three years period or until the passport expires, whichever comes first.](#)

([\[Note2\]](#)) For nationals of Malaysia (since July 1, 2013), visas are not required only for holders of ePassport in compliance with ICAO standards. Those who do not hold such ePassport are advised to obtain a visa in advance, otherwise will be strictly examined and may be refused entry to Japan.

([\[Note3\]](#)) For nationals of Thailand (since July 1, 2013), visas are not required only for holders of ePassport in compliance with ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) standards.



([Note4]) For citizens of Hong Kong, visas are not required only for holders of Special Administrative Region (SAR) passport issued by the Hong Kong SAR of the People's Republic of China or British National Overseas (BNO) passports who have the right of residence in Hong Kong.

([Note5]) For citizens of Macao, visas are not required only for holders of SAR passport issued by the Macao SAR of the People's Republic of China.

([Note6]) For citizens of Taiwan, visas are not required only for holders of Taiwan passport which includes a personal identification number.

([Note7]) For nationals of Barbados (since April 1, 2010), Turkey (since April 1, 2011) and Lesotho (since April 1, 2010), visas are not required only for holders of Machine-Readable Passport (MRP) or ePassport in compliance with ICAO standards. Those who do not hold an MRP or ePassport are advised to obtain a visa in advance, otherwise will be strictly examined and may be refused entry to Japan.

([Note8]) For nationals of those countries with visa exemptions permitting stays of up to 6 months under the bilateral visa exemption arrangements, those who wish to stay in Japan for more than 90 days are required to apply for an extension of the period of stay to the Ministry of Justice (Regional Immigration Bureau) before the period of permitted stay is to expire.

([Note9]) For nationals of the United Arab Emirates (since July 1, 2017), visas are not required only for those who have registered ICAO-compliant ePassport to diplomatic missions of Japan (the embassy, consulates-general, or the consulate). Validity of the registration is three years period or until the passport expires, whichever comes first.

([Note10]) Nationals of Peru (since July 15, 1995) and Colombia (since February 1, 2004), are advised to obtain a visa in advance, otherwise will be strictly examined and may be refused entry to Japan.

For more information regarding customs regulations and restricted items, please visit the following <http://www.customs.go.jp/english/summary/passenger.htm>

## 5. Technical Visit (\*Online registration Closed.)

There are two technical tours for conference participants can take. Technical Visit 1 is a day long trip on February 3rd with a maximum capacity of 40 participants. Technical Visit 2 is a two-day trip on February 3rd and 4th with a maximum capacity of 80 participants. Both courses will visit the Yamagata Snow Festival and Zao Snow Monster (Zao Juhyo).

(Notice) The Technical Visits are organized for international delegates ONLY. Delegates of Japanese nationality are kindly asked to refrain from applying.

Yamagata Snow Festival



Light Up of Zao Snow Monster (Zao Juhyo)



### Yamagata Snow Festival:

The Yamagata Snow Festival is the opening event for all of the snow festivities within Yamagata Prefecture. Behind the main stage will be a large snow sculpture symbolic to the prefecture and the event. Through the abundance of food, culture, and snow activities that Yamagata Prefecture has to offer, this event is enjoyed by people of all ages, at any time of day, to see and experience various winter activities.

Yamagata Snow Festival



Zao Snow Monster (Zao Juhyo)



### Zao Snow Monster (Zao Juhyo):

Come and see Zao Juhyo, also known as "Snow Monsters", born from a combination of the mountain range's weather conditions and plentiful trees. Using the snow and ice symbolic of Yamagata's winter, this is a natural work of art that is scarcely seen in other places around the world.

### Light Up of Zao Snow Monster (Zao Juhyo):

In the quiet darkness, admire the snow monsters as they are illuminated by various lights and enjoy a different feel from the daytime. Spend some time enjoying the otherworldly magical night.



JTB Global Marketing & Travel Inc. (JTBGMT) is the official travel agency appointed for tour arrangements. There are two technical visit courses that conference participants can take. Technical Visit 1 is a day long trip on February 3rd and Technical Visit 2 is a two-day trip on February 3rd and 4th. Both courses will visit the Yamagata Snow Festival and Zao Snow Monster (Zao Juhyo).

