

Daiwa Scholars 2018



Aileen Cooney

Aileen Cooney is completing an MSci in Chemistry at Imperial College London. Her love of the Japanese language developed in her teenage years, and during her gap year in 2013, she visited Japan and lived in Tokyo with a Japanese host family for four months. She is interested in the molecular basis of nutrition and the effect of diet on physiological functions. As a number of renowned Japanese scientists are working in the area of functional foods and fermentation technology, she would like to complete a PhD in Japan at one of the leading food science institutes, and continue working in scientific research.



Graham Davies

Graham Davies is completing an MEng in Mechanical Engineering at Imperial College London. His long-standing interest in Japan was sparked by his interest in “chindougu” (ingenious but useless inventions) and the shinkansen. During the 2016/17 academic year, he decided to take a year out from his university studies to visit Japan, during which time he worked as a researcher at the University of Tokyo and at a café in Naoshima. He is interested in combining Artificial Intelligence (AI) techniques with big data to create improved and robust designs that are better suited to our complex and unpredictable world. He is keen to learn more about Japan’s world-class research in AI and optimisation under uncertainty. After gaining some industrial experience, he aims to complete a PhD in Japan or the UK and go on to work as a researcher developing sustainability technologies.



Enzo DeGregorio

Enzo DeGregorio completed an MA (Scot) in English Literature and History in 2016, and an MSc in Literature and Modernity in 2017, both at the University of Edinburgh. He has worked as a research assistant on a number of projects for Dr Chris Harding, Lecturer in Asian History at the University of Edinburgh and a Daiwa Scholarship alumnus. Enzo took part in Sophia University’s month-long Summer Session in Asian Studies in 2016, studying Japanese language and Japanese literature in translation. He intends to complete a PhD in History, focusing on Japanese agency under the Allied Occupation of Japan, with a view to becoming an academic and writer in the field of Japanese history.



Busayo Esan

Busayo Esan completed an LLB at the University of Warwick in 2013. He was awarded a scholarship in 2014 to study Chinese at Xiamen University for a year. While in China, he also visited Japan, and this spurred his interest in Japan-China relations, and how the two can lead the way in building a robust, pan-regional security architecture. This led to his current MSc in International Politics at SOAS, University of London. He would like to gain experience in a Japanese think tank such as The Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) or the Tokyo Foundation, with a view to creating his own think tank, run by millennials, conducting research into, and advocating for, greater cooperation on security issues within Northeast Asia.



Vikram Jayaswal

Vikram Jayaswal is completing a BSc in Biotechnology with Spanish at Imperial College London. He became acquainted with Japanese in 2011, when he completed a three-week introductory Japanese language course after finishing his GCSEs. As an electronic music enthusiast he admires contemporary Japanese artists and figures such as Ikutaro Kakehashi. He is also interested in Japanese Buddhism and its differences from other schools of Buddhist thought. He aspires to create sustainable and renewable bioenergy resources, focussing on harnessing the power of algae, and has a professional interest in Japan as it is a leader with regard to algal biofuels. He intends to pursue further research into Industrial Biotechnology and Metabolic Engineering, in order to become a leading academic researcher in the field of algal biofuels.



Alba Landra

Alba Landra is completing a BA in Zoology at the University of Cambridge. Her interest in Japan began through a Japanese friend she met at school in Vietnam, who introduced her to Japanese culture through films and art. She has read a number of Japanese authors including Yasunari Kawabata, Hiroko Oyamada, Masahiko Shimada and Kenzaburo Oe. She aspires to work in the area of conservation, and to raise awareness of the beauty of Japan’s wildlife and in doing so, become a leader in the battle to safeguard it.



Joseph McLoughlin

Joseph McLoughlin is completing an MSc (Hons) degree in Chemistry at University College London. He has a long-standing interest in Japanese history, having extensively studied the Tokugawa [or Edo] and Meiji periods among others. His area of expertise is in antibody-drug conjugates, an emerging field set to revolutionise the healthcare industry and into which Japanese industry has heavily invested. While in Japan, he hopes to forge links with fellow scientists. He aspires to complete a PhD before embarking on a career within either academia or industry as a medicinal chemist, and hopes to continue working on the synthesis of next-generation cancer therapeutics.