

# Works Report 2022

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Works  
Report

2022

Volunteer Legacy of the Olympic and Paralympic Games

## Volunteer Legacy of the Olympic and Paralympic Games

**A baton from the Tokyo 2020 Games  
to the Future**

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In the midst of an unprecedented pandemic,  
the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games were held.

With some plans that never materialized,  
what did Tokyo 2020 leave for society in Japan?

The positive impact left by the Olympics and Paralympics  
is referred to as their legacy.

One valuable legacy of Tokyo 2020  
is **volunteerism**.



## Chapter

# 1

## Anticipations and Criticisms of Olympics Volunteerism



The Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games were the second Summer Games to be hosted by Japan. What Japan seeks now as a mature society is an intangible legacy that enriches society, more so than a tangible legacy created by spending a colossal sum of money.

One potential intangible legacy is volunteerism. It is known that volunteer activities enrich the lives of individuals and 60% of the population shows interest. Yet only 20% actually participate in volunteer activities.

An underlying reason is the cold social perspective toward volunteerism. "Occasion volunteering" for a sports festival is different from highly altruistic volunteering, giving it the potential to change public opinion.

# What is a Legacy for a Mature Society?

## The unprecedented Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games

On September 5, 2021, the curtains closed on the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics. Japan captured the most medals ever for the Olympics and the second most for the Paralympics. Japan was filled with excitement for the success of its athletes and the powerful display of sports.

However, in the approximately eight years after Tokyo was chosen as host in 2013, there were many complications leading up to the Games. COVID-19 especially had a large impact. Restrictions were placed on athlete selection and the environment for matches. The Games were postponed for one year and most of the events had no spectators. The Games were held as public opinions were still divided about going forward in the midst of the COVID crisis.

## The positive impact of the Games: the Olympic legacy

Even before COVID, the Olympics have been subject globally to all kinds of criticism. Yet the Olympics continue to be a huge international event. This is because it has social impact beyond simply promoting sports.

For the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, the Tokaido bullet

train and Metropolitan Expressway were constructed. The Olympics also served as impetus to develop the bathroom unit and security by private security companies.

With London 2012, the desolated East London area was redeveloped. With Rio 2016, the public transport network was built.

**Examples of benefits like these, which last long after the Olympics, are referred to as Olympic legacies.** Legacies are both tangible and intangible, and some are planned, while some are unintentional.<sup>1</sup>

## The intangible legacies that enrich mature societies

Unlike Tokyo 1964, when the country was rebuilding after losing the war, Japan in 2020 has a developed infrastructure and is not lacking much in everyday life. Many citizens were opposed to spending enormous amounts of money to leave a tangible legacy, as represented in the opinion of “There is no need to rebuild the stadium.”

In the mature society that Japan has become, people feel that an intangible legacy is more important. At the London Games for example, there was progress in inclusivity of people with disabilities through events leading to the Games and the Paralympics.

In Japan as well, 20% more of those who volunteered for the Paralympics “gained

communication skills and learned how to support people with disabilities” compared to those who volunteered for the Olympics only.<sup>2</sup>

If more people felt a closer connection to those with disabilities, and the mental and physical barriers that block social participation of those with disabilities are removed by the Paralympics, that would be considered its legacy.

## Over 80% say they want to continue volunteering

**One possible intangible legacy of Tokyo 2020 is volunteerism.** A gross total of 76K Games volunteers (Field Cast) and 16K city volunteers (City Cast) assisted Tokyo 2020 (see Chapter 2 for details). Many may remember how the volunteers were honored during the Closing Ceremony of the Paralympics.

Unlike welfare and disaster relief volunteers,

Olympics/Paralympics volunteers tend to be more strongly motivated by self-fulfillment than altruism. Top reasons for participating were “I wanted to be involved in the Olympics/Paralympics,” “I wanted to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” and “I wanted to broaden my perspective.”<sup>3</sup> More than supporting or serving others, their motivation was in the meaning it held for themselves.

For those who don't partake in altruistic volunteering, this type of festival or occasion serves as impetus to volunteer. In fact, more than 20% of Tokyo 2020 volunteers had no prior volunteer experience.<sup>4</sup>

Yet, more than 80% said after the closing that “I would like to continue sports volunteering after the Games.”<sup>5</sup> A notable number of more than 80% are inclined to continue volunteering. Occasion volunteering opens more doors for volunteering and spreads its culture.



<sup>1</sup> Gratton, C. & Preuss, H. (2008) Maximizing Olympic impacts by building up legacies. The International Journal of the History of Sport 25(14).

<sup>2</sup> The Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center (2021) “Post-Games Survey on Field Cast and City Cast at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games”

<sup>3</sup> The Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center (2019) “Pre-Games Survey on Sponsor Employee Volunteers”

<sup>4</sup> The Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center (2021) “Volunteer Opinion Poll of Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games amid the COVID Pandemic”

<sup>5</sup> Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (2021) “Games Volunteer Questionnaire Results”

**Volunteering enriches the lives of individuals**

Why is expanded volunteerism considered to be a positive impact of Tokyo 2020?

This is because volunteering enriches the lives of individuals. The roles of an individual for society include the 4 Ls: Love, Learning, Labor, and Leisure. A combination of these give meaning to life.<sup>6</sup> Because volunteer activities involve multiple Ls, individuals can change the combination of Ls in their lives through volunteerism.

Further, according to survey research<sup>7</sup> by Recruit Works Institute, quality human relationships heighten the level of happiness in life and can reduce the risk of career changes. The human relationships of people who work in Japan tend to be limited to colleagues and family and are smaller in scale than the US and France (Table 1-1). With an aging society, there is an increase of single people, and companies no longer promise a job for life.

**Table 1-1** Types of Human Relationships with Interactions

Japan	4.6 types
US	6.4 types
France	5.8 types
Denmark	6.4 types
China	5.5 types

Source: Recruit Works Institute (2020) "Survey on Relations in Five Countries"  
 \*Average of number of human relationships among 14 types, such as family, workplace, hobby, and sports

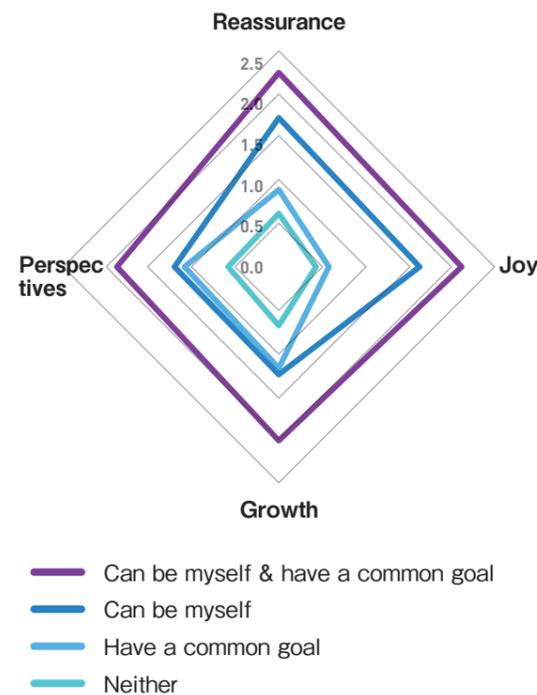
6 Sunny S. Hansen (2013) "Integrative Life Planning: Critical Tasks for Career Development and Changing Life Patterns" (Japanese translation, Fukumura Shuppan)

7 Recruit Works Institute (2020) "Multi-Relationship Society," (2021) "Career Theory of Connections: Six Types of Assistance to Fulfill Wishes"

This is why it is becoming more important to find a "third place" other than the home and workplace. Specifically, **human relationships that let you be yourself and have a common goal will enrich lives** (Figure 1-2).

Volunteerism is an activity where you share a goal with like-minded people, other than your family and colleagues. On top of that, individuals can choose for themselves what to do. People can enrich their lives through volunteer activities.

**Figure 1-2** What Individuals Gain Through Human Relationships



Source: Recruit Works Institute (2020) "Survey on Relations of Working People"

**Development of post-Games platforms by local governments**

Not only that, volunteerism should be welcomed by society. Social issues have become complex in recent years, and the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and ESG investment are spreading. Before social sustainability was ever emphasized, volunteers played an important role in fields such as welfare and environmental conservation.

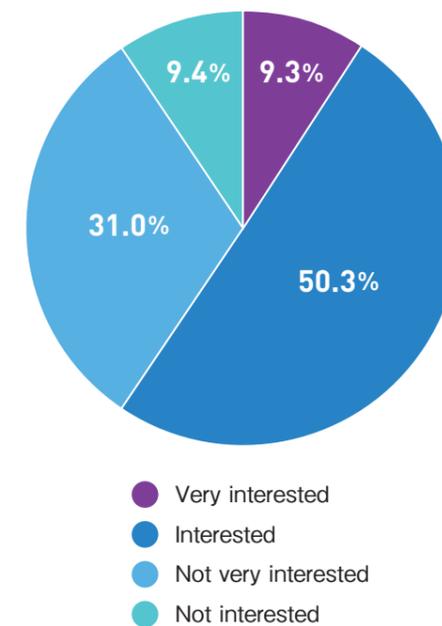
However, **while 60% of people are interested in volunteering, only slightly more than 20% have actually ever volunteered** (Figure 1-3, Figure 1-4). Many people in Japan have not acted to volunteer,

for reasons such as the lack of opportunity, information, and time. It is anticipated that an environment will be developed where people can participate if they desire to do so.

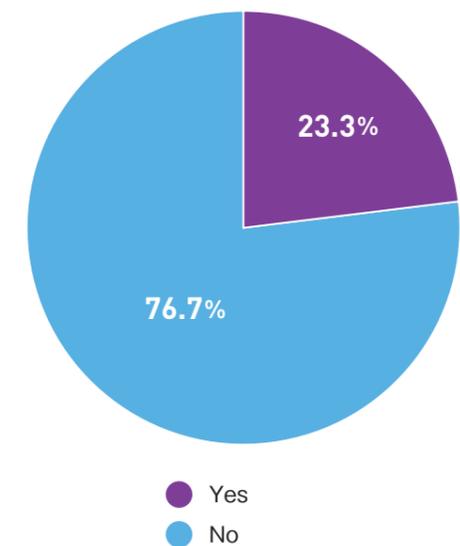
This in particular is actually changing, triggered by Tokyo 2020. In November 2021, the Tokyo government launched "Tokyo Volunteer Legacy Network," a portal site of volunteer opportunities and more. Chiba Prefecture and Fujisawa City, which hosted match venues, are also developing platforms to provide volunteer information (Figure 1-5, P. 26).

There are signs that volunteerism is spreading among both private citizens and local government workers who volunteered at Tokyo 2020.

**Figure 1-3** Interest in Volunteer Activities



**Figure 1-4** Volunteer Experience



Source: Cabinet Office "2015 Survey of NPO and Citizen Social Contributions"

Figure 1-5 Local Government Portal Site



Source: <https://www.tokyo-vln.jp/>



Source: <https://chiba-volunteer.jp/>

**An opportunity to consider the state of “occasion” volunteering**

Signs of budding volunteerism are showing among individuals and local governments, but it is unknown if these will significantly grow. This is because the excitement of the Olympics and Paralympics tends to be very transitory, and if the signs are left alone, they will likely fade away with time.

Therefore, **it is important to socially nurture the buds born from Tokyo 2020 to develop volunteerism into a legacy.** For this reason, there is need to make a record of Tokyo 2020 initiatives, including the issues, and pass them down. It is also crucial to create a social consensus as to how to position non-compensated acts in large-scale events that involve commerce.

Many volunteers have been involved in operations at the Rugby World Cup and Tokyo Marathon as

well. There will be future opportunities for occasion volunteering such as at the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. Just how is this different from welfare and disaster volunteering?

Taking Tokyo 2020 volunteerism as one example, opinions are opposite depending on whether it is seen as “an opportunity to be involved with a rare event” or “mobilization to cut labor costs.” While misguided criticism dampens the desire to volunteer, there is persistent risk that the substance of volunteerism, which is “non-compensated altruistic acts based on individual goodwill,” may be exploited.

**Passing the baton from Tokyo 2020 to the future**

What is needed to sustain the positive impact born from the Olympics and Paralympics? In this publication, we will consider the state of

volunteering for large-scale events, which is different from welfare and disaster volunteering, after a general review of volunteering at Tokyo 2020.

In Chapter 2, “The Creativity of Volunteers at the Tokyo 2020—Amid the COVID Pandemic—,” we will introduce initiatives not only by Games volunteers recruited by the Organising Committee, but also by local governments throughout Japan, as well as initiatives born from being forced to abandon activities because of the pandemic.

In Chapter 3, “The Positive Changes to Corporate Employees from Volunteer Activities—Diversity, Individual Autonomy, volunteer intention—,” we will focus on corporate employees, which had the lowest rate of volunteer experience among the various groups, and analyzed/examined the changes that occurred to them from volunteering at the Games. We will also review the initiatives of companies that dispatched many Games volunteers. In Chapter 4, “Fostering a volunteer culture in Japan,” we will discuss the potential of volunteerism in large-scale events like Tokyo 2020 and the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, as well as what must be considered especially for this type

of volunteerism. Volunteering in large-scale events such as the Olympics and Paralympics have tremendous potential to enrich the volunteer culture in Japan. It is our hope that knowledge about volunteerism in Tokyo 2020 will be passed on and be helpful for volunteerism to spread more positively.

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Senior Chief Researcher, RENGO-RIALS



# Will Tokyo 2020 change a society that derides volunteerism?

## Volunteers need an egocentric excuse

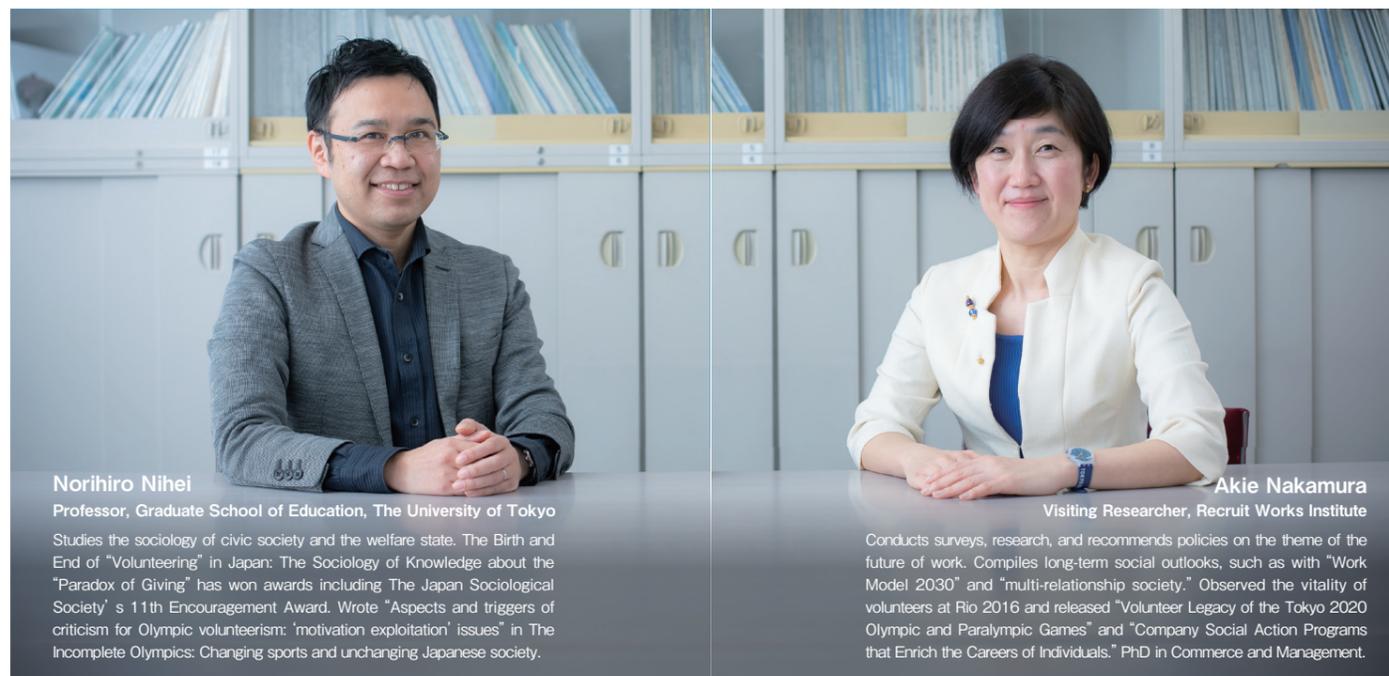
**Nakamura:** I would like to review volunteer activities at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games and discuss how to position volunteerism at future large-scale events in Japan. Professor Norihiro Nihei, a leader of volunteerism research, has joined me to discuss the points of the volunteer culture at Tokyo 2020 and in Japan.

**Nihei:** I talk about the negative aspects of volunteerism as well, so I may sound critical at times (laughs).

A volunteer is one “bearer” who willingly performs acts for others, in fields that existing frameworks such as the country and organizations are unable to cover. However, in Japan, the desire to be active continues to decline since 2000 among the wealthy, which is the group that really should be driving altruistic initiatives.

According to research, it was more likely for someone with higher household income to actively participate in philanthropy until the 1980s. But in the 1990s, there was no longer a correlation with income, and in the 2000s, the participation rate lowered inversely with wealth. The concept of “noblesse oblige” for the wealthy to hold responsibility in helping others has weakened, and as a result, the gap has widened.

**Nakamura:** Why has “noblesse oblige” stopped functioning in Japan?



**Norihiro Nihei**  
Professor, Graduate School of Education, The University of Tokyo  
Studies the sociology of civic society and the welfare state. The Birth and End of “Volunteering” in Japan: The Sociology of Knowledge about the “Paradox of Giving” has won awards including The Japan Sociological Society’s 11th Encouragement Award. Wrote “Aspects and triggers of criticism for Olympic volunteerism: ‘motivation exploitation’ issues” in The Incomplete Olympics: Changing sports and unchanging Japanese society.

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Visiting Researcher, Recruit Works Institute  
Conducts surveys, research, and recommends policies on the theme of the future of work. Compiles long-term social outlooks, such as with “Work Model 2030” and “multi-relationship society.” Observed the vitality of volunteers at Rio 2016 and released “Volunteer Legacy of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games” and “Company Social Action Programs that Enrich the Careers of Individuals.” PhD in Commerce and Management.

**Nihei:** The wealthy and famous in other countries are generally criticized if they don’t participate in philanthropy. But in contrast in Japan, being charitable provokes accusations of seeking publicity or being brainwashed. If they are criticized by society on top of using their own money, they are not motivated to act.

**There is a tendency in Japanese society overall to take a cynical view of altruistic acts, not just**

**of the wealthy.**

For example, if a worker is going to do a volunteer activity over the weekend, their manager might complain or tease them, saying, “Will you fall behind in work?” For this reason, many are driven to use an egocentric excuse, such as “I’m doing it with friends” or “It’s for my own growth.”

## “Bonding type” and “bridging type”

are transcended. In Japan, the bonding type has a strong presence as seen in neighborhood associations and company sports festivals. These activities are feasible with the premise of a framework where unpaid work is rewarded over the long term, such as with lifetime employment and community.

On the other hand, the bridging type such as philanthropy and donations to people who have nothing to do with you did not readily take root in Japan. Those who refrain from bonding-type activities were ostracized, while those who partook in bridging-type activities were pressured by society and ridiculed as being eccentric.

**Nakamura:** With the outflow of human resources from regions, and with employment becoming fluid in modern society, hasn’t it become a challenge for bonding-type activities to be feasible?

**Nihei:** That’s why the definition of “volunteer” has become bloated, being conveniently used even for unpaid work.

**Nakamura:** And so the practice of saving administrative costs by relying on the goodwill of individuals to conduct services that the government should be doing has long been considered a problem in volunteerism research.