## 1. Technical Visit 1

- Date: Feb 3rd (Sat.)
- Course: 09:00 Departure from official hotels
  - \*Yamagata Snow Festival
  - \*Ohanami (Flower viewing) and Hinamatsuri
  - \*Zao Snow Monster (Zao Juhyo)17:30 Return to official hotels
- Guide: English-speaking guide service is included
- Meals: Lunch is included
- Minimum number of participants necessary for the tour: 20 persons
- Maximum number of seats: 40 persons
- Transportation: Bus (Operated by Yamako Bus)
  - \*Duration may be subject to change depending on traffic conditions.

## 2. Technical Visit 2

- Date: Feb 3rd (Sat.) & Feb 4th (Sun.)
- Course: February 3rd (From afternoon)
  - 13:00 Departure from BIG WING (After end of business meeting)
    - \*Yamagata Snow Festival
    - \*Light up of Zao Snow Monster (Zao Juhyo)
  - 19:30 Return to official hotels  
February 4th (Full-day)
  - 08:30 Departure from official hotels
    - \*Visit sake brewery and tasting
    - \*Experience Japanese traditional culture
  - 15:00 Return to official hotels

(Notice) The Two-day Trip doesn't provide the accommodation in Yamagata City on Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>. So please kindly make a hotel reservation for Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> at the same time of the online registration.

- Guide: English-speaking guide service is included
- Meals: Lunch and Dinner on Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> are NOT included. Lunch on Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> is included.
- Minimum number of participants necessary for the tour: 20 persons
- Maximum number of seats: 40 persons
- Transportation: Bus (Operated by Yamako Bus)
  - \*Duration may be subject to change depending on traffic conditions.

## 6. Brief Information about Yamagata Prefecture

Yamagata Prefecture is located along the coast of the Sea of Japan in the Tohoku region with an estimated population of 1,100,000 people. The region is blessed with nature with four distinct seasons and is known to produce 70 percent of cherries in all of Japan.

The people of Yamagata Prefecture are no strangers to snow, having lived side-by-side with it for generations. Here, where snow piles elegantly in vistas that call to mind the Japan of old, the snow-covered scenery itself is an attraction, and we have an assortment of snow sports and activities, traditional snow festivals, brand-new events designed with fun in the snow in mind, and many other snow-centric tourism resources. Additionally, we are working to promote unique combinations involving culture, food, and especially hot springs for attractions that can only be found in our snowy land. In addition to Mt. Zao's "snow monsters" in the southeast of the prefecture, which are already receiving international attention, there is Mt. Gassan in the heart of the Yamagata: during its lengthy ski season, which lasts from spring through early summer, visitors can enjoy blue skies, unmelted snow, and cherry blossoms all at once.

## 7. Practical Information

### 7.1 General Information of Japan

Language:	Japanese
Currency:	Yen / Yen (JPY) 1 Euro = JPY 130 - 132 as of Nov. 10 <sup>th</sup> 2017
Country Code:	+81
Voltage:	100V
Time Zone:	UTC+9
Capital:	Tokyo

Tokyo is the Capital of Japan. It is the seat of the Japanese government and the Imperial Palace, and the home of the Japanese Imperial Family. Tokyo has been described as one of the three "command centers" for the World economy, along with New York City and London. This city is considered an alpha+ world city, listed by the GaWC's 2008 inventory and ranked third among global cities by Foreign Policy's 2010 Global Cities Index. In 2010 Tokyo was named the second most expensive city for expatriate employees, according to the Mercer and Economist Intelligence Unit cost-of-living surveys, and named the fourth Most Liveable City and the World's Most Liveable Megalopolis by the magazine Monocle. The Michelin Guide has awarded Tokyo by far the most Michelin stars of any city in the world. Tokyo hosted the 1964 Summer Olympics and will host 2020 Summer Olympics again.

