

SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART SUPPORT GRANT FY2018

Announcement of the selection result
Kawamura Arts and Cultural Foundation

Dear

Kawamura Arts and Cultural Foundation has launched the SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART SUPPORT GRANT FY2018, which is the first occasion to subsidize Socially Engaged Art in Japan, and we are pleased to announce the result of the open call.

We received 67 applications in total (34 overseas, 33 domestic) from Japan and abroad, and decided to support the following project after a thorough examination. For this project, a maximum of 5 million yen will be supported from the foundation.

Celebrating this result, we will hold a press conference in March 2018. We would appreciate if you could attend the press conference.

Sincerely yours

■ Selected Project of SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART SUPPORT GRANT FY2018

Name of Applicant : PortB**Project Name : New Tokyo School Excursion Project****■ Press Conference & Party**

D a t e : March 12, Monday, 2018
2 : 00pm ~ 3 : 00pm

V e n u e : International House of Japan

A d d r e s s : 5 - 11 - 16 Roppongi,
Minato-ku, Tokyo

U R L: <http://www.i-house.or.jp/>

5 min. walk from Exit 7, Azabu-juban Station, Toei Oedo

8 min. walk from Exit 4, Azabu-juban Station, Tokyo Met

10 min. walk from Exit 3, Roppongi Station, Tokyo Metro Hibiya Line

**【Contact & Apply for the press conference】**

We would appreciate it if you could support and cooperate with us.

Kawamura Arts and Cultural Foundation (Staff : Mizuya)

2-15-2 Soto Kanda, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo HP: kacf.jp Mail: info@kacf.jp

 ■ Outline of the selected project of SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART SUPPORT GRANT FY 2018



photo by Takeshi Yamagishi

Name of applicant : Port B

Project name : New Tokyo School Excursion Project

"New Tokyo School Excursion Project" is a project that executes a "school excursion" in Tokyo "guided" by refugees (including applicants and denials). Participants will learn the reality of refugees from this trip. Participants will interact with the refugees. Participants will see Tokyo with the refugees' eyes. Participants will learn traces of the refugees in Tokyo. Furthermore, others may re-experience the content by documenting the entire process. This will be a researching, educational, and a creative project of the refugees, as well as a cultural exchanging project.

For example, the content of the tour will be customized from a point of view where middle and high school Kurd students would visit for a school excursion in Tokyo—for example, if the tour would be guided by a Kurd, Warabi in Saitama must be a requisite. Participants could be Tokyo residents, or of course, other Kurd refugees (different from the "guide"), or middle and high school Kurd students.

This project will react to the refugee issue from a theatrical approach, suggesting new ways of participating the society that neither political nor economic perspectives could achieve. It will aim a society of further generosity, based on historical understandings by developing creative encounterings with people often collectively recognized as "refugees," and by cultivating personalized relationships. Themes of the tour would be "Asia" and "war," and will fertilize a unique learning field distinctly in contrast with the urban, national, and political festive absorption towards the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Referring to the history of theatre, this project will connect Bertolt Brecht' s "learning play" philosophy and the Japanese "school excursion" with the axis of the refugee issue—and by purposely limiting its field to Tokyo, it will allow the city to be rediscovered as a local region, a rural district, and a place of exile, by strengthening the participants' "eyesights."



photo by Shota Kono



photo by Takeshi Yamagishi

■ About SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART SUPPORT GRANT FY2018

Kawamura Arts and Cultural Foundation was founded on February 15th, 2017, aiming to building a better society by enhancing people' s creativity and imagination with cultural art. The foundation will support activities of artists with remarkable talent, and aspires to further facilitate the creativeness and innovation of cultural art by ascending and developing cultural art that have been fostered so far.

Kawamura Arts and Cultural Foundation is pleased to announce the launch of a new grant supporting projects categorized as Socially Engaged Art. Now at a time where the world is facing drastic changes, one of the major issues in contemporary art is how it displays creativity through relationship with the society. Many artists decide to take the path of proactively interposing themselves into communities and exerting their artistic abilities in the society. Our foundation will accept one art project per year, and implement financial support for Socially Engaged Art projects that commit to the community and society; implement activities together with communities and residents; and aim to build and demonstrate models of a better society.

This grant would be the first occasion to subsidize Socially Engaged Art in Japan. Open to all age ranges and nationalities, the foundation proactively welcomes applications from around the globe and intends to announce its activities worldwide.