## The potential of the agility of being time-limited

**Nakamura: Today, we are focusing on volunteers at the large-scale Olympics/ Paralympics event, especially corporate employee volunteers. I believe that these will expand bridging-type volunteerism in Japan.**

**Nakamura:** Why is a cynical view taken of altruistic activities in Japan?

**Nihei:** I think there is some relation to the time-honored concept of mutual help in Japan.

Volunteerism can be categorized as the “bonding type” where people within the same group help each other, or the “bridging type” where affiliations

In Japanese society, where altruistic activities are scorned, focusing on volunteers for a sports festival, in other words for a “festival,” rolls in a good direction, creating the image of volunteerism as something fun that people want to take part in.

Further, while corporate employees have the lowest rate of volunteer experience among the different groups, companies now expect them to create human networks to broaden their perspectives across organizations, calling this “boundary-crossing learning.” Corporate employees also have income compared to students and housewives.

**Nihei:** If we focus on individuals, it is undeniable that volunteering at Tokyo 2020 was a very bountiful experience.

**Nakamura:** Games volunteer work was for a limited time, so there were no complicated human relationships. Also, being able to agilely participate is an advantage that bonding-type volunteerism lacks.

**Nihei:** When considering the significance of the Games, its ripple effects on overall society should also be assessed. I believe there is also need to evaluate if the Games triggered advances in diversity and understanding of inclusion, more involvement by people with disabilities in social activities, and an increase of those who make donations or volunteer.

**Nakamura:** What are your thoughts on the legacy of Tokyo 2020?

**Nihei:** The biggest blow was that the matches had no spectators because of COVID and lessened the sense of accomplishment for volunteers. Some

participants sensed that the organizer went out of their way to provide them with work and hospitality. This may be consumed as nothing more than a nice memory.

However, with the uproar over the string of improper remarks and resignations before the Games, it was demonstrated to all that the sexism and lookism of the older generation would not be tolerated. It may be considered an ironic legacy that diversity and inclusion progressed as a result.

Nakamura: The survey revealed that the awareness of coexistence with people with disabilities was about 30% higher among Paralympics volunteers than those who volunteered at the Olympics only. I believe that the Paralympics had significant meaning.

For limited-time large-scale events, there is the issue of who the organizer will pass the baton of legacy to. With Tokyo 2020, local governments such as Tokyo developed volunteer platforms in an effort to preserve the legacy. Tokyo 2020 is cultivating new buds for an inclusive society.

**Nihei:** At the Nagano 1998 Winter Olympics, the mobilization of residents under the label of volunteerism was an issue. However, people shared a major sense of accomplishment with all the difficulties they faced, and legacies such as the One School, One Country Program<sup>8</sup> remained for over a decade. **Because the sense of accomplishment at Tokyo 2020 is weaker than it was at the Nagano Games, it makes it that much more difficult to leave a legacy. Still, it is sought for experience from the Games to be seen in a positive light and to position that as a guideline for future behavior.**

**T**o justify participation, a story is needed

**Nakamura:** What aspects of volunteering at large-scale events should be valued especially?

**Nihei:** The larger the event, the more important it is to have a story as to “why this is being done.” For the Great East Japan Earthquake, which was an unprecedented disaster, the story of why people went there was universally understood.

On the other hand, there was insufficient agreement about holding Tokyo 2020, and the story of “why” and “for who” faltered greatly.

Amid this, the commercial aspects of the Games were amplified on the internet and other, provoking criticism such as “There’s no need for volunteers for the Games, which create income for companies.” The story of “sports events should be supported by the voluntary accord of citizens” was not emphasized.

**Nakamura:** As symbolized in the act of traveling to and from the venue wearing a uniform, it seems that Tokyo 2020 volunteers were anticipated to serve as “ambassadors” to bridge the organizers and viewers.

However, with the decision of no spectators, the position of the Games, as well as volunteers, greatly wavered.

**Nihei:** The volunteers themselves likely felt conflicted and unsure of their purpose. During the commute to the venues, a volunteer had the experience of being bumped into and glared at by a man and others wore jackets to hide their uniforms. At the venues as well, some had mixed feelings about having unneeded tasks created to give them

work to do.

With this situation, each person had to create their story to justify that they will volunteer regardless. I think this was a tough experience compared to regular volunteering. This experience should also be left for the records.

**After the Games, it is of value that many volunteers responded in a questionnaire that they were glad that they participated, but to say that “Tokyo 2020 volunteerism was a success” based on that would be deeply flawed.**

**Nakamura:** There is need to examine volunteer activities amid the COVID pandemic.

While harboring challenges and conflicts, the sight of volunteers enjoying their activities at Tokyo 2020 was broadly circulated. I hope this triggers public opinion to warm up to the idea of volunteerism.

**Nihei:** Spreading the mindset that it’s okay to expect the reward of “having fun” in volunteerism will lower the bar for participation. I also hope that Japanese society will become more similar to Western countries, where, for example, donating 3000 yen monthly is a cool thing to do as a businessperson and brings satisfaction.

To conquer the trend of cynicism, it is important that those who can afford it continue to engage in altruistic behavior.

Writer: Tomoko Arima  
Photographer: Tomoyasu Osakabe

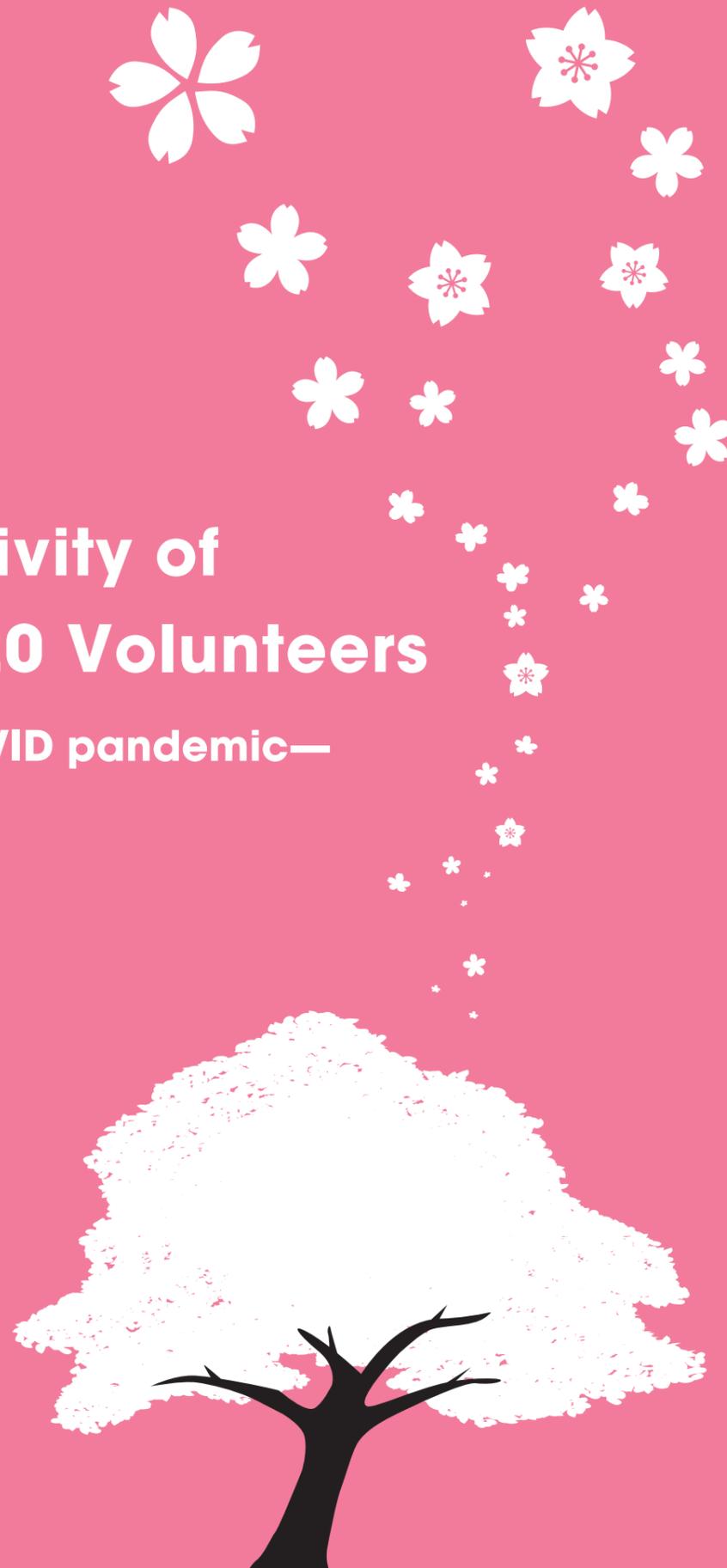
<sup>8</sup> “One School, One Country” was a project where elementary schools, junior high schools, and other in Nagano City each decided which country/region to cheer, studying its culture and history and interacting with its citizens. Up until 2019 before the COVID pandemic, some schools had exchange visits by children or students.

## Chapter

# 2

# The Creativity of Tokyo 2020 Volunteers

—Amid the COVID pandemic—



The Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games were going to have the participation of many volunteers, including Field Cast that the Organising Committee had recruited and City Cast that 11 local governments hosting venues had recruited.

Some volunteers were unable to participate because of the pandemic, but a range of activities were created through the initiative of volunteers themselves and the creativity of those involved.

To create the Games together with volunteers, the Organising Committee aimed to develop horizontal relationships, with Tokyo 2020 volunteers fulfilling a range of roles such as protagonist, backstage staff, and cheerleader. Their resilience was also demonstrated amid the pandemic. While Tokyo 2020 was an event for occasion volunteering, it was also volunteering to overcome adversity.

# Looking Back at Volunteerism at Tokyo 2020

## Diverse engagement with Tokyo 2020

For Tokyo 2020, there was great anticipation for the achievements of volunteers such as Field Cast that the Organising Committee had recruited, City Cast that local governments hosting venues had recruited, and volunteers recruited by local governments involved in the Torch Relay and Host Towns.

However, with the spread of COVID-19 and the decision to hold no-spectator matches, a considerable number of volunteers became unable to participate. On the other hand, initiatives that exerted the autonomy and creativity of volunteers in the face of the unprecedented situation were also born here and there.<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter, we will look back at the overview of volunteerism at Tokyo 2020.

## Total of 76,000 “Field Cast” Games volunteers

To start, a total of 76,000 “Field Cast” members assisted the Games: 51,672 during the Olympics and 24,514 during the Paralympics. A total of 204,680 people applied for the 80,000 Field Cast openings, making these highly coveted positions.

Field Cast submitted their preference for three out of the nine activities (guidance, competitions, mobility support, personal assistance, operational support, healthcare, technology, media, and ceremonies); competitions, guidance, operation support, and ceremonies were especially popular. In contrast, few indicated a desire for mobility support (transporting Games participants by vehicle).

There were some cases of not being assigned as hoped because of coordination in the number of people per activity. Also, because many competitions had no spectators at these Games, the initial placement plan was revised, especially for guidance (guiding spectators and participants at venues etc.) and healthcare (for response to health emergencies and injuries among spectators and participants).

The Games did not go as planned because of COVID, for example with these last-minute placement changes. However, with the warm smiles and fantastic work of Field Cast who supported the Games at venues throughout Japan from early morning to late at night, both the Olympics and Paralympics safely came to a close.

<sup>1</sup> Volunteer activities are often defined by (1) spontaneity/autonomy, (2) social ties/public nature, and (3) gratuitousness; however, features such as pioneering, cross-linking, and creativity are also sometimes pointed out.

### Column

#### Morning glory volunteers

With the assumption of having spectators, the Flower Lane project was planned in which potted-plants such as morning glories grown by 33,000 students at about 300 schools were to be used in place of traditional fences at baggage screening areas in front of venues. Without spectators, partitions were no longer needed and it was decided to place the morning glories near volunteer rest areas at venues and near the Media Center instead. Each morning glory pot had messages from elementary school students to the athletes.

Before long, volunteers at venues throughout Japan suggested returning the plants with thank-you message cards. Thank-you messages from volunteers and media members were enclosed with the plants at many venues and returned to elementary schools all over Japan. This was indeed a thoughtful initiative brought about by the unique mindset and action of volunteers. Incidentally, it was also the volunteers who watered the morning glories every day so they did not wilt.



## City Cast sought by 11 local Japanese governments

City volunteers called “City Cast” were recruited per local government, mainly to support spectators with guidance near match venues and transportation guidance at major stations. Eleven local governments with venues (Sapporo City, Miyagi Prefecture, Fukushima Prefecture, Ibaraki Prefecture, Chiba Prefecture, Saitama Prefecture, Tokyo Prefecture, Yokohama City, Fujisawa City, Shizuoka Prefecture, Yamanashi Prefecture) issued calls for volunteers and all received more applications than spots available. However, the local governments with the exception of Miyagi and Shizuoka Prefectures decided to hold no-spectator matches, and activities were cancelled. Where cancelled, the local governments took measures such as taking volunteer activities online and preparing substitute activities such as cleaning the area around the venues and sending off athletes.

**With the no-spectator policy decided right before the Games, the activities of City Cast were limited. However, local governments arranged various opportunities for City Cast after the Games as well, and thus City Cast wearing the same uniforms as at the Games were gradually seen throughout Japan doing volunteer work.**

Column

**Narita Airport remote volunteers**

City Cast Chiba used avatar robots and the Zoom online tool to express their feelings of appreciation and send off athletes and Games staff. Avatar robots were placed in a booth, and volunteers spoke directly and waved their hands through a monitor. Also, hospitality goods prepared by prefecture residents were lined up in the booth for athletes and Games staff to take as souvenirs.



**Anticipation for volunteerism in Host Towns and elsewhere throughout Japan**

Besides City Cast, volunteers supported ceremonies held around Japan along the Torch Relay course before the Games began. Further, several local governments volunteered as Host Towns and pre-Games training camp sites with the objective of engaging in human, economic, and cultural exchange with participating countries and regions. Many local governments were ultimately forced to cancel, but there were plans to recruit volunteers in each area to welcome the athletes.

Column

**Volunteers who supported the long-term pre-Games camp (Maebashi City, Gunma Prefecture) of the South Sudan team**

Despite gaining independence in 2011, South Sudan continued to be unstable, resulting in many refugees and displaced persons. It also made for a challenging environment for sports, as it was impossible for athletes aiming for Tokyo 2020 to concentrate on practicing. Under these circumstances, there was a request to take in a pre-Games camp. After some review, it was decided to welcome from November 14, 2019 four athletes and one coach who were aiming for the Olympics. Interpreter volunteers and others, especially among residents, supported this long-term training camp.

**The difficult decision to pull out due to COVID**

Many Field Cast and City Cast had no choice but to decline from participation for reasons such as the risk of COVID-19 and scheduling with the postponed Games. There were also many volunteers who planned to

participate from abroad but had to give up because of border entry restrictions. Many City Cast were looking forward to using their language skills to guide spectators coming from abroad. Because of the entry restrictions, it became difficult for some to find motivation. There were also more than a few volunteers who pulled out from social pressure, as public opinion was divided about holding the Games during the pandemic.

Column

**Yell for one project**

The Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center launched the “Yell for one” project for Tokyo 2020 athletes and the spectators who wanted to cheer them on, yet couldn’t come to the venues. Through a special website, they sang the 204 national anthems to cheer them on. These were mainly Tokyo 2020 volunteers such as City Cast and Field Cast, but the movement spread to their families and friends, as well as schools and companies in Japan and beyond. The project grew to have over 1,300 people, both young and old, participate.

**The rich diversity of Games volunteers**

The Field Cast crew, who served as volunteers for the Games, had great diversity with a range of ages, genders, and nationalities (Table 2-1). The elderly were also prominent, with approximately 3,000 volunteers in their 70s and up. There were also about 20,000 young volunteers in their teens and 20s, resulting in intergenerational exchange through volunteer activities. The majority of volunteers were in the worker age range of 30s–60s. Despite the required commitment of ten days or more, they adjusted their work schedule and other to participate.

While many foreigners had to pull out because of COVID-19-related border entry restrictions, approximately 7,000 foreign nationals living in Japan participated.

Table 2-1 Field Cast Attribute Distribution

Age	10s	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	70s	80s	90s	Total
People	2,112	17,354	8,112	11,972	16,815	11,640	2,823	139	3	70,970

Gender	Male	Female	X	Total
People	29,667	41,289	4	70,970

Nationality	Foreign	Japanese	Total
People	7,092	63,878	70,970

\*X is those who identify with neither male nor female

Source: Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games

## Disabled also active as volunteers

Applicants to volunteer for Tokyo 2020 included many people with disabilities. There was especially need to identify what type of support was needed for the vision- and hearing-impaired so that volunteers could participate with a feeling of reassurance. The Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center designated volunteer activity sites in advance and verified what type of support was required. At the same time, it worked with the Organising Committee and local governments where matches would be held to prepare the environment and ensure this would be ready for Tokyo 2020.

The spread of COVID-19 also had a huge impact on volunteer participation by people with disabilities. For example, those with hearing disabilities communicate by looking at the other person's mouth, and the prevalence of mask usage became a daunting obstacle. Another example is the issue of those with vision disabilities being unable to determine where hand sanitizers are installed.

The Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center quickly responded to these issues, proposing a structure where the hearing-impaired are paired with volunteers who can use sign language to work, and distributing portable alcohol sanitizing sprays.

With advance preparations and support responding to needs like this, a number of volunteers with disabilities were able to participate.



## Formation of an inclusive volunteer environment

One concept of Tokyo 2020 was “Unity in Diversity.” The volunteer handbook and e-learning included a

chapter on “Diversity & Inclusion,” and discussed diversity in the context of actual volunteering situations. This was based on the approach that every volunteer can fully exert their strength only with mutual understanding and respect for diversity. Specifically, the content was about the diversity of athletes, staff, and spectators that they would be in contact with, and the diversity (culture, gender, age, religion/beliefs, physical and mental functions, etc.) involved in volunteers working together. In e-learning, videos were used to depict situations that were expected to occur while volunteering.

During group training sessions, the Disability Equality Training program was implemented, in which people with disabilities led the training and conducted group work such as “What disables people?” and “possible solutions,” in a study of disability social models.

## Over 70% of participants were satisfied; about 80% for the Paralympics

According to a survey<sup>2</sup> held by the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center after the Olympics and then the Paralympics, it is clear that there was change in what volunteers gained and sensed through the Games.

The items “gained communication skills and learned how to support people with disabilities,” “was able to broaden my perspective,” and “was able to do something fulfilling” especially had higher scores at the end of the Paralympics compared to the Olympics (Table 2-2).

It is surmised that there was a synergistic effect from what was gained through the characteristics of the Paralympics and through volunteering for a long period through the Olympics and Paralympics.

The scores were also high for “was able to interact with people” and “was able to aid the success of Tokyo 2020” for both Games (Table 2-2). Despite the absence of spectators because of COVID, these are thought to be reasons why more than 70% said they were satisfied (Table 2-3).

## Increased desire to continue volunteering after the Games

The percentage of Field Cast who “definitely want to” continue volunteering was higher after the Games compared to before the Games (Table 2-4). It can be guessed that more people wanted to continue volunteering because they were highly satisfied by volunteer activities and had a fun and fulfilling experience during the Games.

Regarding the type of popular volunteer activities, these included “large-scale international sports events (Olympics, Paralympics, Asian Games, etc.),” “domestic sports events (marathons, professional sports events, etc.),” “sports-related,” “large-scale cultural events (Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, flower expos, etc.),” and “international cooperation-related” (Table 2-5). The task ahead is to figure how to link this motivation to continue volunteering to real action.