The figures of arrival guests from foreign countries hit the goal more than 10 millions passengers in 2013 and in 2016 about 24 million people visited Japan. The old image of Japan are clearly changing and Japan came to be recognized as an affordable destination with an abundance of attractions. The price of commodity of Japan is getting reasonable after high evaluation of US dollars as well as Euro against Japanese Yen. It was going down more than 20% less expensive than the one in 2012. Also, people living there is very friendly and attentive.

For more information on Japan, please also kindly refer to the following JNTO web-site:

<https://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/>

## 7.2 Geography

Japan is situated in north eastern Asia between the North Pacific and the Sea of Japan. The area of Japan is 377,873 square kilo meters, nearly equivalent to Germany and Switzerland combined or slightly smaller than California. Japan consists of four major islands, surrounded by more than 4,000 smaller islands.

Shown below are the four major islands, their locations and sizes.

*Hokkaido (northern island)	83,000 square kilo meters
*Honshu (main island)	231,000 square kilo meters
*Shikoku (smallest island)	19,000 square kilo meters
*Kyushu (southern island)	42,000 square kilo meters

Japan's topographical features include coastlines with varied scenery, towering mountains, which are very often volcanic and twisted valleys that invite visitors into the mysterious world of nature.

## 7.3 Clothing

Business attire is required at official meetings.

## 7.4 Insurance

Participants are encouraged to purchase travel insurance before leaving their home country. Insurance plans typically cover accidental loss of belongings, medical costs in case of injury or illness, and other possible risks of international travel.

## 7.5 Credit Card

International credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, JCB, etc.) are accepted in many locations (hotels, restaurants, convenience stores, mass retailers) in Japan. However, it might be unacceptable at small enterprises, markets, transportation services, and other establishments.

Most bank ATMs in Japan accept only cards issued by Japanese banks. To withdraw cash, ATMs that accept foreign banks cards can be found at 7-Eleven and Lawson convenience stores, which can be found throughout Japan.

## 7.6 Duty Free Import

Personal effects and professional equipment can be brought into Japan duty free as long as their contents and quantities are deemed reasonable by the customs officer. You can also bring in 400 cigarettes, 500 grams of tobacco or 100 cigars; 3 bottles of alcoholic beverages; 2 ounces of perfume; and gifts and souvenirs whose total market price is less than 200,000 yen or its equivalent. There is no allowance for tobacco or alcoholic beverages for persons aged 19 years or younger. Firearms and other types of weapons, and narcotics are strictly prohibited.

For your reference, please see the following web-sites on Duty Free regulations in Japan.

\*Japan Custom: <http://www.customs.go.jp/english/summary/passenger.htm>

\*Information on Customs procedures in Japan:

[http://www.customs.go.jp/kaisei/youshiki/form\\_C/C5360-Br.pdf](http://www.customs.go.jp/kaisei/youshiki/form_C/C5360-Br.pdf)

## 7.7 Climate (February 2016)

[Tokyo, Japan]

The average temperature in Tokyo in February 2016 was cold with the lowest of 1.7°C (35.1°F) and highest of 10.4°C (50.7°F). The average temperature was 5.7°C (42.3°F)

[Yamagata, Japan]

The average temperature in Yamagata in February 2016 was cold with the lowest of -3.3°C (26.1°F) and highest of 4.0°C (39.2°F). The average temperature was 0.1°C (32.2°F)

For more information, please visit the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) Forecast for Travelers: <http://www.jnto.go.jp/weather/eng/index.php>

## 7.8 Healthcare \*quoted from JNTO Web Site

\*Water: Tap water is safe to drink in Japan. Mineral water including major imported brands can be easily obtained from supermarkets and convenience stores.

\*Hospitals: Medical systems and facilities in Japan are well-established and you can expect to receive a high standard medical treatment, should you have a problem with your health during your stay.

\*Inoculations: There are no inoculations required for entering Japan from anywhere around the world.

## 7.9 Electricity Supply \*quoted from JNTO Web Site

The voltage used throughout Japan is uniformly 100 volts, A.C. There are two kinds of frequencies in use; 50 Hertz in eastern Japan (Yamagata / Tokyo etc.) and 60 Hertz in western Japan (Kyoto / Osaka etc.).