■ Towards the Socially Engaged Art Support Grant

At this age of globalism, Japanese artists are actively working in broad areas both domestic and abroad, and increasing numbers of grants and awards that support such artists' activities have developed over the recent years. In such condition within the international art field, Socially Engaged Art, which aims to realize a better society through direct artist involvements with communities and societies, are attracting increasing attention among their approaches towards various controversies such as environmental issues, economic discrepancies, immigrant issues, and more others. In Japan however, Socially Engaged Art is not yet well renowned, and no particular system could be found up until this point that support such activities. Taking into account of such condition, Kawamura Arts and Cultural Foundation will start a new grant system in which would be the first case to support Socially Engaged Art in Japan. We hope this grant system would contribute in attaining a broader understanding of Socially Engaged Art along with its social meanings and possibilities, and intensify the activities and practices of artists who aim to realize a further better society towards the future.

Chairman, Kawamura Arts and Cultural Foundation
Yoshihisa Kawamura

■ Juries' comments towards the selection



Yuji Akimoto

Director,
The University Art Museum,
Tokyo University of the Arts

The selection of SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART SUPPORT GRANT FY 2018 took place. Detailed descriptions of the word Socially Engaged Art (SEA) was explained in the beginning of the application guide, maybe as the word itself is not yet that common in public. Words which appeared here were terms such as "... through a proactive process of participation and communication with the society," which meant, the society could become enormously boundless depending on how the artist would approach, leaving range of art activities to be accepted being extensively wide. My personal impression of the total numbers of application, 67, were quite many. I knew the process of narrowing them down to one would be a difficult when I started looking into each proposals. This one, that one—many projects actually caught my eye.

One project became selected after a discussion held among the juries in the end. The selected project is highly appropriate for the inaugural year of the grant. The content of SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART SUPPORT GRANT FY 2018 is now ready.



Yasuyo Kudo

Administrative Director,
ART & SOCIETY
RESEARCH CENTER

It was significantly meaningful that a support grant towards Socially Engaged Art—a form of art activity that reflect the current age—started here in Japan in 2017. Many applications came in in the inaugural year of the grant, with international and domestic applications being half each, which exemplified the high recognition the grant is globally collecting. Proposals that remained until the very last stage of the jury discussion were those which sincerely confronted political issues; including projects that featured the history of war and regions, aiming reinterpretation of history and a multicultural society. Other unique ideas focused on daily living environment or the international society; including projects that suggested a sustainable collaborative program fostered with the regional community through daily life; or development of an educational material in collaboration with experts from diverse fields in order to inherit the multihued philosophies to the next generation. I truly look forward to seeing how those projects which unfortunately could not be selected will be unfolding in the future too.



Kenji Kubota
Independent Curator

Expectations were high for the very first support grant towards Socially Engaged Art (hereafter, SEA) in Japan, and this grant had a significant role in the means of properly defining SEA and raising its recognition in the society. I felt responsibility in being one of the juries, and looked at all applications with a sincere manner. It was a delightful that many of the applied projects appeared to create significant influences towards the society, while it was severe that we had to choose just one in the end. Overall impression of looking at all applications was that not many had both of the two required elements, which were, “Projects applying strikingly new methods or ways of expression,” as well as, “Projects which include a collaborative production process with participants.” For the former, I look forward to seeing further creative ways of expression. For the latter, further concrete research must be required upon plotting the project. In this aspect, I feel the project by Akira Takayama, chosen as the recipient of the grant this year, was exquisitely astute.



Tadasu Takamine
Artist / Associate Professor,
Akita University of Art

This was a globally unique grant that limited its genre, which more than half applications came in from overseas. However, because of the feature of Socially Engaged Art being created through communication with the society, informative and physical distance between Japan seemed to distinctly appeared in proposals. The few projects that remained on the last stage were all Japanese artists, which invaded more deeply into the Japanese context and appeared more realistic in feasibility. Although this result was a legitimate, it also made us think how possibilities for international artists to receive the grant could arise.



Yoshitaka Mori
Professor,
Tokyo University of the Arts,
Graduate School of Global Arts

Although the word “Socially Engaged Art” is not yet fully established at a Japanese word, a number of domestic and international proposals at high-quality were submitted. The selection became a very difficult process, while I used the three criteria below upon making my judges.

- 1) Does the project apply a strikingly new method of ways or expression.
- 2) Does the project cope with a crucial matter the society current confronts, in a strikingly new way (unlimited to art) that has never been taken before.
- 3) Is the project well prepared, leaving high potential of sufficient achievement made within the period.

Selected this year was Akira Takayama (Port B), who is internationally renowned with his variety of works featuring the framework of theatrical art itself. Takayama’s proposal this time furthermore developed his prior experiments, and approached “immigrants”—a theme that is increasingly becoming an important issue in the current society—with the unique framework of “school excursion,” assessed highly appropriate as the recipient for the inaugural year of this grant. We highly look forward to the achievements of the project.