2 The Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center (2021) “Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games Volunteer Survey”

Table 2-2 What Was Gained and Sensed by Volunteering at Tokyo 2020

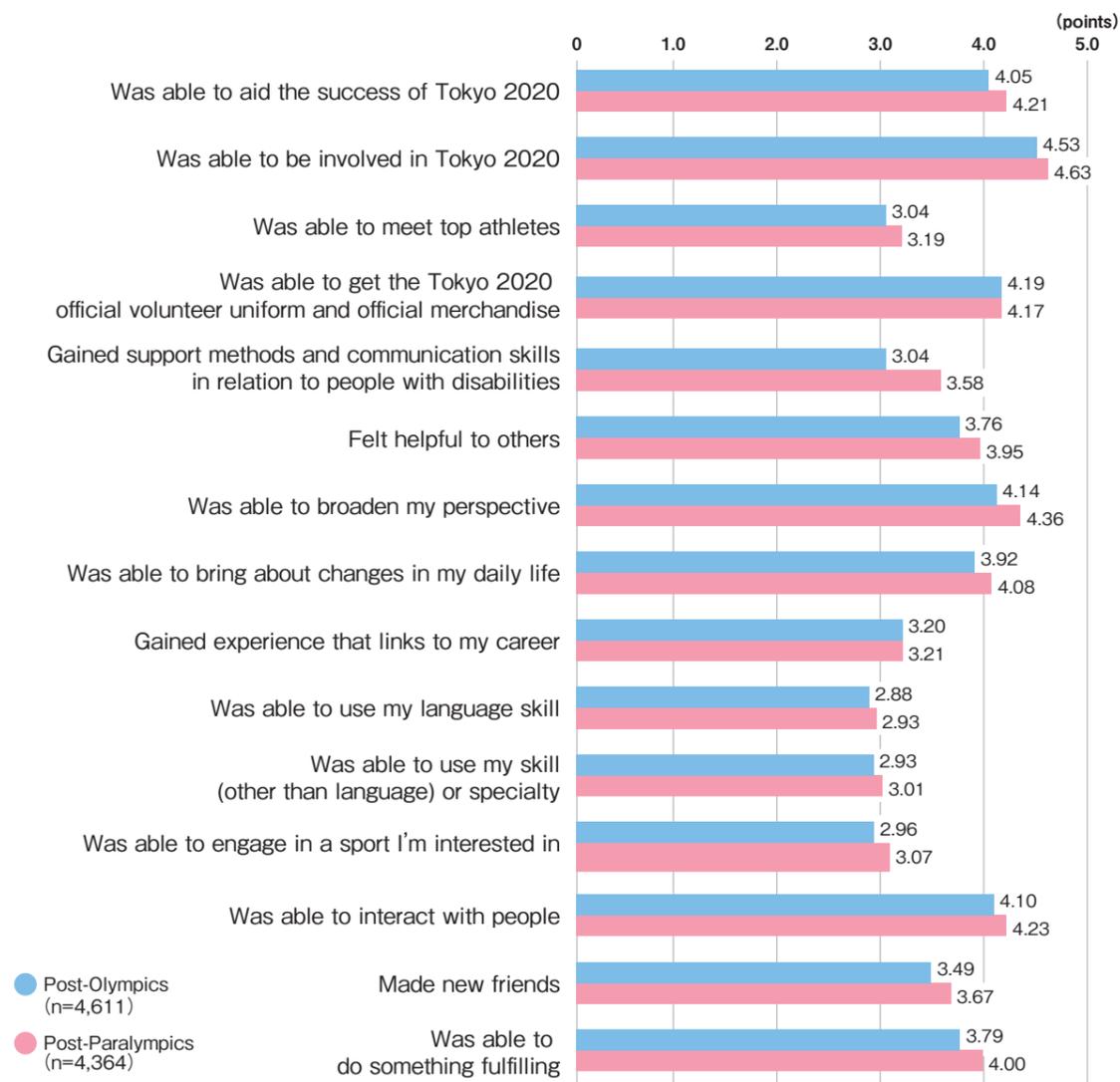


Table 2-4 Desire to Continue Volunteering

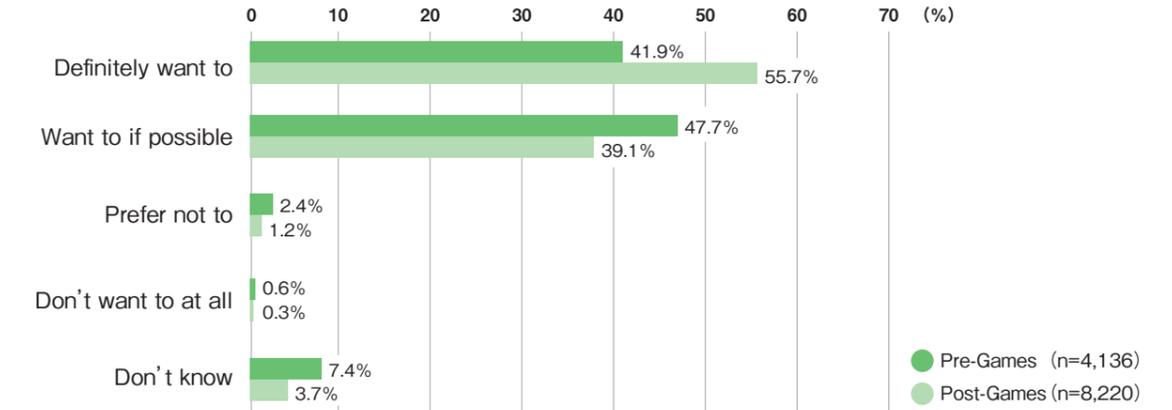


Table 2-5 Type of Desired Future Volunteer Activity (multiple answer)

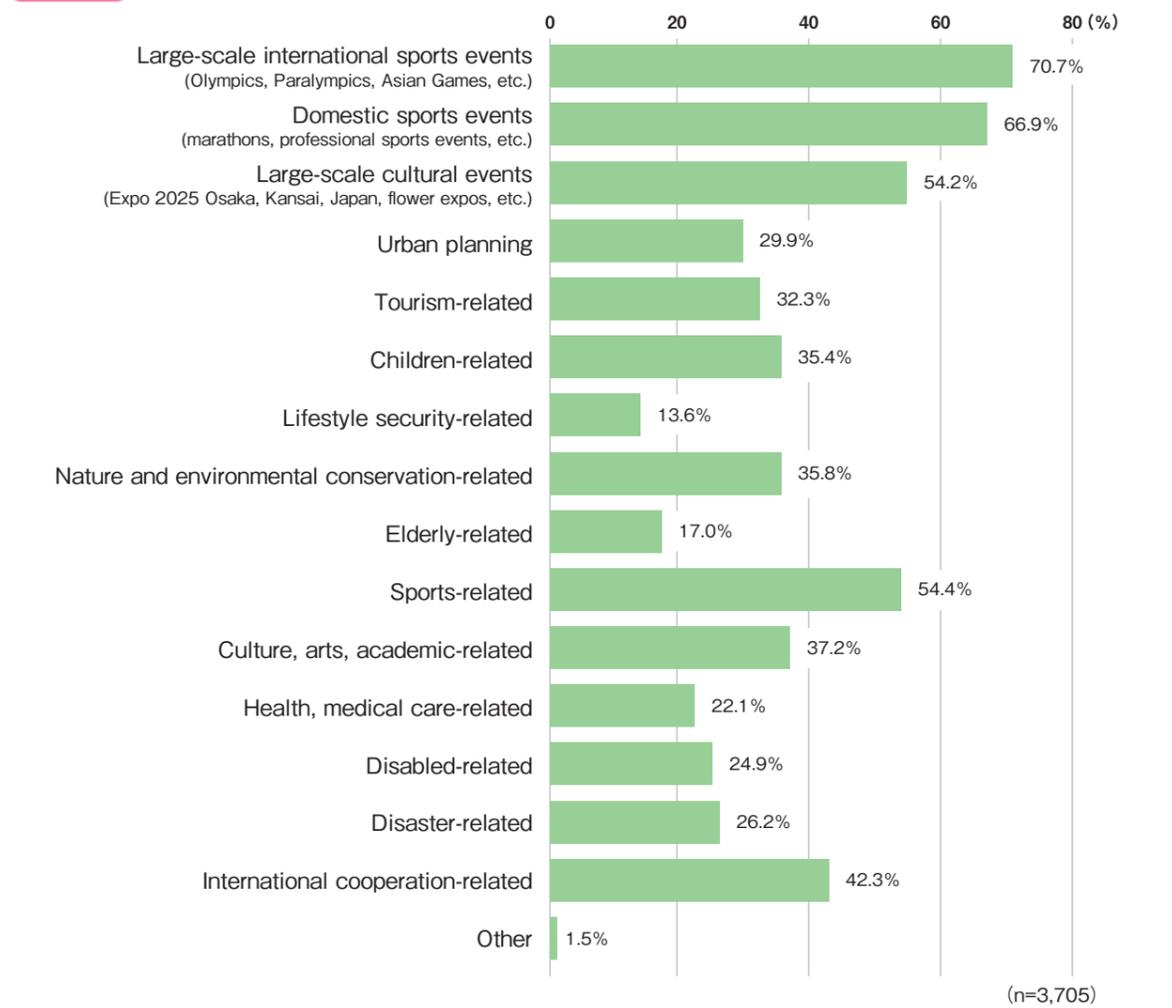
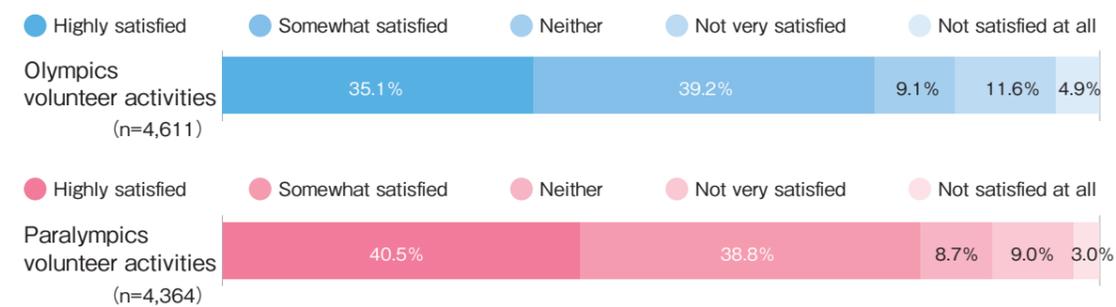


Table 2-3 Level of Satisfaction in Tokyo 2020 Volunteer Activities



## A platform to mobilize people's intention to continue

As Tokyo 2020 came to an end, the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games passed on the personal information of volunteers in its possession to the IOC (International Olympic Committee), IPC (International Paralympic Committee), and JOC (Japan Olympic Committee).<sup>3</sup> Of this, volunteer activity information and other was shared with the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Center (formerly Gakuvo)<sup>4</sup>, and it was decided that JOC and the foundation would distribute information about volunteer activities and other.

Before this, the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center launched the “VoKatsu!” platform to support better fulfillment from volunteer activities. In effect, this platform will sustain the activities of Games

volunteers. A number of programs are already underway, one example being volunteer activities to remove pumice stones that washed ashore from the 2021 Ogasawara submarine volcano eruption. This particular program was held on Yoron Island of Kagoshima Prefecture.



### Column

#### Sustaining City Cast activities in Fujisawa City of Kanagawa Prefecture

At Fujisawa City of Kanagawa Prefecture, where sailing matches were held, approximately 800 City Cast were planning to assist with spectator transportation, tourism, and Games guidance. However, with the decision to proceed without spectators, these were cancelled by the city. With circumstances making it a challenge to continue with activities, Fujisawa City designed a unique volunteer platform named “Team FUJISAWA2020” as a legacy of the Tokyo 2020, making volunteerism more inviting by posting activities in a range of fields (tourism, sports, urban planning, etc.) and building a system that makes it easy to apply. With this platform

system, those who wish to participate in volunteer activities can apply to recruitments or automatically receive an e-mail when their preferred activity is calling for volunteers.



Source: <https://team-fujisawa2020.jp>

## The unique appeal of working behind the scenes as a sports volunteer

There is always backstage staff at events, not only in sports, but at concerts and festivals as well. It is a fact that many of these are not volunteers, but temporary workers. But if you ask someone why they chose to take a temporary job for a concert, responses such as “The work is tough, but I can see my favorite artist close up” indicate that there is value in what only backstage staff can experience. Sports volunteering is one opportunity to experience (pursue) these many experiences that are unique to backstage staff.

Sports volunteers are defined as those who support (practice) behind-the-scene activities for the sports environment in general. Volunteering is popular especially at international events such as the Olympics/Paralympics with its top athletes and professional sports events (such as J.LEAGUE, B.LEAGUE, and professional baseball), presumably because these experiences unique to backstage staff are appealing.

However, in contrast to the fanfare of sports events, the backstage staff who support this endure many hardships that are not seen on the surface. Sometimes they must assemble very early in the morning, and sometimes they must work in hot, cold, or rainy conditions. However, many volunteers are drawn to the privileges of backstage staff, such as being able to see star athletes perform in close proximity, being thanked directly by athletes or spectators, or being supplied with exclusive volunteer uniforms and merchandise.

There are times when issues arise and situations must be assessed to decide how to resolve them, but the sense of accomplishment and motivation in overcoming these are unique to backstage staff. Some veteran sports volunteers will even say, “The more we overcome difficult situations, the more interesting the activity.”

**In observing Tokyo 2020 volunteers as well, We noticed instances where they shared their ideas for their activities. I imagine that these activities enhanced the autonomy of each and boosted their mindset that they supported the Games.** Rather than simply carrying out instructions, suggesting what is needed on the spot and taking action is also an attractive aspect of volunteerism.

<sup>3</sup> The data of those who registered with the Organising Committee as volunteers was passed on only if the person agreed.

<sup>4</sup> The Nippon Foundation Volunteer Center is a group that dispatches student volunteers throughout and outside of Japan and conducts volunteer programs and classes in partnership with colleges. This is scheduled to consolidate with the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center that had provided support such as training for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics volunteer program.

## Volunteers are both protagonist and supporter

The appeal of backstage staff, explicitly because they support the execution of an occasion. The “once-in-a-lifetime experience” catchphrase touted when recruiting volunteers for the Rugby World Cup 2019 held in Japan indeed embodied this.

The phrase used for recruiting Tokyo 2020 volunteers was: The power of Tokyo 2020 is the “Volunteers”. This expressed that every volunteer served as the driving force of the Games. This is also reflected by the naming of volunteers as “cast,” which embodies the hope that every volunteer will take on the important role of galvanizing the Games.

It goes without saying that holding the Olympics and Paralympics involves enormous cost. By having unpaid volunteers support this, the economic burden on organizers may be lessened versus employing paid workers.

However, **the largest value is not that economic factor. It is that volunteers become the biggest supporters of the Games.** Especially in this extremely chaotic situation with COVID, the presence of supporters=volunteers was imperative to operating the Games.

The word “volunteer” and “will” both come from the Latin “volo,” which means to do something out of choosing or with pleasure. Motivation is sustained precisely because each person is a protagonist and recognized as so by the people around them.

## Transcending altruistic and egocentric for mutual benefit

Japan has experienced many natural disasters. Each time this occurs, dedicated disaster volunteers are in the spotlight. This is because it is a fact that they arrive at disaster sites all over Japan quickly to aid victims, saving more people with their work.

Actions to help those in need can be seen as self-sacrificing for the sake of others, or “altruistic.” Does this mean that volunteers exist exclusively for altruistic actions such as saving those in distress?

It is impossible to know when and where a disaster will occur. This means that anyone could become a victim in need of help. A person who has volunteered to aid others may someday become someone who needs help. This is the kind of society we live in.

When the Great East Japan Earthquake hit the Tohoku region in 2011, volunteers rushed to help from all over Japan. Relief supplies and donations also arrived. At the time, many volunteers, aid, and donations also came from Kumamoto Prefecture, which later had its own major earthquake. When the Kumamoto earthquakes hit in 2016, this time there was generous aid, including volunteers, from the Tohoku region. In other words, volunteerism is not a one-way activity of “supporting” or “being supported”; it is an activity that is anchored in the relationship of “mutual support.”

One type of sports volunteer is the guide runner, who supports visually-impaired runners. The guide may seem to be supporting the visually-impaired runner at first glance, but both runner and guide have thoughts such as “It’s funner than running alone,” “It’s encouraging,” and “The sense of fulfillment is doubled in reaching the goal.” They both seem to have a satisfying time.

**This embodies the essence of volunteerism. Whether the motive is altruistic (for others) or egocentric (for oneself), engaging in volunteer activities is ultimately beneficial in a mutual way (for society).**

According to various surveys, the motives for volunteering at Tokyo 2020 ranged from egocentric (“It’s a once-in-a-lifetime event” “I want to be involved with athletes” “I want to engage with all kinds of other volunteers” “I want to use my language skills to communicate”) to altruistic (“I want to help the Games” “I want to support those with disabilities”).

It is vital for overall society to recognize that regardless of motive, all Tokyo 2020 volunteer activities were mutually beneficial (for society), and this is precisely why volunteerism held meaning.

From the perspective of the volunteer, what is seen in Tokyo 2020? Recapping the Games from a different perspective might very well bring new discoveries. I believe that the post-Games legacy will be built along these lines.

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Associate Professor, Dept. of Human Sciences, Faculty of Human Sciences, Bunkyo University

Consultant to the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center

Member of Volunteer Advisory Conference Committee of the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games

## Koichi Furuse

Seconded from Tokyo Metropolitan Government to serve as deputy manager of volunteer promotion in the HR department of the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

## Natsuki Den

Seconded from Toyota Motor to serve as senior director of volunteer promotion in the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (until November 2021).



Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games

## Volunteers Are Peers. Not Customers, nor “Helpers.”

When the Organising Committee’s volunteer operations were launched in 2014, Den and staff started by **positioning volunteers as being “a presence to develop the Games together while having fun.”** **The belief was that having volunteers engaged with feelings of fulfillment and joy would set the mood for the Games.**

This sentiment is verbalized in the “I will shine” concept. Some of the participants were moved to tears by the words accompanying the concept: “People who enjoy themselves always shine.”

In December 2016, the Organising Committee and

Tokyo Metropolitan Government released the “Volunteering Strategy for the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020.” This included basic concepts for Tokyo 2020, broadly ranging from volunteer recruitment and management to Post-Games legacies.

**“Thanks to these basic concepts, we were able to return to the starting point when in doubt and move forward with measures. I strongly realized how important it is to formulate a vision like this when managing a large project,”** says Furuse.

When volunteer recruitment started in 2018, words

such as “blacklisted volunteering” and “mobilization” circulated, spurring voices of concern that the number of applicants may fall short. However, there were ultimately more than 200,000 applicants, and the criticism quieted. While some pulled out due to the postponement, over 70,000 volunteers were engaged.

**The Organising Committee placed priority on advancing all stages of work together with volunteers.** Volunteers participated in developing application requirements, interviewing applicants, executing training, and more. They also voted themselves on the names “Field Cast” and “City Cast.” “I believe that Tokyo 2020 is the first time in Japan that volunteers and the Organising Committee worked in collaboration to develop the event. Commending the volunteers during the Closing Ceremony also signaled that they were one of the main players.” (Den)

The biggest challenge was when spectator participation was cancelled (with some exceptions), eliminating work for approximately 20,000 volunteers who were to be guides. Some in the Organising Committee felt that to avoid crowding, it would be better to release volunteers who no longer had duties. However, we had been on the volunteer journey with these peers to that point. With the desire to have them take part, we approached all of them and spared no effort in providing them with other roles.

However, there were some administrative issues. There were breaches of etiquette, such as using the accreditation card that serves as an entry pass to watch matches or posting pictures of athletes on social media. There were also people who were so enthusiastic that they would come to the venue on

their days off, saying they wanted to help. We were unexpectedly kept busy handling cases like this.

To enhance a sense of unity for the Games, uniforms and other original merchandise were distributed to volunteers. The quantity was more than expected, with partner companies and the IOC also providing merchandise. As a consequence, we found instances of merchandise being sold online. Furuse stated his regret that “We should have made it clearer to refrain from these actions, as they affect the morale of other volunteers and are stipulated also in the participation rules.”

Den said, “We also considered what work/activities to assign between volunteers and vendors.” **It was decided to have physical labor, dangerous tasks, and highly specialized work done by paid vendors, and tasks that could be enjoyed as a member of the Games to be covered by volunteers** and thus each of the enormous number of tasks and activities was categorized as one or the other.

