



The Tazaki Foundation

Developing Young Japanese People into Truly Global Leaders by Supporting Their Study Abroad

As Japan continues to internationalise at a rapid pace in line with economic growth, there has been a tremendous rise in the number of Japanese companies expanding their office networks across the world. However, at a stage where Japan must aim towards the next round of growth, a human resource challenge has become apparent: the lack of global leaders who can powerfully promote business across national, cultural and value boundaries. It is believed that at the heart of these challenges lie issues with Japan’s educational system, which over-emphasises textbook learning and is poorly suited to developing the kind of individuality that enables people to make breakthroughs. Having studied at a UK university and started up a several businesses overseas, Tadayoshi Tazaki has felt that he, as a pioneer in this kind of internationalisation, should play a leading role in efforts to resolve these issues of Japanese education. What Japan needs now is not just people who can speak English fluently, but the kind of human resources who could be described as “truly global leaders”. On 1 August 2016, based on this sense of mission, Tadayoshi established the Tazaki Foundation, which provides support to young people who aim to study abroad at the world’s best UK universities such as Oxford and Cambridge and to succeed as global leaders in a variety of industries in the future.

Aiming to Cultivate Truly Global Leaders

After going to the UK at age 19 in 1962, Tadayoshi spent some time at a British “public school” (private boarding school) before entering the University of Cambridge. After graduating, Tadayoshi set up a number of businesses independently, including JAC, and established Tazaki Group. As he expanded his various businesses overseas, he began to feel that there were many things he had learned in the UK which he wanted to bring back to Japan. This was because, looking back on the first half of his life, he felt that his success was based on the fact that he received the world’s best education in the UK, where he studied hard and gained a lot of experience while engaging in friendly competition with his local peers, and he felt that all this had laid the foundations for his later life. Based on his own experiences, he felt convinced that cultivating the young Japanese people who would carry the future forwards, by developing them within a global environment, was essential for the future of Japan, and that it was his personal mission to carry out this work. It was in 1985 that Tadayoshi moved from ideas to action, by starting up a grand new project of establishing an English-style all-boarding secondary school (junior high and high school) in Japan. He succeeded in getting the cooperation of University of Cambridge, one of the most prestigious universities in the UK, and the UK government for the establishment of a

school in Japan. However, just at the point where the project’s future prospects looked bright, the Japanese Ministry of Education of the time declared that they would not authorise the establishment of the school, making it clear that instruction at schools had to follow Ministry-authorised textbooks as an absolute condition. Even after this, Tadayoshi continued to negotiate tenaciously with the government for relaxation of these regulations, but after spending six years or so battling with the situation, he was ultimately forced to give up on his project of establishing the school.

Yet Tadayoshi continued to feel in his heart that it was essential to cultivate young Japanese people who could compete at the global level. Twenty-five years after his experience with the school project, with Japanese companies now starting to achieve success on the global stage, it was becoming evident that the movement of young people overseas for study was going in the opposite direction, with the numbers of such students declining year after year. Feeling alarmed about this situation, Tadayoshi tried to think of a new method for turning out the leaders who could achieve global success; hoping to try one more time to transform this vision into action, he created a plan to develop a five-year scholarship system, with repayment not required. Finally, in 2016, he established the Tazaki Foundation as an organisation providing scholarships to outstanding young Japanese people for study abroad in the UK.



Farewell party for the first group of scholarship students in 2017



Farewell party for the sixth group of scholarship students in 2022



The first group of scholarship students during their study abroad in the UK

Full Scholarships Covering Study Abroad Expenses, with Repayment Not Required

The Tazaki Foundation provides support in the form of the full sum of expenses of five years of study, comprising two years in a “public school” (private secondary school) and three years at a UK university, for 16-year-old high school students. Covering the actual expenses of study abroad, this financial support amounts to around ¥60 million to ¥70 million in total per person, including tuition and accommodation fees and the like. Applications from high school students hoping to study abroad are accepted once a year, with successful applicants being selected based on document screenings and several interviews. A significant feature of this scholarship is that only first-year high school students (aged 16 and under) are eligible. This limitation comes from Tadayoshi’s personal sense that “19 was already too late for me when studying abroad”. It is an indisputable fact that it is better for people to study English when they are young, as they will be quicker to pick it up. However, junior high school students would be too young to go overseas alone to study abroad, because this age group falls under mandatory education in Japan. Moreover, it is now no longer possible for students to enter British public schools at 19 after graduating from a Japanese high school. Tadayoshi therefore decided on 16—the first year of high school—as the year when students were still just about young enough to benefit from this programme.

The Tazaki Foundation places a strong emphasis not only on students’ studying abroad at a UK university, but also on living and learning at public school for two years from age 16 to 18. This system—providing a cohesive package of support from public school through university—is a unique and practical assistance programme that is only to be found at the Tazaki Foundation. Furthermore, the provision of such a generous scholarship with no need for repayment originates in Tadayoshi’s belief that above all, it is vital to create an environment in which students can dedicate themselves entirely to their studies in the UK and lead a full and rich student life with their peers without worrying about economic aspects as Tadayoshi himself did during his time studying abroad.

In addition to the scholarship programme for study abroad, the Tazaki Foundation also provides assistance with English language study for those students who pass the initial round of screening, as these studies will lay the foundation for the students’ success internationally. The Foundation also delivers entrusted scholarships to support Japanese university students to study in the UK. These provide support to Japanese students for study abroad in the UK or provide scholarships for designated subjects within postgraduate education at Cambridge University. The Foundation is also extending its support activities across a wider range of areas, such as starting assistance for an organisation that runs English debating tournaments for Japanese junior high and high school students, with the aim of cultivating “truly global leaders”.

Prospects for the Future

Creating a Global Network That Is One of a Kind

As of March 2025, the Tazaki Foundation has dispatched and provided support to a cumulative total of 61 students studying abroad in the UK since its establishment in 2016. When the recipients of language study support, entrusted scholarships and the like are included, the number of students supported rises to 416 in total. The Foundation started by selecting five students in its first year, but this has risen to nine students as of 2023. Moreover, with students supported through the Foundation now having graduated from prestigious UK universities including Cambridge, Oxford and the University of London, these budding global leaders are now taking up positions in ministries, agencies, major companies and research institutions both inside and outside Japan. The Foundation has high hopes for the success of these young people as leaders both in Japan and across the world in the future.

One aim of the Tazaki Foundation in providing this wide-ranging support is to build a global network. Going forwards, as more and more young people supported by the Tazaki Foundation achieve success in the world and come together as one body, they are set to form a global human resource network that will be a source of strength when they become active in the wider world in the future. Tadayoshi firmly believes that by not only supporting the development of individual abilities but also building up relationships between global leaders, the Tazaki Foundation can transform the relationship between Japan and the rest of the world.

■Track Record of Support

●Unit: No. of people

Fiscal year		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Students studying abroad		5	5	8	7	9	8	10	9	10	71
Language study students		20	22	22	22	24	24	30	30	30	224
TOPS* participants		8	14	10	-	Online	15	15	13	Unspecified	75
Study abroad scholarship recipients who engage in language study		-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	2	5
Entrusted scholarship programmes	University of Tokyo	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	7	6	24
	Institute of Science Tokyo	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	11	17
	Hitotsubashi University	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	2	7
	Postgraduate study at Cambridge University (Computer Science)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	3
Total		33	41	40	29	34	49	70	69	61	426

*TOPS: Tokyo Oxford Programme of Summer. A summer program lasting approximately two weeks where students can experience classes and individual instruction given by the instructors who teach actual students at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

As of June 2025