All the venues of the Conference will have eastern Japan outlets. A convertible type of electrical appliance such as a hair dryer, travel iron and shaver will therefore be handy; otherwise a step-down transformer is required to convert the voltage. There are no columnar-shaped plugs or 3-pin plugs used in Japan but 2-flat-pin plugs are used instead. It is therefore advised to purchase a plug adapter beforehand.



## 7.10 Consumption Tax & Tipping

There is an 8% consumption tax that will be imposed on most goods and services at the time of purchase. Indicated prices contains consumption tax in many cases. Tipping is not required for service in places like hotels, taxis, restaurants, & beauty salons in Japan. Service charge is often charged to your consumption at some Hotels or Restaurants.

For your reference, please see the following web-sites on Tax-Free Exemption in Japan.

\*Japan's tax exemption program: <https://tax-freeshop.jnto.go.jp/eng/shopping-guide.php>

## 8. Contact Details of the Event Coordinators

UNWTO Coordinator	Coordinator in Host Country
<p><b>UNWTO:</b> Mr. Shinobu OZAWA Senior Officer Regional Programme for Asia-Pacific E-mail: <a href="mailto:sozawa@unwto.org">sozawa@unwto.org</a> TEL+34 91 567 93 25 (extension 312)</p>	<p><b>Japan:</b> <b>1. Yamagata Prefectural Government</b> *Mr. Atsushi SUZUKI Deputy Director, International Exchange Office E-mail: <a href="mailto:suzukiatsu@pref.yamagata.jp">suzukiatsu@pref.yamagata.jp</a> Phone:+81 (0)23 630 2211 *Mr. Masakazu SUZUKI Cheif, International Exchange Office E-mail: <a href="mailto:suzukimasaka@pref.yamagata.jp">suzukimasaka@pref.yamagata.jp</a> Phone:+81 (0)23 630 2211</p> <p><b>2. Japan Tourism Agency</b> *Ms. Ryoko OKADA Director for International Tourism Relations, International Affairs Divisions, Japan Tourism Agency E-mail: <a href="mailto:okada-r2zf@mlit.go.jp">okada-r2zf@mlit.go.jp</a> Phone: +81-3-5253-8111 *Ms. Yui TOYONAGA Official, International Affairs Divisions, Japan Tourism Agency E-mail: <a href="mailto:toyonaga-y2gj@mlit.go.jp">toyonaga-y2gj@mlit.go.jp</a> Phone: +81-3-5253-8111</p>
	<p><b>Coordinator in Registration &amp; Hotel Reservation</b></p> <p><b>Japan:</b> The official Coordinator is; JTB Global Marketing &amp; Travel Inc.</p> <p>Upon the preparation of Registration URL, the e-mail address for inquiries will be informed.</p>



## Annex 1: Additional Information on language

There is only one official language spoken in Japan, which is of course Japanese. However, many Japanese are able to understand English to a certain extent since English is the foreign language that everyone must learn as part of compulsory education.

Even if you don't understand Japanese, you can still certainly enjoy Japan. But if you know a few everyday Japanese phrases then it will make your trip even more memorable. A few words make a big difference.

### Useful Japanese Phrases: Japanese < > English

Ohayou gozaimasu	Good morning
Kon'nichiwa	Good afternoon
Kon'banwa	Good evening
Oyasumi nasai	Good night
Sayounara	Good-bye
Sumimasen	Excuse me
Gomen nasai	I am sorry
Wakarimasen	I don't understand
Arigatou	Thank you
Hai	Yes
Iie	No

## Annex 2: Additional Information on population

Japan's population is over 126 million. Most Japanese reside in densely populated urban areas. Japan's capital city is Tokyo. The population of the Tokyo Metropolitan Area including the city, some of its suburbs and the surrounding area is approximately 12 million.

### Major cities of Japan and their approximate populations

City	Population
Tokyo	12,059,000
Yamagata	252,000
Yokohama	3,426,000
Osaka	2,598,000
Nagoya	2,171,000
Sapporo	1,822,000
Kobe	1,493,000
Fukuoka	1,290,000
Sendai	1,008,000