Den emphasizes that the most crucial point for successful volunteerism was to have them become peers. She instructed workers at the call center that responds to volunteer applicant inquiries that those who were calling were peers, so language should be inclusive rather than honorific.

**“Volunteers are not customers who we serve activities to, nor are they ‘helpers.’ I strongly feel that management must view them as peers who are developing the Games together alongside us.”** (Den)

Writer: Tomoko Arima  
Photographer: Tomoyasu Osakabe

# Volunteering amid the Adversity of COVID

## The unprecedented pandemic: impact on volunteerism as well

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games were postponed for a year. On top of that, most matches were without spectators, and athletes and Games staff were isolated from the outside population in a “bubble.”

This affected Tokyo 2020 volunteer activities generally in three ways.

The first is that with the dates postponed and spectators eliminated, many volunteers were unable to engage in the activities they were looking forward to. The volunteers who were supposed to guide visitors and tourists especially were completely deprived of their roles.

The second is that some volunteers backed out because of the danger of COVID-19 and/or because of discomfort about holding the Games under these circumstances.

The third is that some volunteers were confronted by the public criticism about holding Tokyo 2020 and felt conflicted and troubled.

Volunteerism is a spontaneous activity, so the second can be considered a personal decision. However, the first and third were unforeseen circumstances for a large-scale event that had been carefully planned.

## Feeling of insufficiency among volunteers due to scaled-back schedule and content

However, in response to “I was able to achieve my aim for participating in Field Cast activities” in a Organising Committee survey of Games volunteers, 72.1% said “Yes,” 11.4% said “No,” and 16.5% said “Neither.”<sup>5</sup> The majority of Games volunteers found meaning in Tokyo 2020 activities despite the limitations from COVID.

To put it the other way around, those who were unable to participate as volunteers experienced great disappointment. Social media posts about volunteer activities reflected not only sharing of experiences and joy, but also stirring of envy and dissatisfaction.

The Organising Committee and local governments reevaluated activity content and reallocated tasks so that volunteers who had lost their roles could participate as much as possible.

This resulted in a number of comments, such as “I was happy that I was able to help despite the circumstances” “If I was going to be so idle, I shouldn’t have taken the trouble to go” “I felt bad that they went to so much trouble to create tasks for us that were really unneeded.”

## Vague positioning provoked criticism

This indicates how the volunteer-organizer relationship is very delicately balanced.

Before the advent of COVID-19, denouncement of Tokyo 2020 focused on its strong commercialism and decision-making process. The use of volunteers was also criticized as “mobilization of nonpaid labor to reduce operation costs.” This criticism implicated that Tokyo 2020 organizers were exploiting the spontaneous intent of individuals, with volunteers being “merchants” and Games organizer being the “customer.” However, as indicated by the fact that there were more applicants than spots, people were not forced to work as Tokyo 2020 volunteers; they had to want to participate themselves. Thus, the assertion of “compulsory mobilization” is off-target at the least.

It is presumable that insufficient communication about the positioning of Tokyo 2020 volunteers as “a presence to develop the Games together while having fun” provoked concern about volunteers and linked to excessive criticism.

## Roles reversed with COVID

However, volunteers were unable to work as planned because of COVID, and they had less opportunities to enjoy. To minimize this as much as possible, the Organising Committee and local governments reevaluated the task content and roles of volunteers, creating some way to participate for those who wished.

Given this situation of the Tokyo 2020 organizer considering the wishes of volunteers, the volunteers became “customers” and the organizer became “merchant.” This means that with COVID, roles were reversed between volunteers and the organizer.

Unlike welfare and disaster recovery aid that is highly altruistic, event volunteering is undertaken more casually. Some people even consider it their right to participate in volunteer activities, similar to when buying a ticket for an event. For this reason, there has always been a tendency for some volunteers to have a strong customer mentality, more so than in activities that are highly altruistic.

An excellent balance is needed for events—organizers must not exploit volunteers, while volunteers must not behave too much like customers.



<sup>5</sup> Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (2021) “Games Volunteer Questionnaire Results”

### The ideal is a horizontal relationship as peers

Natsuki Den of the Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games states, “Volunteers are not customers who we serve activities to, nor are they ‘helpers.’ I strongly feel that we must view them as peers who are developing the Games alongside us.”

Toshiaki Koyama, who volunteered as both Field Cast and City Cast, said, “I felt that the efforts of the organizer to develop the Games together with fun volunteerism enhanced my motivation to work at my own initiative.”

**It is preferable for the volunteer-organizer relationship to be equal, with neither party being customer nor helper to the other.**

Kazuto Sawatari of the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center points out, “Even if we prepare with that mindset, if the on-site manager where the volunteer happens to go is a person who sees volunteers as helpers, it all comes to nothing. The reality is that there is still great variance between different people.”

### The initiative of volunteers is truly the source of power

Volunteers are peers who develop the event together; they are not laborers, nor are they customers. This mindset is vital because the basis of volunteer activities is in their initiative.

Noboru Hayase of Osaka Voluntary Action Center explains.

“There are two reasons why events need volunteers. One is because volunteers have creativity.

Volunteers provide all kinds of hospitality through their own ingenuity. This is fun for visitors and boosts excitement for the event.

Another is that events bring unforeseen matters. No matter how carefully you plan, there will be unexpected problems or incidents. When this happens, people who work under someone’s command will say, ‘That’s not my responsibility.’ However, volunteers who are participating out of their own volition will try to solve this.

**Precisely because the activity is spontaneous, they can exert creativity and respond flexibly.**

### Volunteers thrive especially in challenging situations

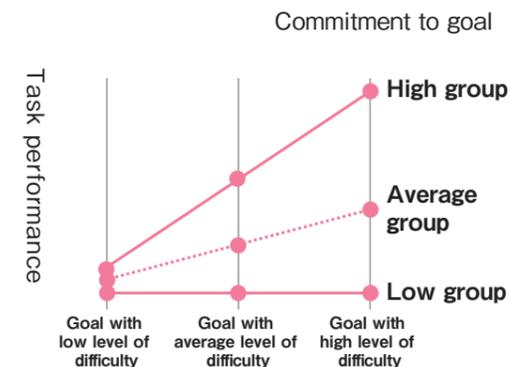
It can be academically explained how autonomous volunteers can thrive in providing hospitality according to person and situation or in responding to unexpected incidents.

First, the commitment to a goal is strengthened when you decide or are involved in deciding. It is known that when the goal is challenging, a stronger commitment will result in better performance (Figure 2-6).<sup>6</sup>

Being spontaneous is what makes it possible to overcome difficult circumstances. There was strong criticism for holding Tokyo 2020 despite COVID, and some volunteers who cooperated with Games operations concealed their participation from others, while some took care not to show their uniform as they traveled. The content of activities also completely changed from what was initially expected.

“Tokyo 2020 was profoundly incomplete because of COVID and the absence of spectators,” says Kentaro Sawada, who operated a social media community of over 2,000 Tokyo 2020 volunteers.

Figure 2-6 Commitment to Goal and Performance



“However, this also meant that there was plenty of room for improvement. As a result, the various suggestions and ideas of volunteers were put to use and there was a sense of achievement.”

Despite the adversity of COVID, there were no significant comments of dissatisfaction from Tokyo 2020 volunteers and the volunteers were lauded at home and abroad—this is presumably because the volunteers had resilience.

### Resilience strengthens with solidarity

Resilience means “the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances.”<sup>7</sup>

It is also known that resilience heightens with connection to others.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, Tokyo 2020 volunteers often mention the presence of fellow volunteers as a reason why they decided to or were able to volunteer despite the circumstances of COVID.

“COVID makes it difficult to adequately form human relationships in everyday life, so being able to gain many experiences as a volunteer was

unmistakably a plus for individuals,” says Norihiro Nihei, professor at The University of Tokyo. In-person collaboration brought joy to individuals, even more so than in “normal” times.

Working in alignment with others toward a shared goal is a major appeal of volunteerism. If the “big story” of success of the Olympics and Paralympics is added to this, individuals become even more inspired and excited.

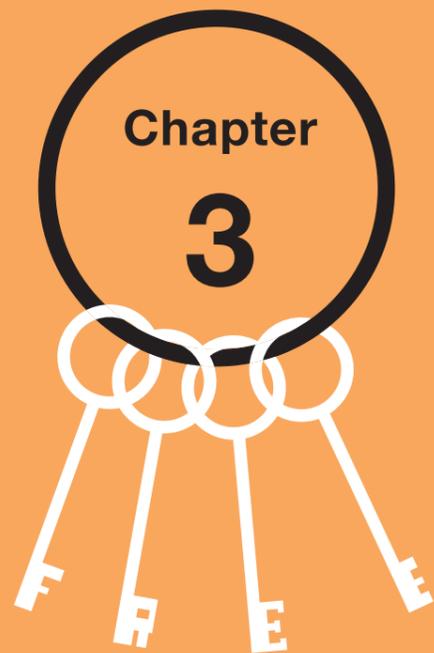
Because of COVID, Tokyo 2020 did not have a “big story” that was prevailingly extolled. However, it can be presumed that **this adversity was overcome because of the autonomy and solidarity of volunteers.**

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Visiting Researcher, Recruit Works Institute  
Senior Chief Researcher, RENGO-RIALS

<sup>6</sup> Klein, H. J., Wesson, M. J., Hollenbeck, J. R., & Alge, B.J. (1999). Goal commitment and the goal-setting process: Conceptual clarification and empirical synthesis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84, 885–896.

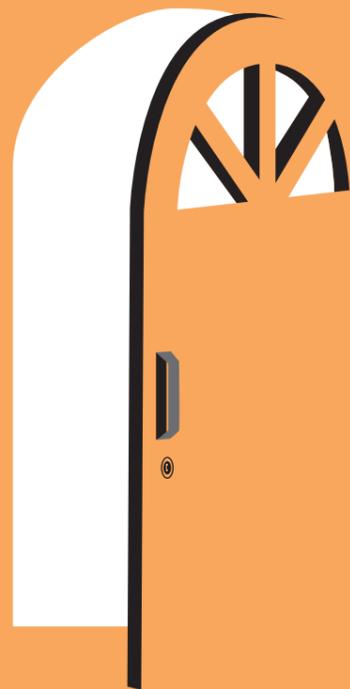
<sup>7</sup> Masten A. S., Best K. M. & Garnezy N. (1990) Resilience and development: Contributions from the study of children who overcome adversity. *Development and Psychopathology*, 2, 425–444.

<sup>8</sup> Grotberg E. H. (2003) (Ed. ). *Resilience for Today: Gaining Strength from Adversity* Greenwood Publishing Group.



## The Positive Changes to Corporate Employees from Volunteer Activities

—Diversity, Individual Autonomy, Volunteer Intention—



Of the various attributes, company workers have the lowest rate of experience as volunteers. In recent years, however, companies seek that their employee engage in social issues for growth.

Through Tokyo 2020 volunteerism, company workers gained awareness that could not be found at the workplace. Some companies strategically promoted volunteer activities for employees.

It became clear through surveys that after volunteering at Tokyo 2020, company workers had higher “trust in diversity,” “job crafting,” and “future volunteer intention.” We compiled five proposals to change Japan’s social culture that is scornful of volunteerism and to link the outside learnings of employees to work.

# Why the Focus Today on corporate employee Volunteering?

**Overseas business science research taking notice of corporate employee volunteering**

From around 2000, overseas business science research began taking up employee volunteering as a topic. This research **has pointed out that when companies provide volunteer opportunities, employees appreciate their management style and feel more pride and affect for their organization; there is also the effect of employees developing skills through their volunteer experience.**<sup>1</sup>

In recent years in Japan as well, it has been reported that programs for corporate employees to aid the enhancement of NPO organizational foundations and programs to create business proposals that link to resolving social issues become opportunities to develop leadership. It has been observed that for these corporate employees, this not only enhances sensitivity to social issues, but also develops leadership by reflecting the meaning of their work and engaging more actively with others within their organization.<sup>2</sup>

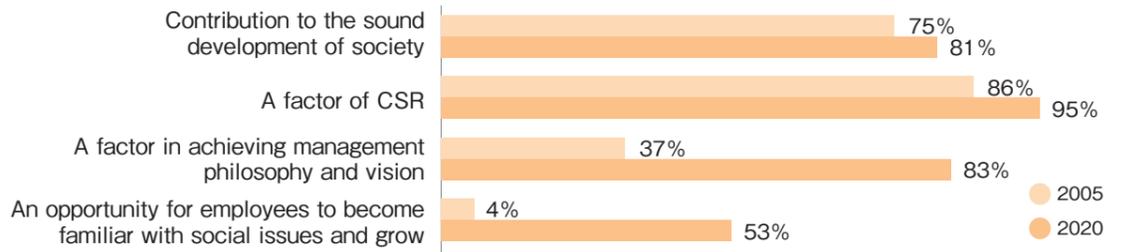
**From CSR to Strategic management tool**

There has also been an increase of research from the standpoint of examining the association to CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) and HRM (Human Resource Management).<sup>3</sup>

Conventionally, CSR placed emphasis on social responsibility for a company's environment protection activities and international contributions. But now, management recognizes that providing social contribution opportunities to employees should be considered as an option for employee management as well.

In fact, according to a Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) survey comparing 2005 and 2020, companies that positioned social contribution activities as "a factor in achieving management philosophy and vision" increased from 37% to 83%, and "an opportunity for employees to become familiar with social issues and grow" amazingly surged from 4% to 53% (Table 3-1).

Table 3-1 Role and Meaning of Social Contribution Activities



Source: Keidanren (2020) "Questionnaire Survey about Social Contribution Activities"

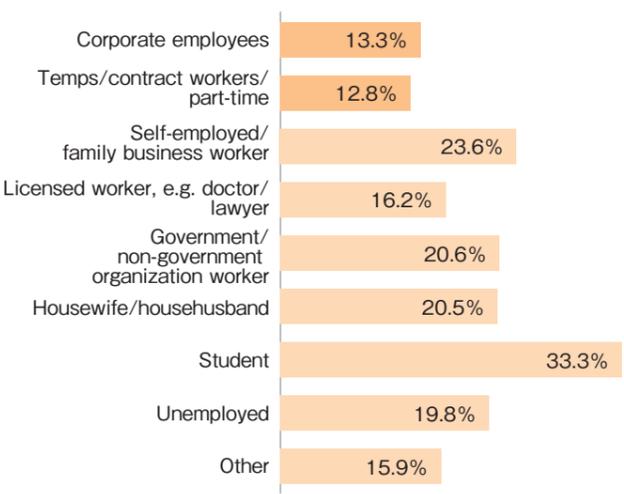
1 Rodell, J. B., Breitsohl, H., Schröder, M., & Keating, D. J. (2016) Employee volunteering: A review and framework for future research. *Journal of management*, 42(1), 55-84.  
 2 Recruit Management Solutions (2021) <https://www.recruit-ms.co.jp/issue/column/0000000991/?theme=player,innovation>  
 3 Jamali, D. R., El Dirani, A. M., & Harwood, I. A. (2015) Exploring human resource management roles in corporate social responsibility: The CSR+HRM co-creation model. *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 24(2), 125-143.

**Potential growth of volunteers is contingent on the participation of corporate employees**

On the other hand, **it is corporate employees with the lowest rate of volunteer experience in Japan** (Table 3-2).

There is a considerable gap in the image of employee volunteers as reported abroad and in the image of volunteers in Japan. The rate of volunteer experience among corporate employees is low, and it has been pointed out that besides being busy with work or being greatly limited by work hours and locations, the strict image of volunteerism is also a reason for hesitation to volunteer.

Table 3-2 Volunteer Experience Rate



Source: Cabinet Office "2019 Survey on Social Contribution of Citizens"

"Volunteerism with the participation of busy corporate employees who made the time" "Volunteerism with companies encouraging the activities of employees." New initiatives were seen in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games,

and this was presumably an excellent opportunity to uncover future potential for volunteering by corporate employees. In contrast to the typical strict image of volunteers, volunteerism at Tokyo 2020 is thought to have emphasized the aspect of self-fulfillment more than contribution to others. Understanding the learnings and changes gained by corporate employees through self-fulfillment volunteerism is sure to greatly expand the potential of Japan's volunteer culture.

**Identification of positive changes that have occurred in corporate employees**

As mentioned, the rate of volunteer experience among Japanese corporate employees is low, and for many, Tokyo 2020 was their first time volunteering. Tokyo 2020 provided an opportunity for these people to become familiar with volunteering and to want to participate again. That have fostered a culture of volunteerism, and that was surely the legacy of Tokyo 2020 born in the hearts and minds of each and every one of us.

The following articles examines the four positive changes that occurred among corporate employees through their volunteer work at Tokyo 2020: "Fostering a volunteer culture," "diversity," "individual autonomy," and "engagement" (details on P. 44).

Even without the context of volunteerism, fostering "diversity," "individual autonomy," and "engagement" are themes that many Japanese companies are addressing as urgent issues.

We believe fostering "diversity," "proactivity," and "engagement" will create a virtuous cycle as a link to the "fostering a volunteer culture."

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# Revelations and New Steps from the Volunteer Experience

*I relearned leadership and changed how I engaged with superiors and subordinates*

When I engage in volunteer activities, I call myself “Taisho.” It’s easy to remember and is effective for team-building.

Sports volunteering is an activity where people with different backgrounds and values become a team and create results in as short as one day. For achievement, it is important to have quality communication, and more than anything else, for people to enjoy themselves. I aimed to create this kind of team for Tokyo 2020 as well, and everyone was able to complete the activities with smiles. I felt that the efforts of the organizer to develop the Games together with fun volunteerism enhanced our motivation to work at our own initiatives.

The Pre-Games Leadership Training was also a valuable opportunity to relearn how to drive the team from the standpoints of both leader and member. I have changed at work since then, such as focusing more on output and motivating younger colleagues rather than presenting the right answer, and speaking with superiors with more consideration of their concerns.

I began volunteering because I wanted to use my skills to contribute to society, but am realizing that the more I engage in this, the more I gain.

**Toshiaki Koyama** (age 50s)

Works at Shimizu Corporation. Was engaged as volunteer leader for skateboarding and BMX at the Olympics, and marathon at the Paralympics. Worked also as City Cast.



*Bask in the Games! Managed an independent event*

I love festivals and events, so I applied as Field Cast, eager to bask in the days leading to the main event, as this would be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. And so I created a volunteer peer community on social media and organized events almost every month, such as networking and study sessions. I learned many things through event management.

But at the early stage of the Games, I was afraid of the disapproving eyes of the public and commuted to the venue wearing a jacket over my uniform. But after a few days, people started saying “Keep up the good work” to me, and I really felt the shift to a supportive mood. Because of the Games, I became aware of people with disabilities in a good sense. It’s been a while since we started hearing how “diversity is important,” but there is little occasion to interact with people with disabilities. I wanted to have exchange with volunteer peers with hearing disabilities, so I learned sign language and began approaching people with disabilities who were having trouble on the street. I have now launched a community to promote information about parasports, with the aim of communicating their appeal to society.

**Yuko Hoshino** (age 30s)

Works at Meiji Feed. Participated from Ibaraki Prefecture. Engaged as a driver for 11 days during the Olympics and for marathon course traffic control during the Paralympics. She had never volunteered before applying.



*“Trial and error”: I broke out of my shell at the words of a passenger*

I was saddened by the devastation of the Great East Japan Earthquake in my second year of high school, and this spurred my desire to volunteer and help others. I have since participated in a range of volunteer activities. My assignment at Tokyo 2020 was vehicle driver. At first, I was very worried about being responsible for people’s lives and communicating in English in the closed space of a vehicle.

But in reality, I had a valuable, jam-packed experience that felt like more than three days. The Tunisian man who rode on the first day encouraged me with words such as “Good luck with your courage and smile,” and “Trial and error.” This released my feeling of obligation to speak English correctly, and gave me the courage to speak to passengers with a smile.

A woman from the British Virgin Islands was heading to the swimming match venue to cheer on an athlete from her country, but the athlete was quickly eliminated. Visitors couldn’t go anywhere because of COVID. I thought it would be sad for her to go straight back to the Olympic Village, so I got permission from a staff member to return via a route to enjoy the beautiful Tokyo night views.

She said, “Thank you. You are the best driver,” when leaving the vehicle. But it was me who had the best time, and I am full of gratitude.

**Hironao Igarashi** (age 20s)

Works at a Fujitsu group company. Engaged for three days during the Games as a vehicle driver based at the Harumi Olympics Village to transport the staff of Olympics Committees from different countries.



*Discovered my ideal style as a leader! Taking the initiative at the workplace as well*

I was really excited, but my role as a volunteer was cancelled with the no-spectator policy.

I spoke with many people to find a way to participate. When I finally arrived at the volunteer site, the leader was a Sydney Olympics medalist. Their leadership style, such as approaching members and being considerate was different from what I’ve ever experienced.

All companies at the time had similar types of managers, and I was wondering if corporate culture was built with a chain of “copies of manager images.” The backgrounds of volunteers were really diverse. Seeing the different types of leaders work at the Games, I became able to envision my own role model of the leader I aspired to become.

For now, I take the initiative for what I can do, such as improving the mood of the team and facilitating work efficiency. I also take care to cheerfully greet and approach others.

I also look forward to volunteering at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, which will be held where I live.

**Jun Hiromura** (age 40s)

Works at a service industry-related company. She applied as Field Cast when she was working in Tokyo, but her role became redundant with the no-spectator policy. Ultimately, she worked for six days at Paralympics swimming matches and other. Lives in Osaka.



# Corporate Employee Volunteers' changes through Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games

In the “Tokyo 2020 Sponsor Employee Volunteer Survey,” we asked corporate employees who participated as Tokyo 2020 volunteers about their experiences in detail twice, Pre-Games and Post-Games (survey outline is P53, Table 3-10).

We took those results and analyzed who applied to become Games volunteers and what anticipations they had, as well as what experiences and environment promoted the four changes spawned in employees (fostering a volunteer culture, diversity, individual autonomy, engagement in work and organization).

## Hardworking corporate employees step forward to volunteer

It is noteworthy that the female:male ratio was about 50:50 and the majority were over age 45. For Field Cast overall, the female:male ratio was 4:3 (Table 2-1), which implicates that corporate employee volunteers comprised a relatively higher number of males.

In Japan, these corporate employees at the prime of their careers have a low rate of volunteer experience. In fact, 26.3% in the Pre-Games survey said they were volunteering for the first time, including 41.9% who said they were participating for the first time in volunteer activities provided by their company.

Tokyo 2020 volunteerism had a image of self-fulfillment rather than contribution to others. The casualness and appeal of this spurred middle-age and older corporate employees to take their first step forward to volunteer.

## A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity; about 70% say “want to broaden my perspective”

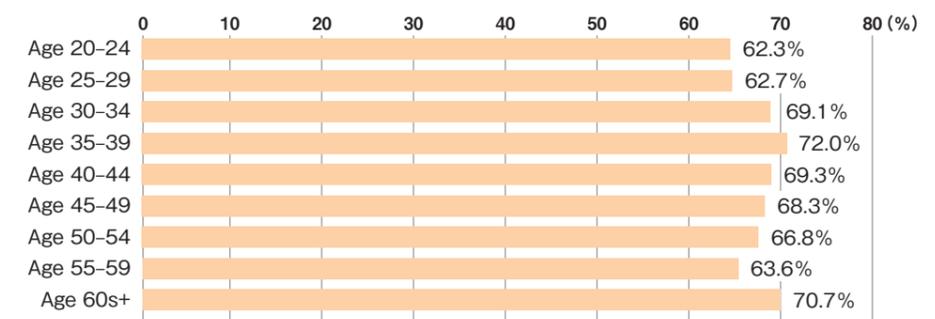
The motivations for participating as Games volunteers, in order of selection rate in this survey, were: “Because I’m interested in the Olympics” (84.6%); “Because I wanted to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity” (83.7%); and “Because I wanted to broaden my perspective” (67.5%).

Volunteering at a large-scale international event as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity is referred to as “episodic volunteerism” that adds a special episode to one’s life. It seems many people decided to participate from the appeal of a rare opportunity this time as well.

The selection rate of “Because I wanted to broaden my perspective” was highest among those age 35–39 (Table 3-3).

It is presumable that volunteerism has elements that fulfill the desire of further growth for mid-level employees, who have become accustomed to work.

Table 3-3 “Because I Wanted to Broaden My perspective” Response Rate by Age Group (n=2,913)

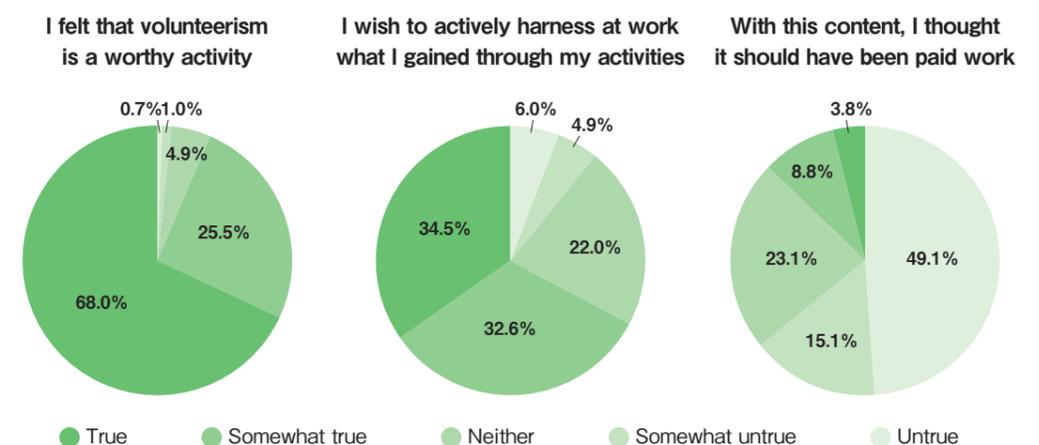


## High level of satisfaction; 60%+ “wish to harness at work”

It seems that Games volunteers did in fact have a fulfilling and greatly satisfying experience. As indicated in Figure 3-4, 93.5% in the Post-Games survey said “I felt that volunteerism is a worthy activity” and 67.1% said “I wish to actively harness at work what I gained through my activities.”

Only 12.6% said “With this content, I thought it should have been paid work,” thus Games volunteers presumably gained experience that is different from paid activities such as work (selection rate is total of “true” and “somewhat true.”)

Figure 3-4 Level of Satisfaction as Games Volunteer (n=1,052)



## The four positive changes spawned through Games volunteer

We conducted our research on the prediction that the Games volunteer experience would bring not only satisfaction but also change lasting after the Games.

**We verified changes in individuals for “fostering a volunteer culture,” as well as “diversity,” “individual autonomy,” and “engagement,” which are urgent organizational/human resource management issues at many companies** (Figure 3-5). We will briefly explain the reasons why we believe that the Games volunteer experience not only familiarizes corporate employees with volunteerism, but also serves as impetus to resolve the organizational/human resource management issues of companies.

Figure 3-5 Changes Spawned in Corporate Employees through Volunteer Experience



### (1) Fostering a volunteer culture

We believe that experiencing the worthiness and fulfillment of volunteerism at Tokyo 2020 heightens intention to participate in future sports-related activities and other volunteer activities.

Further, beliefs such as “I can face difficult matters and derive good results” are called “self efficacy” which

has been learned from academic research that this encourages active engagement by individuals in various activities and brings good results. Self efficacy has the aspect of affirming participation in social activities; it has been pointed out that this is low in Japan.<sup>4</sup> If the weak self efficacy for participation in social activities is rooted in lack of experience, it could be enhanced by the Games volunteer experience.

### (2) Diversity

Many corporate employees in Japan, especially those who work at big companies, belong to a group with relatively similar social circumstances and experience. Changing jobs also tends to be uncommon.

On the other hand, Tokyo 2020 volunteers provided support for athletes who gathered from diverse countries. Some also engaged in activities with people with disabilities. It was also an opportunity for corporate employee volunteers from different companies to have exchange and learn from each other.

This kind of experience becomes an experience in trusting someone different from oneself. We believe that this brings confidence in building relationships of trust with diverse people.

### (3) Individual autonomy

In many cases, volunteerism is self-initiated from personal motives. For these Games, there were more applications for volunteers than spots; participants captured this opportunity as they hoped.

It has been revealed by academic research that when employees feel that their affiliated organization thinks about their happiness and respects their wishes, this leads to organizational contribution by the employee. However, this image of organizations respecting individuals is relatively new in Japan. We believe that this was a valuable opportunity especially for the middle-aged and older to experience the approach of an organization respecting individuals.

There are also many occasions where volunteers respond flexibly in unfamiliar situations and cooperate with someone they’ve just met. They are expected to think for themselves and be creative in occasions that have no correct answer. We believe that when corporate employees face a situation that is “not the same as usual” they will consider the meaning of their responsibilities. Their attitude to take action themselves will be stimulated, thus increasing autonomy for actions at work as well. This time, we measured the concept of “job crafting” which means proactivity at work initiated by individuals.

### (4) Engagement

Tokyo 2020 was a tremendous project involving many. It was also the culmination of many years of dreaming and planning for athletes. There were many situations to absorb positive energy, and we believe this linked to vitality for work.

In the case of corporate employee volunteers who took time off from work to participate, the understanding and support of their companies and workplaces served as encouragement. When the future was unpredictable for Tokyo 2020, the mutual support of peers was reassuring and likely an opportunity to discover warmth that is different from work. We believe that this type of experience elevates pride and affection for the organization, and also links to vitality for work through the new bonds between employees.

<sup>4</sup> Cabinet Office “2014 White Paper on Children and Young People”

**The quality of volunteer experience through a “boundary-crossing” lens**

As a lens for verification, we adopted the concept of “boundary-crossing.” “Boundary-crossing” refers to the experience of participating in communities of different cultures and overcoming differences in values and customs to work together in moving matters forward.

It is known from academic research that with boundary-crossing experiences, people reexamine the practices of themselves and their affiliated organization, discovering new approaches and ways to address issues. This is why there is anticipation in recent years for application of this to human resource development at companies.

In this survey, we perceived volunteerism as a cross-culture activity and measured “autonomous execution,” “skills/actions different from work,” “open-minded collaboration,” “reflection on the working self,” and “reflection on affiliated organization objectives” as boundary-crossing experiences during volunteer activities.

With a focus on the quality of experience as such, we statistically studied the impact of multiple factors including those, on the four changes. Results using multiple regression analysis are summarized in Table 3-6.

The top part of Table 3-6 shows the four changes and each of their two elements, for a total of eight Post-Games changes. On the left of the figure are “Personal attributes,” “Volunteer activity content,” “Quality of volunteer activity experience,” “Pre-Games work circumstances,” and “Post-Games work circumstances.” Any statistically meaningful impact on the eight change elements is indicated with the symbol “+” (promoting effect) or “-” (inhibitory effect).

Change before and after the Games was analyzed using the two time-point data of 457 persons from response data who could be confirmed as having responded both pre-Game and post-Game.

**The core of boundary-crossing is open-minded collaboration and self-reflection**

We can see from Table 3-6 that there are common factors promoting multiple changes. “Quality of volunteer activity experience,” especially “open-minded collaboration,” “reflection on the working self,” and “reflection on affiliated organization objectives” promoted change in most perspectives. These are presumed to be the core of boundary-crossing experiences in Games volunteerism.

By engaging in “open-minded collaboration,” in other words, to cooperate with others as equals, the positive impact of volunteerism will apply to work as well. Further, the two types of self-reflection—“reflection on the working self” and “reflection on affiliated organization objectives”—promote reexamination of oneself and the affiliated organization, bringing change in work behavior and the approach to the organization.

Considering this, it is presumable that for volunteer activities, the quality of experience is more

Table 3-6 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Regarding Changes from the Volunteer Experience (n=457)

		Lasting changes in individuals post-Games							
		Fostering a volunteer culture		Diversity		Individual autonomy		Engagement	
		Future volunteer intention	Self-efficacy in social contribution	Understanding of social issues and awareness of coexistence	Trust in diversity	Recognition of an organization that values individuals	Job crafting	Pride and fondness for the organization post-Games	Work engagement post-Games
Personal attributes	Age					+		+	+
	Gender_Male								
Volunteer activity content	Activity content_competition support						+		+
	Activity content_mobility support								
	Activity content_operation support								
	Paralympics volunteerism			+					
	Level of satisfaction as Games volunteer						-		
	First time participating as company volunteer								
Quality of volunteer activity experience	Autonomous execution	-		-					
	Skills/actions different from work			+					
	Open-minded collaboration	+	+	+	+		+	+	+
	Reflection on the working self	+	+	+	+		+		+
Pre-Games work circumstances	Reflection on affiliated organization objectives	+	+		+	+		+	
	Pride and fondness for the organization pre-Games		-		-	+		+	
Post-Games work circumstances	Work engagement pre-Games		+				+		+
	Autonomy-support management by managers		+		+	+	+	+	+

\*Regression analysis conducted; only variables with statistically significant or marginally significant impact are noted (+ is promoting effect, - is inhibitory effect)

**important than the content.** The anticipated impact of experience of “skills/actions different from work” and “autonomous execution” did not appear.

Activities in Tokyo 2020 were restricted, and thus it is likely that these experiences were insufficient. If it weren't for the restrictions and changes because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the content and experiences from volunteer activities might have been richer.

**Variables used in analysis**

**[Open-minded collaboration]** Seven items, including: “I realized the value of collaborating as a team,” “I worked with an open mind, opening up myself and accepting others,” and “I listened carefully to others without preconceptions”

**[Reflection on the working self]** Four items: “I was able to confirm my strengths/weakness at work and a specific work style that will generate results,” “I discovered a new side to myself,” “I gained a concrete awareness of my own professionalism and skills,” and “I thought deeply about the objectives and meaning of work”

**[Reflection on affiliated organization objectives]** Two items: “I gained a concrete awareness of the value my company and industry provide to society” and “I became more interested in the management strategy and philosophy of my company”

**Autonomy-support management as the key to applying boundary-crossing experience to work**

**Another factor that had impact on multiple changes is the autonomy-support management style by managers at their workplaces post-Games.**

It became clear in this survey that for learnings from boundary-crossing experiences to be applied to the workplace and in work, an important condition is that the workplace environment is one where managers enable subordinates to work in their own way, provide work-related information to give meaning to the work, and encourage subordinates.

When companies expect employees to have diverse experiences and apply them to work, they may tend to be conscious of experiences that readily link to learning or of content learned. However, it is presumably important to also ask themselves if the workplace and work provide an environment where those outside learnings can be applied.

**Variables used in analysis**

**[Autonomy-support management by managers]** Three items: "My supervisor allows me to do my job my way," "My supervisor helps me understand the importance of my work to the overall effectiveness of the company," and "My supervisor expresses confidence in my ability to perform at a high level"

**Self-efficacy of social contribution and rise of trust in diversity**

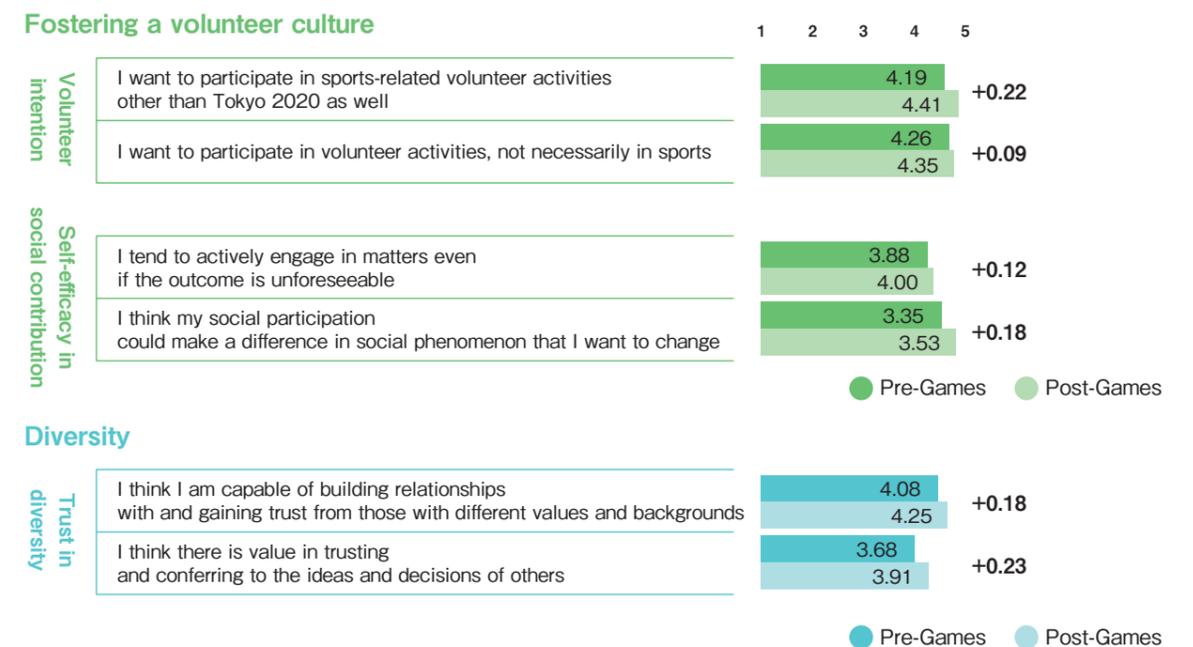
We have confirmed to this point that open-minded collaboration, self-reflection, and autonomy-support management by managers are common factors of changes in corporate employees from volunteerism. There also were their own specific factors of each of the four changes.

For (1) fostering a volunteer culture, and (2) diversity, they showed significant changes widely seen to an extent that it can be presumed that the standard was raised for respondents overall.

In Table 3-7, we scored response Pre/Post Games (Untrue=1, Somewhat untrue=2, Neither=3, Somewhat true=4, True=5) and calculated and compared the average score, indicating the items where statistically meaningful changes were seen.

We interpreted that the satisfaction and fulfillment of the Games volunteer experience may have led to future volunteer intention and self-efficacy for social activities and diversity.

Table 3-7 Changes in Average Value Pre/Post Games (n=457)



**Variables used in analysis**

**Two elements of [fostering a volunteer culture]**

**[Volunteer intention]** Three items, including: “I want to participate in volunteer activities, not necessarily in sports,” “I want to participate in volunteer/social contribution activities that are referred or introduced by the company”

**[Self-affirmation in social contribution]** Four items, including: “I believe that I have the power to contribute to society,” “I think my social participation could make a difference in social phenomenon that I want to change”

**Two elements of [diversity]**

**[Understanding of social issues and awareness of coexistence]** Three items, including: “It was an opportunity to learn about social issues and needs for support,” “I gained a familiarity with people with disabilities and no longer saw the differences in a special light” (measured only post-Games)

**[Trust in diversity]** Three items, including: “I think there is value in trusting and conferring to the ideas and decisions of others,” “I think I am capable of building relationships with and gaining trust from those with different values and backgrounds”

### Anxiety toward diversity dispelled for the middle-aged and older

It is noteworthy that the score went up for trust in diversity. This suggests that Tokyo 2020's principle of diversity took hold in every Games volunteer. We analyzed in more detail by age, and found that for those age 45 and up, "I think I am capable of building relationships with and gaining trust from those with different values and backgrounds" had a relatively low score pre-Games, so the increase margin was all the more larger (4.02 points -> 4.23 points).

**Middle-aged and older corporate employees might have had vague anxiety toward people different from themselves. By gaining confidence in collaborating with a diversity of people through volunteer activities, this anxiety may have been dispelled.**

The effect of contact with diversity also shows in the understanding of people with disabilities cultivated through the Paralympics. Table 3-8 separates participation ("Paralympics participation" group) and non-participation ("Olympics only" group) of Paralympics volunteerism and indicates the difference in response for understanding of social issues and awareness of coexistence. We scored response before/after the Games (Untrue=1, Somewhat untrue=2, Neither=3, Somewhat true=4, True=5) and calculated and compared the average score, indicating the items where statistically meaningful changes were seen.

**For "It was an opportunity to learn about social issues and needs for support" and "I gained a familiarity with people with disabilities and no longer saw the differences in a special light," the Paralympics participation group statistically had significantly higher scores.** As a matter of fact, this difference of score was not seen in the responses of 77 Games volunteers who had personally participated without the support of their organization, which we had calculated as a reference value. Considering this, it is presumable that collaborating with a diversity of people was highly effective for corporate employees who usually have little contact with diversity and participated as an opportunity for self-fulfillment.

Table 3-8 Difference in Average Value from Participating as a Paralympic Games Volunteer (n=1,052)

#### Diversity



### Awareness of individual autonomy urged especially in organization members

In human resource management at companies today, individual autonomy is of major interest. I believe that to promote this, there is need for an awareness that the organization respects and anticipates individual autonomy and to practice elevating autonomy in immediate work. This survey measures these two elements.

There were major restrictions coming from infection control measures for the Tokyo 2020, and as already mentioned, there did not seem to be much impact from the experiences of autonomous execution and skills/actions different from work through volunteer activities.

Despite those restrictions, the effect in promoting autonomy for people with certain Pre-Games work circumstances was discovered. The factors was: **"the more pride and fondness there is for the organization pre-Games, the stronger the perception becomes of an organization that values individuals" and "the higher the engagement in work pre-Games, the stronger job crafting becomes, which means creativity at work initiated by individuals."**

This may sound a bit extreme, but it seems that "corporate soldiers" had a stronger tendency to realize that their company values individual autonomy, while "workaholics" had a stronger tendency to start applying fresh ideas to work. Also, when the person is older, there was higher tendency to recognize an organization that values individuals.

Organization oriented members have a stronger tendency to learn autonomy. We can consider these results to indicate the meaning of companies taking the step of supporting volunteerism, which is a personal activity.

#### Variables used in analysis

##### Two elements of [Individual autonomy]

**[Recognition of an organization that values individuals]** Three items, including: "My company respects the lives of every employee" and "My company provides options for employee lifestyles"

**[Job crafting]** Ten items, including: "Think about how your job gives your life purpose" and "Remind yourself of the importance of your work for the broader community"

### Volunteer cooperation, shining in the online era

Companies are now placing importance on engagement in work and organization. The relationship between individual autonomy and engagement are like centrifugal force and centripetal force; it is vital that they are both nurtured.

Change was not seen before/after the Games in the average value of all who responded regarding engagement in work and organization. It is presumed that the major changes to work environment and workplace communication triggered by the pandemic during this time had large impact.

Despite the circumstances, engagement was promoted by the shared factors seen in Table 3-6: experiences of open-minded collaboration and self-reflection, and autonomy-support management by managers. Because it had become a challenge to collaborate at the workplace and for work, the Games volunteer experience very

likely functioned to have even more meaning.

**Variables used in analysis**

Two elements of [Engagement]

[Pride and fondness for the organization] Four items, including: "When someone praises my company, I feel like I am being praised" and "I feel pride in my company"

[Work engagement] Nine items, including: "At my work, I feel bursting with energy," "I feel happy when I am working intensely," and "I am proud of the work that I do"

**The quality of boundary-crossing experiences, elevated by company policy**

We have observed the shared factors of change in corporate employees through volunteerism as made evident in this survey and the features of those four changes. Finally, I would like to consider what companies and relevant parties can do to elevate the quality of the volunteer experience, which was a shared factor.

**The quality of the three experiences—open-minded collaboration, reflection on affiliated organization objectives, and reflection on the working self—are presumed to be boundary-crossing experiences that tend to occur in volunteer activities. Furthermore, the quality of these experiences were enriched depending on policies and other intentionally executed by companies.**

For all policies indicated in Table 3-9, when comparing the presence/absence of policies according to the respondent's perception, the average value of the responses about the qualities of the three experiences had statistically significant differences.

For open-minded collaboration in volunteer activities, difference in Average Value occurred from the presence/absence of opportunities for Games volunteers to network internally at the company and opportunities to encourage each other after the Games were postponed. By developing relationships that serve as a base to engage in collaborative experiences during volunteer activities, companies that send off their employees can enrich the quality of boundary-crossing experiences.

Also, opportunities for Games volunteers to network create a difference in reflection on affiliated organization objectives and the working self. It is likely that when employees are in a position to discuss volunteer activity experiences with each other, self-reflection about affiliated organization and work is facilitated more often.

**Table 3-9** Difference in Average Value for Quality of Volunteer Experience, According to Presence/Absence of Policies (n=1,052)

	Opportunities for Games volunteers to network internally at the company Present/absent	Opportunities for volunteers to encourage each other after the Games were postponed Present/absent	Explanation to Games volunteers about the significance for the world and society Present/absent	Management message to encourage volunteers after Games postponement Present/absent
Open-minded collaboration	+0.23	+0.25	+0.21	+0.23
Reflection on affiliated organization objectives	+0.38	+0.45	+0.68	+0.63
Reflection on the working self	+0.20	+0.26	+0.27	+0.29

**Words from management that urge self-reflection of organization objectives**

Also, explanations of significance "for the world and society," "for the company," and "for the participant themselves" of Games volunteerism all created difference in Average Value in the quality of the three experiences (Figures only for "for the world and society" shown in Table 3-9).

Of these, the variance created by the explanation of significance "for the world and society" was especially large for the quality of all three experiences. The absence/presence of a message from management to encourage volunteers after Tokyo 2020 was postponed also created a gap of the same level.

**The explanation of social significance and management messages among volunteer policies created major difference for quality especially for "reflection on affiliated organization objectives" and "reflection on the working self" among the three experiences.**

Because volunteerism entails participation in social activities as an individual, when companies thoughtfully communicate directly through management what they anticipate of volunteers when in contact with society, this likely affects the quality of boundary-crossing experiences in volunteering.

This concludes the report of the four changes and their factors as found from the two time-point survey of corporate employees who participated as Tokyo 2020 volunteers.

Volunteerism offers a range of surprises and appeal, such as being altruistic while connecting to self-growth, and being an individual activity while gaining learnings that can be applied to organizational activities. This is why promoting and supporting employees to volunteer holds great potential as an human resource management policy. However, moderate engagement with the approach that "this will not be used as a management tool" is more effective for volunteers to maximize use of boundary-crossing learning that is characteristic of volunteerism.

**Table 3-10** Survey Outline

	Pre-games survey	Post-games survey
Survey subjects	Volunteer participants/applicants from 22 Tokyo 2020 sponsoring companies	
Survey method	The contact point for each company announced the URL to access an online survey form to employees subject to the survey	
Survey dates	September 2019	October 2021
	2,913 respondents	1,052 respondents
Valid responses	Female/Male/Other (45.4%/54.1%/0.4%); age up to 34/35-44/45+ (14.5%/22.4%/63.1%); no past volunteer experience (26.3%); no past company-sponsored volunteer experience (41.9%)	Female/Male/Other (43.2%/56.8%/0.0%); age up to 34/35-44/45+ (23.7%/24.1%/52.2%)
	Changes before/after Games calculated by using the responses in the pre-games survey and post-games survey of 457 people who we were able to match using IDs	
Organizer	The Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center	
Survey designed/analyzed	Institute for Organizational Behavior Research, Recruit Management Solutions Co., Ltd./Recruit Works Institute	

Writer: Rie Fujisawa  
Recruit Management Solutions Co., Ltd.  
Lead Researcher, Institute for Organizational Behavior Research

# Strongly Backed Volunteering Great Positive Impacts on Diversity & Inclusion



Approximately 200 employees of Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance volunteered at the Tokyo 2020 Games. Kazunari Yokota from the Olympic and Paralympic Office recalled the following efforts made at Tokio Marine & Nichido.

Set 3 objectives to aim at contributing to the success of the Games

Tokio Marine & Nichido aimed to contribute to the success of the Games and made various efforts to foster a volunteer culture as a legacy.

First, **the company set the following objectives for volunteer participation in the Tokyo 2020 Games:**

- Foster a sense of unity and enhance employee engagement in the Tokio Marine Group through the volunteer participation of the entire group in the Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- Enhance employees' leadership, team building, and communication skills with a variety of peers through volunteering experiences.
- Foster a culture that contributes to society as members of "Good Company" and make it a legacy in Tokio Marine & Nichido.

Volunteer participants were confirmed in 2018, and in 2019, an internal SNS group was created for the

volunteers and the clerical office. In the SNS group, those members shared their awareness obtained through training, and some of those who had participated in the Games earlier than others actively posted their experiences to share during the Games, which functioned to increase motivation among those members.

Before the Games started, those members had six online networking sessions. In June, just before the Games, Tokio Marine & Nichido organized a kick-off meeting and granted their participation as part of work for full support.

During the Games, paid leave for volunteering was also granted to the volunteers, and those who lived in areas far from Tokyo were allowed to use their training center in Tokyo as accommodation. After the Games, a booklet and movie that summarized all the efforts made by the entire company toward the Tokyo Games, including stories of volunteering and interviews with volunteers, were made for sharing their experiences within the office.



Made efforts to ease members' concerns Used networking events as a place to cheer up each other

Due to the COVID pandemic and the Games' postponement, the most challenging experience for Tokio Marine & Nichido was easing the volunteers' concerns.

With a critical eye on the holding of the Games in itself, some employees were worried as to whether they could gain an understanding of their participation from colleagues when they returned to work. In this situation, online networking functioned as a place to share their concerns and cheer up each other.

As a result of a discussion as to whether Tokio Marine & Nichido should send the volunteers to the Games in the COVID pandemic or not, they reached the following conclusion: **leave volunteers to make their decision on participation based on their sense of value and family circumstances because volunteering is an activity outside work, and the company then put safety and security of the volunteers first once they have decided to participate.**

Although 300 participants were initially expected, approximately 200 employees eventually participated due to the Games' postponement. Some employees decided against participation after personnel shifts associated with changes in work locations or due to their schedules. Using their company newsletters, the office delivered what their volunteers were doing toward the success of the Games while taking due care of their safety.

Words of appreciation from the president Paralympics promoted changes

After the Games, many participants commented that they were glad about their participation. There was a move that volunteers presented their experiences to pass on to the workplace.

With a positive impact that volunteers' performance was recognized and praised in the closing ceremony, praise for their volunteers also grew in the company. Moreover, after the Games, Shinichi Hirose, President, sent words of appreciation to those employees who did volunteer work. Judging from the series of movements, Mr. Yokota believes that this participation greatly worked to foster a sense of unity in the group.

According to their questionnaire survey, many of those volunteers commented on the awareness from their experiences, such as, "I learned the importance of diversity," which positively influenced their human resource development. Those participants were delighted with their participation, and their volunteer program was believed to be a great success. Mr. Yokota insisted that Tokio Marine & Nichido needs to continuously take measures to enable the volunteers' growth through the Games to bring about a ripple effect on their colleagues at the workplace and transform it into a legacy that makes a volunteer culture take root in the company.

He also pointed out, "The Paralympic Games became a trigger that brought about changes to our society, including volunteering, in the Tokyo 2020 Games." There were many comments on inspirational parasports and awareness through communication with para-athletes in their questionnaire survey of members. Some of them have already volunteered at another parasport event after the Games.

**"We intend to link the members' inspiration and awareness to our promotion of Diversity & Inclusion and growth strategy,"** Mr. Yokota said.

Writer: Tomoko Arima

# Raise Sensitivity to Our Society and Identify Issues to Be Solved. Utilize Volunteerism to Boost Corporate Management

Orchestrating a brighter world **NEC**

Over 200 employees of NEC volunteered at the Tokyo 2020 Games. We interviewed Naomi Ito, Naoki Hashi, and Satoshi Ogino from the Promotion Office of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games (as of September 2021).

NEC has always driven social contributions Transformation at the Tokyo 2020 Games

“Volunteering at the Tokyo 2020 Games was an effort to transform the significance of volunteering on a company-wide basis.”

Ms. Ito from the Promotion Office said. NEC has already run several social contribution programs since before the Tokyo 2020 Games, such as the NEC Paddy Making Project to revitalize rice fields by their employees and weeding in the park, and has proactively worked toward post-disaster reconstruction. In NEC, volunteering was basically regarded as a spare-time activity for employees, with a strong image of “helping others” and “self-sacrificing.”

**In the Tokyo 2020 Games, NEC re-defined volunteering as an activity to play a role as a Social Value-Creating Company and requested their volunteer participants to bring the fruits of the activity, such as new experiences and awareness and leadership, back to the workplace.**

“Volunteerism is a perfect opportunity to identify

social issues. Raise sensitivity to our society and find issues by themselves. Then, create solutions to those issues in their main work. We intended to create this cycle,” Ms. Ito said. “Another aim was to build a bridge between corporate practice chasing profits and unpaid volunteer work, which are seemingly conflicting,” Mr. Hashi recalled.

Required a reference to see the seriousness of applicants Participants hosted voluntary study sessions

**“We as a company provide you with full support. In return, bring something back from your experiences, rather than just your self-contentment.”** To deliver this message, the Promotion Office made various arrangements.

Since the Promotion Office was inaugurated in 2015, NEC has provided employees with opportunities to gain volunteering experience, focusing on sports events, including wheelchair tennis, which NEC has supported for over 30 years, and Super Rugby. Executive officers at that time, including the Senior Executive Vice President, attended the kick-off event for volunteers. Paid leave of absence was additionally granted to the volunteers for the number of volunteering days during the Games.

Meanwhile, the Promotional Office included the

following two requirements in the entry conditions: submit a reference from one employee of a friend, co-worker, or manager and gain volunteering experience before the actual Games. “We expected to get employees committed to taking a step forward by setting such obstacles for this opportunity,” Mr. Ogino said.

Volunteer participants at the Games were confirmed in June 2018, and activities, including training, started in February 2019. Then, five passionate volunteer members took the lead in starting voluntary study sessions. The volunteer participants had seven sessions in total. They listened to experienced volunteers and paralympians and joined a dance group with people with disabilities to enjoy dancing together.

“Such spontaneous gathering also brought significant meaning to our company,” Ms. Ito said. The Games was eventually decided to be held without spectators, which caused confusion at job sites. However, according to some members, this resulted in experiences of thinking by themselves and demonstrating initiative during the Games. One of their volunteer members, who is not so good at English, was suddenly dragged out in front of a TV camera and asked a huge favor to be a simultaneous interpreter for a TV show.

“Experience to bear the brunt of something will be of great utility in business. I am sure that those volunteers gained unwavering confidence by



successfully dealing with unexpected events flexibly,” Ms. Ito said.

Participants' energy and passion generated a virtuous cycle Make experienced volunteers a role model

After the Games, many employees who did volunteer work spoke out about their emotions and pleasures obtained through the work. This report has been archived on their internal site to be saved forever as a record of NEC's Tokyo 2020 Games.

After the Games, four volunteers held an online meeting to talk about their experience, and 700 employees joined the meeting. “Some of those audiences commented that those four volunteers' high energy and passion inspired them to do something,” Ms. Ito said. With such performance of those volunteers, NEC's engagement score substantially increased from the previous year.

However, **“It cannot be denied that our volunteers could have had a much richer experience if there were spectators,”** Mr. Hashi gave a frank view. This view comes from numerous comments that a sense of unity among volunteers, spectators, players, and staff led to fulfilling experiences and pleasures in the Rugby World Cup that NEC supported.

As the next step, NEC has two challenges: set a role model of an employee who utilizes volunteer experience in one's main work and connect employees' volunteering to NEC's sustainability initiatives.

“By paving the way for our employees to share and utilize their learnings and growth through volunteering at the workplace, we also intend to take advantage of such volunteering to grow our company,” Mr. Hashi remarked.

Writer: Tomoko Arima

# Strategic Use of Volunteer Opportunities

## —Efforts of Games Sponsors—

**Volunteering at the Games is an opportunity that is equivalent to sales promotion**

It is well known that Olympic and Paralympic sponsor companies are allowed to use the designation and imagery of the Games and do sales promotions at venues. However, the utilization of volunteer opportunities is generally unknown.

**For those sponsor companies, utilizing Olympic and Paralympic-related rights and opportunities to the fullest is an important theme from the viewpoint of business strategy. The volunteer opportunity that enables employees to have valuable experiences is no different.**

We look back on the progress in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games sponsor companies that made lots of thought-provoking efforts in terms of the strategic use of volunteer opportunities, even though these examples came from such a rare mega-event.

**Unknown experience for sponsor companies**

In September 2013, since Tokyo was chosen as a host city for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the number of sponsor companies reached 82, which ended up the highest number in history. Sponsor companies are roughly classified into four tiers, and what they are allowed to do at the Games

and their sponsorship fees differ among the tiers (Figure 3-11). Compared with TV commercials and merchandise sales with Olympic and Paralympic logos by those sponsors, the efforts relating to volunteering at the Games received little attention.

Figure 3-11 Basic Structure of Sponsorship in the Tokyo 2020 Games



Volunteering at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, which enables volunteers to interact with athletes and spectators from all around the world while cooperating with various types of members, has been viewed as a precious, valuable opportunity to enhance the growth and engagement of employees since the past Games. Many sponsor companies have proactively encouraged their employees to apply for volunteer positions at the Games. However,

volunteering at the Olympic and Paralympic Games was an “unknown” thing for sponsor companies in Japan, a developing country in volunteering.

**Internal information posting and volunteer selection differed among sponsor companies**

**The schedule relating to Games volunteers is called “Volunteer Journey” (Table 3-12).**

For proactive use of the opportunity of volunteering at the Games, sponsor companies encouraged their employees to apply for volunteer positions through their in-house training that explained the significance of sponsorship and the outline of volunteering with the introduction of volunteers and practice in the past Games, posting information using intranet email communication or other suitable methods, before the start of receiving applications from September 2018.

However, such efforts were not made in all sponsor companies, and the methods differed among those companies. Some provided no such information or minimized such information to avoid proactively encouraging employees due to a decision to prioritize business over volunteering at the Games because their peak period coincided with the Games weeks. In contrast, others required applicants to submit an entry sheet to select committed employees. Of those companies that screened employees for the volunteering, some had surplus applicants, which made it highly competitive, and others had only a few applicants. The processes of delivering information, encouraging employees, and screening applicants strongly reflected each company's corporate culture and organizational climate for volunteering, including the company's perspective on volunteering and understanding of external activities at the workplace.

Table 3-12 Volunteer Journey for the Organising Committee and Sponsor Companies

	Organising Committee	Sponsor companies
September 2013	Tokyo was chosen to be a host city of the Olympic and Paralympic Games	
June 2014-		Japanese sponsor companies were born one after another
February 2017-December 2018		Encouraged employees to apply for volunteer positions and screened applicants through in-house training and posting information
June 2018	Announced recruitment information	
September-December 2018	Received applications	
January 2019	Announced names (Field Cast and City Cast)	
February 2019-		[1] Provided in-house training [2] Produced merchandise and utilized internal SNS tools [3] Cooperated with external programs
February-July 2019	Provided orientations (explanation sessions and interviews)	
October 2019-February 2020	Provided common training sessions (in-person and e-Learning)	
March 2020	Notified roles and venues	
	The postponement of the Games was decided	
April 2020-		· Switched training to online · Ensured infection control measures for volunteer employees
July-September 2020	Confirmed the intentions of Games volunteers to continue their participation	
October 2020-	Resumed common training sessions (online)	
April-August 2021	Provided training sessions by role (online)	
April-May 2021	Provided leadership training sessions (online)	
May-August 2021	Delivered uniforms and accreditation cards	
June-September 2021	Provided vaccinations	Provided PCR tests and workplace vaccinations to volunteer employees
June-August 2021	Provided training sessions by venue	
July 23, 2021-August 08, 2021	Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games	
August 24, 2021-September 05, 2021	Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games	

### Sufficient measures based on strategic intent

After encouraging employees to apply for volunteer positions and screening applicants in the companies, volunteers from sponsor companies (hereinafter, “volunteer employees”) were officially registered, interviewed, and given various training sessions by the Organising Committee members in line with the volunteer journey before entering the Games, in principle. Sponsor companies additionally provided those volunteer employees with internal and external training sessions and volunteer work as well as various programs in partnership with other companies.

In the in-house training, unlike when encouraging employees to apply for volunteer positions and screening applicants, the volunteer employees were informed of experiences, abilities, and skills that they were expected to gain through volunteering at the Games, as well as specific messages about how those things gained could lead to their growth after the Games, even by the top management sometimes. Many networking programs were also provided to facilitate a sense of solidarity among employees.

The sponsor companies were committed to creating a company-wide momentum toward the Tokyo 2020 Games; a sense of unity among volunteer employees



was strengthened by producing original corporate goods limited to the Games volunteers and grouping them in the internal SNS tools, and volunteer employees and their volunteering history were proactively introduced and shared via company newsletters and the intranet system.

Those **sufficient aids and measures were strategically provided from the viewpoint that sponsor companies should fully utilize all Olympics and Paralympics-related opportunities.**

Meanwhile, cooperation was proactively established among those sponsor companies with a common purpose for the use of volunteering at the Games. For example, networking events were often held to discuss diversity and sustainability with an eye toward post-Games. Such cross-sectional cooperation among large companies across sector boundaries can be an Olympics and Paralympics-specific phenomenon.

### How much sponsor companies should support their employees? The decisions differed among companies

Like other volunteers recruited from the public, employees sent from sponsor companies as volunteers face the same issues, including covering the costs of accommodation and traveling and taking long leave during the Games.

Some companies took measures that allowed those employees to use their training facilities, paid their travel expenses, and extended or newly established the scheme of paid leave for volunteering. Again, like the way of encouraging to apply for volunteer positions and screening applicants, the content and degree of the support reflected

each company's corporate culture and organizational climate for volunteering.

**In terms of how much companies should get involved in volunteering at the Games, which is in a sense a private activity, the decision on the support for volunteer employees differed among those sponsor companies.**

### The foundation of sponsorship wavered due to the COVID pandemic

In 2020, when the arrangement toward the opening of the Games was reaching its climax, the status of COVID-19 infections worsened in the blink of an eye, resulting in the postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Games. The decision came as a bolt out of the blue for the sponsor companies. Then, those companies had to face the following three difficulties since the COVID pandemic. Firstly, needless to say, an expected profit increase through advertisement, PR, and merchandise sales using sponsorship was affected. This was precisely the situation that shook the foundation of sponsorship.

Secondly, being a sponsor company is often considered an honor in and outside the company, as some companies support the Olympic and Paralympic Games as a social contribution; however, the sponsor companies had to deal with the unexpected risk of reputation because being a sponsor company under the COVID pandemic sometimes aroused criticism. Although no sponsor companies pulled out their sponsorship eventually, the sponsor companies continuously had a tough time making very sensitive decisions.

Thirdly, communication with all employees, including volunteer employees, was challenging. More precise and passionate communication was needed to gain a consensus internally because employees in those sponsor companies were not always favorable to

continuing the sponsorship.

The sponsor companies had already put lots of time and effort into their volunteer employees based on the premise that opportunities relating to the Olympic and Paralympic Games should be used to the maximum. Therefore, pulling out of the sponsorship was not an easy option for them.

### Some companies took their own safety and security measures

In the COVID pandemic, the sponsor companies did the steering carefully between continuing and pulling out of the sponsorship and, at the same time, took all possible infection control measures for volunteer employees to prepare for the Games.

Although the speed differed among the companies, the programs provided in-person before, such as training and networking, became available online relatively early as business operations were switched to online.

Infection control measures toward the Games also progressed promptly. Online training to learn basic knowledge and the things to be ready for infection control measures was delivered, and infection control goods such as disinfectants and face masks were provided.

Some companies also provided free PCR tests and raised the priority of the workplace COVID-19 vaccination to ensure safety and security for volunteer employees in their volunteer work. Even though they were volunteers, it was no different from officially sending their employees to the Games from sponsor companies. From this viewpoint, the sponsor companies ensured all possible infection control measures for the Games.

Indeed, treating volunteer employees in terms of PCR tests and priority at the workplace vaccination was a sensitive challenge, and the attitude differed among those companies. However, it goes without saying that

there was a critical challenge to make the most of sponsorship that gained more importance due to the COVID pandemic, as the background for the decision to raise the priority of volunteer employees in many of those sponsor companies.

### Satisfaction with volunteering represents the return on investment for sponsors

On July 23, 2021, the curtain of the Tokyo 2020 Games, the first postponed Games in history, rose.

Substantial changes in volunteering due to no spectators, which was decided just before the opening of the Games, had a major impact on the content and effectiveness of the support for volunteer employees. Some volunteer employees participated without telling people around them, considering their families, workplace, and stakeholders, including business clients. In addition to infection control measures, mental care for their employees came up as an important challenge for the sponsor companies during the Games.

Like this, many twists and turns happened to the volunteering at the Games. However, the percentage of the volunteer employees who were satisfied with their work at the Olympic and Paralympic Games was 82.6%, which was extremely high.<sup>5</sup> This became an important index for the sponsor companies to measure the return on investment for the Tokyo 2020 Games.

### Can companies accept the diversity of both attributes and acts?

In the Tokyo 2020 Games that was held with unprecedented difficulties, the sponsor companies re-realized many challenges and were aware of new

possibilities from the involvement with volunteer employees.

What I felt acutely aware of as challenges for large companies like those sponsors, particularly, was the closed nature of the organizational climate and the understanding of employee engagement. The closed nature of organizational climate is closely related to the penetration of DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion).

In the sponsor companies, not many employees necessarily showed interest or understanding of their colleagues who volunteered at the Games while top management recognized the volunteer work at the Games as a precious opportunity for boundary-crossing learning outside business operations. **When people talk about diversity, a diversity of attributes, such as “foreigners” or “people with disabilities,” generally receive attention. A diversity of acts, such as “volunteering outside one’s work,” should also be accepted and respected.**

Messages and communication from the top management team and managers to employees were insufficient during the COVID pandemic, which was particularly remarkable in the earlier stage of the pandemic. I realized that very few companies see employee engagement as a management strategy.

The promotion of DEI and the improvement in employee engagement do not lead to rapid innovation. However, challenges emerging through the relationship with volunteer employees should be promptly improved from the viewpoint of advancing a foundation to increase a company’s competitive strength.

### Evaluation of the potential in people who are capable of providing excellent service outside the office

The presence of volunteer employees was a discovery

with great potential for the sponsor companies.

According to our survey, employees with a habit of volunteering have higher trust in diversity, more engagement in work, and more superior innovation-oriented actions than employees without a habit of volunteering.<sup>6</sup>

However, it is not rare that personnel departments or corporate managers are unaware of those employees who performed excellent service as Games volunteers. Some companies commented the survey results were surprising.

This seems to be because evaluations and expectations for people in the company are based on how they perform at the workplace, which cannot fully understand the potential of people with unique experiences outside the office. However, in recent years, companies have started requiring employees to gain sensitivity to our society in order to encounter complex social issues.

As mentioned before, how volunteer employees’ potential can be utilized depends on their managers’ management style and capability at the workplace (see P. 47). **Those companies are tested whether or not they can “visualize” those employees’ high capabilities and possibilities through volunteer work at the Games.**

### Half a year after the Games Changes remain in individuals and companies

**It has already been over half a year since the Games finished. Positive changes after the Games, which are legacies, can be found in both those sponsor companies and volunteer employees.**

In the sponsors, some companies proactively endeavor to promote volunteering to all employees using volunteering at the Games by preparing a booklet

compiling experiences of volunteer employees to deliver internally, continuing online seminars and networking, and extending the scheme of paid leave for volunteering the following year onward. Other companies are establishing a business strategy utilizing the practice in the Tokyo 2020 Games.

In the volunteer employees, some continue studying English or sign language or participate in other volunteer programs with peer volunteers from other companies met through volunteering at the Games. Others hold seminars to share their precious experiences at many places. Various legacies are genuinely observed.

### Volunteering = solving social issues x personnel measures

In the recent trend of sustainable development goals (SDGs) and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investment, companies are required to link social issue solving with their business operations. Companies’ support for volunteering where employees intend to do so can be positioned as part of such efforts. We believe that utilizing a volunteer opportunity as a means, not a purpose, will increasingly enhance companies’ competitive strength and value.

Speaking from the efforts of sponsor companies toward their volunteer employees, **utilizing a future volunteer opportunity in a company will require an attitude that works in cooperation with other organizations to improve the organizational climate with poor diversity and develop human resources through crossing-boundary learning outside the office, from the perspective of business strategies.**

We hope that the efforts of sponsor companies and the service of volunteer employees at the Tokyo 2020 Games will be handed down as legacies in many companies.

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<sup>5</sup> The Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (2021) “Games Volunteer Questionnaire Survey”

<sup>6</sup> the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center (2021) “Sponsor Employee Volunteers at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games [Interim Survey]”

# Five Proposals for Your Company to Utilize Learnings From Volunteering

In Chapter 3, we reviewed what corporate employees could learn from volunteering through some examples and data. We believe you have realized that volunteering generates plenty of learnings that can be utilized in work, despite activities outside the office.

In other words, from the viewpoint of companies, your employees' volunteering experiences have great potential that can be utilized for your company. However, such private learnings from external activities are not passed on to companies unconditionally.

From this point, we provide five proposals that are the points to utilize employees' volunteering experiences for your company. We present those proposals one by one while looking back on the contents discussed in Chapter 3.

## Five Proposals to Utilize Employees' Volunteering Experiences for Your Company

- 1 Deliver the positive significance of volunteering from your top management team
- 2 Encourage your corporate middle managers to do volunteer work to advance their leadership skills
- 3 Provide opportunities to talk about what volunteers learned from their external activities of volunteering in the office
- 4 Proactively recommend volunteering that requires working in cooperation with diverse people
- 5 Assign jobs to solve social issues to your employees who actively do volunteer work

### Proposal 1 Deliver the positive significance of volunteering from your top management team

Norihiro Nihei, a professor at the University of Tokyo, pointed out, "Japan is a community that sneers at volunteering. An action that avoids responsibility in a community and intends to serve outside the community is easy to get criticized."

Suppose a corporate organization is the epitome of such Japanese society. In that case, volunteer participation will get a negative tag, making corporate employees who participate in volunteering feel guilty for their companies and colleagues at the workplace. To avoid such a burden, many people may hesitate to do outside activities or may not say anything to their companies about it.

Indeed, Koichi Murakami from the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center also pointed out that large

Japanese companies generally have a closed nature of the organizational climate, making it challenging to accept volunteering outside the office as a diversity of acts.

What can remove such a negative tag is the clear and positive meaning and message from the top management team. As mentioned at the outset of Chapter 3, the number of companies that position social contribution activities as "a factor in achieving management philosophy and vision" and "an opportunity for employees to become familiar with social issues and grow" is surging (Figure 3-1). For example, the meaning and message are clearly declared internally and externally using sustainability reports or integrated reports, the negative tag can be replaced with a positive one.

**Japanese society tends to demand an "excuse" to do a good deed. For that reason, making a positive "excuse" by words from corporate executives gives a solid push for employees to participate in volunteering, creating the power to change society.**

As shown in our survey results, a corporate message facilitates the pass-on of external learning to the company (Table 3-9). Contributions to society are also a significant activity for corporate management today—delivering this message from the top management team is the first step that cannot be omitted.

Proposal  
2

### Encourage your corporate middle managers to do volunteer work to advance their leadership skills

Our survey showed whether or not learnings from volunteering are utilized in one's work depends on whether or not managers manage the workplace with respect for members' autonomy and diversity. If that is the case, advancing the management style of managers must be a promising way.

Then, volunteering becomes a perfect opportunity to transform and improve their management skills. According to our survey results, volunteering provides learnings that increase trust in diversity, particularly among middle-aged and senior adults, which possibly account for most managerial positions.

Toshiaki Koyama, who volunteered at the Tokyo 2020 Games, said, "I take sports volunteerism as an activity where people with different backgrounds and values become a team and create results in as short as one day, which is an opportunity enabling me to relearn my leadership skills." Jun Hiromura said, "I noticed that companies have similar types of managers, which makes me wonder if company culture was built with a chain of "copies of manager images." Seeing the different types of leaders work at the Games enabled me to draw a picture of the leadership on my own."

**The range of "management types" in one organization is surprisingly narrow. Having corporate middle managers cross the boundary into volunteer work before their members do should be a kill-two-birds-with-one-stone measure that transforms their management style and facilitates boundary-crossing learnings of their members to pass on to the company.**

To encourage corporate middle managers (bosses) to do volunteer work, there are some possible measures, including providing volunteer programs exclusively for corporate managers, sharing stories of corporate managers who do volunteer work and how much volunteering influences their work in the office, and encouraging private volunteering with monetary support and paid leave.

Proposal  
3

### Provide opportunities to talk about what volunteers learned from their external activities of volunteering in the office

Our survey demonstrated that the quality of boundary-crossing experience from volunteering enhances trust in diversity, individual autonomy, and engagement of employees. One of the factors that influence the quality of experience is the presence or absence of reflection on the working self and reflection on the objective of their affiliated organization (Table 3-6). It is not easy for companies to directly control the external experiences of employees, although it is possible to create an opportunity for self-reflection in the office.

As Tokio Marine & Nichido did, the opportunities to interact among volunteers from their group companies and training to deepen the idea of leadership, team building, and diversity are brilliant examples. In NEC, repeated delivering the significance of the growth through volunteer experiences fostered an atmosphere that created community and workshops among volunteers spontaneously. When employees with volunteer experiences see each other in the office, an opportunity for self-reflection on work should occur naturally.

**Another effort to be desirably one step further is to develop a habit of asking questions by managers to facilitate self-reflection. Supervisors show interest in rich experiences obtained by their members outside the office and warmly ask them some questions. This enables the afterglow of their boundary-crossing experiences to pass on to their workplace.** Needless to say, a meaning by words from the top management team and volunteering experiences of corporate middle managers, which were described in Proposals 1 and 2, are beneficial to draw such questions from the management-level employees.

Talks in the office serve as triggers to deepen what employees learned from volunteering as well as to relativize and review their way of working among colleagues at the workplace and reflect ideas and issue awareness in their work.

Creating opportunities for self-reflection and its relationship in the office connects boundary-crossing experiences, which tend to be complete on their return from outside activities, as a circle to circulate the movement continuously.

Proposal  
4

### Proactively recommend volunteering that requires working in cooperation with diverse people

Our survey also demonstrated that another factor that influences the quality of the experience was “open-minded collaboration” (Table 3-6). There are some volunteer tasks to be done with less involvement with others. Positive changes that can be passed on to work may not be generated in such tasks.

Activities requiring cooperation to deliver results while working together with diverse people on an equal footing lead to learnings about diversity, individual autonomy, and engagement.

Some CRS and sustainability-related departments have provided their employees with volunteering information. **It is recommended to include a viewpoint of whether volunteer programs to be introduced involve cooperating with diverse people in their selection criteria** in the future.

For example, in the volunteering that supports activities of NPOs, which is called “Pro Bono,” projects usually

last a few months long. This is possible to create an opportunity for cross-industry collaboration with other companies. For another example, even for an activity mainly with simple tasks, the quality of experience can be modified by networking among different generations or industries or giving a learning theme. The cross-industry collaboration created during large-scale events like the Olympic and Paralympic Games is considered a resource that adds experiences of cooperation with diverse people to volunteer work, which will become a precious legacy to be retained.

Proposal  
5

### Assign jobs to solve social issues to your employees who actively do volunteer work

Nearly 70% of corporate employees who volunteered at the Tokyo 2020 Games answered, “I want to actively harness at work what I gained through my activities” (Figure 3-4).

Noboru Hayase from the Osaka Voluntary Action Center insists that people can demonstrate their talent, precisely because the activity is spontaneous. In an environment where those employees are not passive or inactive and are allowed to show their talent, they display their creativity and initiative, as shown in the examples of Tokio Marine & Nichido and NEC.

Now, the last one we would like to propose is **to transform the relationship between a social contribution related-department, such as the CRS Department and the Sustainability Office** that commonly play the role of volunteering clerical office in the company, **and employees from Service Provider and Receivers to Social Issue Solving Co-workers.**

There are not a few employees proactively do volunteer work, establish a personal network, and plan and run programs by themselves, not limited to those who volunteered at the Tokyo 2020 Games. However, surprisingly human resource departments have not fully recognized the existence and potential of such people due to the social climate described in Proposal 1 and a lack of interest in boundary-crossing learning in the company until quite recently.

The expectation that companies get involved in social issues has increased over recent years. The intertwining of social contribution measures and business is also progressing. Under these circumstances, effective human resource measures are to identify employees with sensitivity to our society and awareness of issues through volunteering and assign (or transfer) those employees to jobs enabling them to utilize their capabilities.

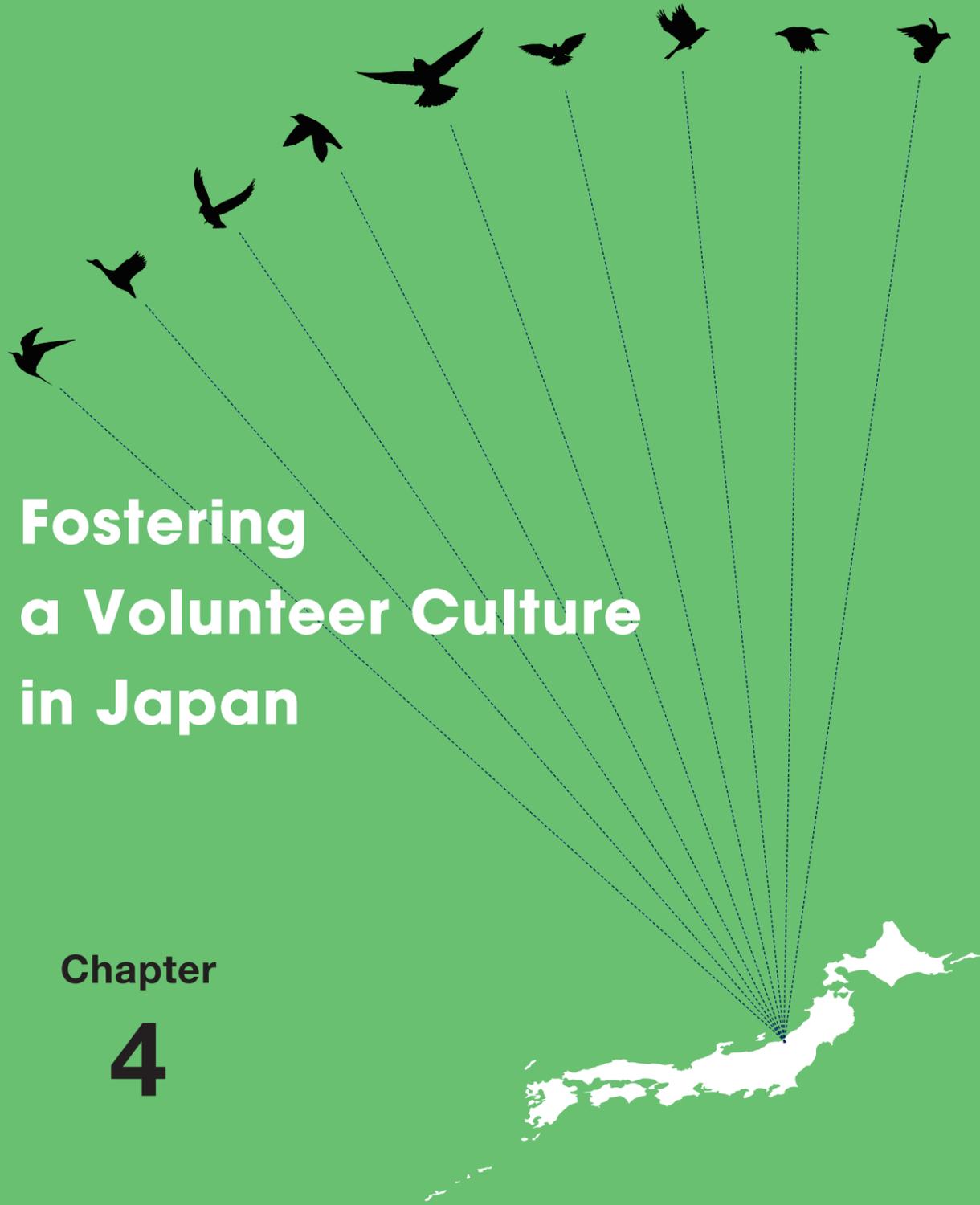
Another idea is to have those employees participate in the operational side or clerical office that creates volunteer opportunities as an internal second job or internal volunteer. This enables not only to provide opportunities that suit the needs at job sites but also to make practical opportunities for those employees to learn and display leadership that changes society.

Volunteering in itself has an aspect in helping others and improving society. While valuing the positive aspect, it is feasible for volunteers to bring what they learned for their work, which is generated as a by-product of volunteering, as much as possible to leverage strengths in the office. We hope that a circle of boundary-crossing learning by volunteering will expand across your company.

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# Fostering a Volunteer Culture in Japan

## Chapter 4

After the Tokyo 2020 Games, a volunteer legacy is emerging in individuals, companies, and local governments. However, a volunteer culture does not spread out spontaneously.

While Japan's first year of volunteering was 1995, when the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake occurred, Osaka currently ranks at the bottom of the prefectures on volunteer rate. Even if the interest and actions of volunteering increase temporarily, social efforts are essential to make that temporal movement permanent.

From the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games to the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and then throughout Japan— In this chapter, we discuss what is needed to take over volunteering-related knowledge and obtain a social consensus on how volunteering should be implemented for large-scale events.

# From the Tokyo 2020 Games to the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. Pass on the Thoughts of Event Volunteering



Noboru Hayase, Osaka Voluntary Action Center



Eiichi Yamamoto, Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition



Kazuto Sawatari, the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center

## Spread of fun volunteering

—Mr. Sawatari from the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center, you went with approximately three years of volunteer journey for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Tell us about what was achieved and what remains as challenges when looking back on the Tokyo 2020 Games?

**Sawatari:** The volunteering at the Tokyo 2020 Games received criticism during the recruiting period in 2018, like “blacklisted volunteering” or “motivation exploitation,” and negative opinions about having the Games itself increased due to the COVID pandemic, confronting difficult situations so many times. This volunteering should be something you are proud of, but some participants felt guilty and became distressed. We endeavored to be considerate of their worries and maintain their motivation.

However, it turned out that over 200,000 people applied for 80,000 positions, and how those volunteers were having fun during the Games was widely reported. **I think that it was effective to let many people know that volunteering does not have to be austere or self-sacrificing, and fun volunteering is acceptable.**

For Field Cast, which were the volunteers at the

Games recruited by the Organising Committee, and City Cast, which were the volunteers recruited by local governments, we arranged training and requirements for work as uniformly as possible to operate in an integrated manner, which was another achievement.

—Mr. Hayase from the Osaka Voluntary Action Center and Mr. Yamamoto from the Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition, what did you think about volunteering at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games as passive observers?

**Hayase:** After the Games was decided to be postponed, the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center held online workshops of Urban Volunteering University for Everyone, lectured by nine City Casts. That was a great effort that put volunteers’ positive energy into a specific project.

During the Games, volunteers put uniforms on empty seats to express their support. I noticed that volunteers showed their originality and ingenuity on many occasions. I believe the audiences and officials who saw their work grew attached to the Games, Tokyo, and Japan.

**Yamamoto:** What left a great impression on me was athletes from overseas sent out messages about those volunteers’ generous support using SNS. I intend to take over the knowledge obtained through the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games to establish structures that allow our volunteers to warmly welcome and support pavilion officials and visitors at the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

The Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan is not a sports event or an event involving disaster recovery. I also

intend to create a third form of volunteering, following fun volunteering and welfare volunteering, to deliver a new direction that fits the current times.

**Sawatari:** In the Tokyo 2020 Games, I reflect on the bitter experience of the intense pressure of self-restraint due to the COVID, which discouraged volunteers from doing their work as they intended. Volunteers are supposed to make full use of their capabilities when society is not functioning. In the United Kingdom, even volunteers administered vaccinations. I think Japan will become an advanced country in volunteering in a real sense when we overcome this issue.

## Begin with aligning recognition among persons involved

—What should event hosts keep in mind for volunteering at large-scale events?

**Sawatari:** Volunteering at large-scale events is characterized by less strict requirements, which is easier for novices to participate. This also means that those who expect to have fun willingly, like one of the event’s guests, may participate. For this reason, event hosts need to educate and encourage participating volunteers to show their initiative.

In the Tokyo 2020 Games, I sometimes felt that understanding and knowledge about volunteering were insufficient in the Organising Committee in an early stage. Then, I asked veteran volunteers to talk about what they think about doing volunteer work and what experiences they feel are meaningful to the executive members of the Organising Committee

in person. With this process, **the recognition that volunteers are essential peers in building and running the Games was finally spread. I became fully aware of the importance of aligning the recognition of volunteering among event host members.**

**Yamamoto:** It is challenging to establish the shared common recognition in the organization that having volunteers demonstrating their initiative through volunteering work creates and leaves a legacy to the community, not regarding volunteers as just a workforce.

**Hayase:** The advantage of event volunteering is to enable preparation in advance, unlike those for disaster relief work. Volunteers have a chance to understand the purpose and significance of the event through training or other relevant occasions. Then, they will be aware that they create their work, showing their originality and ingenuity.

**It is also necessary to train someone to be a coordinator who ensures a place of psychological safety so that no one rejects unique ideas immediately when volunteers offer them.** In the Tokyo 2020 Games, there was variability in the quality of coordination among competition events or venues. It was slightly disappointing that this made a difference in initiatives among volunteers.

**Sawatari:** Although the Organising Committee staff understood volunteers well, it is doubtful that contractors who played an on-site coordination role on the game day had the same level of understanding. I humbly gave those contractors my advice on how to give directions to volunteers and how to treat them on the spot (with a bitter laugh). There are so many stakeholders in the Olympic and

Paralympic Games, such as the Organising Committee, local governments, contractors, sports associations, and IOC. Under these circumstances, there is always a challenge to take a cross-sectional approach toward many organizations to establish a shared recognition.

Give volunteers a leading role in urban planning

**—In the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, what volunteer programs are planned?**

**Yamamoto:** With the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games as a guide, we are currently discussing how we develop volunteer programs both in and outside the venue, in line with the theme of the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. I want to broadcast the way how the power of the residents is creating the Expo through volunteering to the world. Based on the premise that various types of people, including those with disabilities, participate in volunteering, we are developing programs with both tangible and intangible aspects.

I hope that residents' spontaneous activities will expand in the Osaka and Kasai area after the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai Japan as its legacy. I also intend to raise the social status of volunteers with this movement.

The concept of the Expo is People's Living Lab. We are also seeking a way of volunteering where volunteers do their work remotely by utilizing virtual reality and digital technologies. I think that the participation of volunteers from all around the world will be able to expand the scope of volunteering further.

**—Do you have any expectations or advice for the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan?**

**Sawatari:** In Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, its Legacy Plan did not include volunteering, which made initiatives for volunteering one step behind. The volunteer organization of the London 2012 Olympic Games still gets new members every year after the Games to continue their activities. Considering this case, **I suggest that the Expo be prepared while considering a volunteer legacy from its early phase.**

People with volunteer experience are essential players in solving social issues. Personal information protection poses significant limitations to accumulating and utilizing the data of those people. Not only for the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, but for future volunteer opportunities, a system that collectively manages registered information with volunteers' consent should be established to invite their participation when something happens in the future.

**Hayase:** A legacy that can be left through a limited-time, large-scale event is to bring back residents'

initiative to develop their community through their experience of building the event. We primarily ask service providers for even community activities, including cleaning, and passively consume their services as customers. I hope that the Expo becomes a place to provide learning and practice needed to restore such initiative, and the volunteers will take a central role in urban planning when they return to their community after the Expo.

**Unfortunately, Osaka continuously ranks at the bottom for the percentage of volunteering per population. With Mr. Yamamoto and his team, we commit ourselves to making the Expo act as a catalyst for the residents' social involvement to get out of the last place.**

**—While large-scale events have a positive aspect that expands fun volunteering, it has difficulty handing over the knowledge and challenges obtained through those events due to their temporariness. Pass the knowledge from the Tokyo 2020 Games to the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and then the knowledge from the Expo to other events. We hope that the volunteer culture will expand with this chain.**



**Noboru Hayase**  
Chairperson,  
Osaka Voluntary Action Center

Mr. Hayase started volunteering at 18 years of age and joined the center in 1978. He is also an operation member of the Japan Volunteer Coordinator Association and Vice President of the Japan Fundraising Association. He teaches at Doshisha University.



**Eiichi Yamamoto**  
Operations Department, Japan Association  
for the 2025 World Exposition

Mr. Yamamoto has temporarily been transferred from a private company that designs and produces events, including the Expo 2005 Aichi Japan, to plan and operate volunteering at the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.



**Kazuto Sawatari**  
Chief of the Secretariat,  
the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center

Mr. Sawatari had considerable volunteering experience, including disaster relief work. In the Tokyo 2020 Games, he implemented training and measures for volunteers in cooperation with the Organising Committee, as well as various surveys on volunteers.

Moderator: Akie Nakamura Visiting Researcher, Recruit Works Institute  
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# A Volunteer Culture Is Not Just There; It Is Something to Be Created

## Fostering a Volunteer Culture

### Spread of volunteering through the Tokyo 2020 Games

In this chapter, we discuss fostering a volunteer culture through volunteering at large-scale events in Japan. Before entering into the discussion, we recap the key points discussed here.

In Chapter 1, we raised the question of whether the penetration of volunteering could be perceived as a legacy of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Norihiro Nihei, a professor at the University of Tokyo, pointed out an icy climate for volunteering in Japan, which requires an excuse to do volunteer work. To spread volunteering in Japan, we have to begin with facing the irresponsible attitude toward volunteering that is lurking in society.

In Chapter 2, we looked back on the overview of volunteering at the Tokyo 2020 Games. In the Tokyo 2020 Games, while volunteering was limited due to COVID-19 infections, there were new challenges: volunteer participation of people with disabilities and volunteer involvement in all processes of the measures for volunteering taken by the Organising Committee. Some local governments developed their volunteer platform.

The signs of growing legacies that will remain after the Games can be observed.

In Chapter 3, we focused on corporate employees, which have the lowest rate of volunteering experience. We found that “trust in diversity,” “job crafting,” and “future volunteer intention” increased after the Tokyo 2020 Games in those corporate employees who experienced cooperative volunteering at the Games. Some sponsor companies strategically supported the volunteer participation of their employees.

**Overall, volunteering at the Tokyo 2020 Games, which came under criticism sometimes, created various positive changes indeed.**

### Four reasons why those changes are positive

**Legacies of the Olympic and Paralympic Games are changes, particularly benefit that last long after the Games.<sup>1</sup> There are four primary reasons why the advancement of volunteering is desirable.**

Firstly, while 60% of people are interested in volunteering, only slightly over 20% have volunteering experience (Figures 1-3 and 1-4). As many as 40% of those who show their interest in volunteering cannot or do not volunteer for some reason.

Secondly, volunteering can enrich individuals’ lives. For example, volunteering can provide 4 Ls (Love, Learning, Labor, and Leisure) that bring meaning to your life and a human relationship that “allows you to be who you are under a common goal” (Figure 1-2).

Thirdly, in recent years, companies have been increasingly looking for people with high sensitivity to our society due to SDGs and business innovation (Figure 3-1). The number of companies that value boundary-crossing learning of their employees has also been rising. Volunteering is a perfect opportunity for such boundary-crossing learning.

Fourthly, supporting each other is expected to be spread out as our population is declining and our social issues are becoming complex. For example, healthy individuals involve with those with disabilities by volunteering in parasports. This advances living in harmony together, which is a desirable change.

### A volunteer culture will not last without maintenance

Even though the spread of volunteering is a desirable change in society, there may still be some opinions that volunteering, which is an individual

spontaneous act, should be left to those volunteers with no need of discussion by others, or even measures for volunteering should not be taken. However, such an attitude does not work to expand a volunteer culture.

A trigger that expanded social awareness of volunteering in Japan was the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, where approximately 1.38 million volunteers worked. Subsequently, 1995 was referred to as the first year of volunteering. However, the 2016 survey showed that Osaka ranks at the bottom of the prefectures on volunteer rate (Table 4-1).

**In short, even though interest in volunteering and such actions temporarily increase, such momentum does not always last.**

This is the case in traditional performing arts and crafts. It is not uncommon that even those with brilliant expertise and techniques become obsolete. In the fields that are inherited for an extended period, those involved nurture successors and widely create opportunities for showing their performing arts or crafts to deliver information. Those accumulated efforts make it a culture.

As is the case with volunteering, in order to turn new signs created in the Tokyo 2020 Games into long-term volunteer legacies, it is essential to cultivate those signs in society.

Table 4-1 Ranking of Volunteer Rates by Prefecture

Rank	Prefecture name	Volunteer rate (%)	Rank	Prefecture name	Volunteer rate (%)	Rank	Prefecture name	Volunteer rate (%)	Rank	Prefecture name	Volunteer rate (%)
1	Shiga	33.9	13	Okayama	30.8	25	Nagasaki	27.7	37	Okinawa	25.1
2	Gifu	33.4	14	Iwate	30.2	26	Ehime	27.5	38	Aichi	24.6
3	Shimane	33.1	15	Oita	29.8	27	Akita	27.2	38	Kyoto	24.6
4	Kumamoto	32.7	16	Yamanashi	29.7	28	Nara	26.8	40	Niigata	24.5
5	Saga	32.6	17	Shizuoka	29.4	29	Miyagi	26.7	41	Saitama	24.2
5	Kagoshima	32.6	18	Miyazaki	29.1	30	Ibaraki	26.2	41	Wakayama	24.2
7	Toyama	32.4	19	Mie	29.0	30	Tochigi	26.2	43	Hokkaido	22.6
8	Nagano	32.3	20	Gunma	28.3	30	Tokushima	26.2	43	Kochi	22.6
9	Fukui	32.2	21	Kagawa	28.2	33	Hyogo	26.0	45	Aomori	22.4
9	Tottori	32.2	22	Fukushima	28.1	34	Hiroshima	25.6	46	Tokyo	21.6
11	Yamagata	32.1	22	Fukuoka	28.1	35	Kanagawa	25.5	47	Osaka	20.6
12	Ishikawa	31.6	24	Yamaguchi	27.8	36	Chiba	25.2			

\* The percentage of people who did volunteer work in the past 1 year (aged 10 or older)  
Source: Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications “2016 Survey on Time Use and Leisure Activities”

<sup>1</sup> Scheu, Anja, Holger Preuß, and Thomas Könecke. “The Legacy of the Olympic Games: A Review.” *Journal of Global Sport Management* 6.3 (2021): 212-233.

### Cultivate signs created at the Tokyo 2020 Games at the social level

To cultivate signs of the volunteer culture created in the Tokyo 2020 Games at the social level, we must consider how volunteering should be implemented for large-scale commercial events and how changes generated through it should be handed down.

Volunteers have already obtained the position of a must-have function for large-scale events, such as the Rugby World Cup and the Tokyo Marathon. More large-scale events that recruit volunteers will come up, such as the Expo 2025 Kansai, Osaka, Japan.

In Japan, however, speaking of volunteering, it mostly recalls the work in more altruistic fields, such as welfare, disaster relief, and environmental conservation. A social consensus on how volunteering should be implemented for a large-scale event has not been established yet.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, volunteering at the Tokyo 2020 Games came under criticism as “blacklisted volunteering” or “motivation exploitation by mobilization” because many people feel uncomfortable or awkward that the unpaid work performed with good intentions by individuals is used to the advantage of highly commercial events.

For volunteering in more altruistic fields such as welfare, many people have been concerned that governments' services are imputed to unpaid acts performed with good intentions by individuals. In large-scale events with parties making their profits, the need for recruiting volunteers and its social meaning are questioned more than those in traditional altruistic volunteering.

## Event Volunteering

### Event volunteering widens its scope and livens up events

Should paid workforce be used in large-scale commercial events, not unpaid volunteering? To start with the conclusion, it is too early to judge like this for both individuals and society.

In the event volunteering like the Tokyo 2020 Games, unlike highly altruistic volunteering, there are so many volunteer participants who expect their self-contentment, such as “because the experience will become unforgettable memory,” “because I want to participate in the festival,” or “because I love the activity (e.g., the sport to support).”

More than 20% of the volunteers at the Tokyo 2020 Games had no volunteering experience. When the range of volunteering work broadens from highly altruistic work to highly egocentric work, the work options will be increased for individuals, resulting in a widened scope of volunteering.

Moreover, interviews of the Organising Committee and volunteer participants suggested that volunteers at the Tokyo 2020 Games were not just a workforce but played a role in developing and livening up the event together.

Volunteers do not work silently like a machine but provide their best services and solve problems as a team, using their originality and ingenuity as they see fit. This attitude of volunteers is the only thing to liven up events warmly. Volunteers with event uniforms coming and going in the town also vitalize inside the venues as well as the streets.

Even for individual volunteers, participating in such a big story that makes a large-scale event successful

and a sense of unity with peers bring an uplifting feeling that they do not have in their daily life.

### Points at issues for volunteering at commercial events

As discussed earlier, volunteering at large-scale events is a positive activity for participants, event hosts, and host areas. Therefore, it is more constructive to advance large-scale event volunteering into a sound form rather than entirely deny such volunteering.

There are two points when discussing volunteering at large-scale commercial events. One is about the boundaries of roles between paid work and unpaid volunteer work, and the other one is about how the burden of the costs and rewards associated with volunteering should be treated.

In commercial events, personnel costs can be saved by replacing paid work with unpaid volunteer work, boosting profits. For this reason, the higher the commercial aspect of such an event is, the more the general public becomes sensitive to this aspect. On the other hand, appealing and popular events attract many applicants even if the work does not offer any monetary reward. For applicant volunteers, compensation for services is not only a monetary reward but also an opportunity to participate in a rare event.

This issue involving money essentially comes down to the initiative required in their work. In paid work, workers generally follow the directions and orders of their supervisors and receive a reward (wage) as compensation for services. In contrast, volunteers' own spontaneous decisions and actions are respected in their work, while they are not

offered a monetary reward. In other words, paid workers have no power for self-determination and receive a monetary reward as compensation for such passive work.

In event volunteering, however, there are event hosts who systemically prepare their events. The descriptions of volunteer work are set to some extent beforehand. Because volunteers are only allowed to show their initiative within the range that the disciplines of the event are ensured, the complementary relationship between gratuitousness and spontaneity in volunteering is not just maintained.

### Monetary rewards and non-monetary rewards

However, surprisingly, the survey of corporate employees who volunteered at the Tokyo 2020 Games showed that only 12.6% answered, “With this content, I thought it should have been paid work” (Figure 3-4). This result is nothing else that many volunteers at the Tokyo 2020 Games found non-monetary value in their work.

Although income increase raises the happiness of people with low incomes, it does not do so in people with incomes at a certain level.<sup>2</sup> A study showed that the difference in happiness between those who donated and those who did not was the same as the difference in happiness when their incomes doubled.<sup>3</sup> In short, it is inappropriate to discuss the rights and wrongs of volunteering only from the viewpoint of monetary rewards.

In welfare and disaster relief volunteering, volunteers can feel that they are helping others, or the work in itself brings a sense of personal contentment. Unlike those facts, in the Tokyo 2020 Games, there were many materialistic requests such

<sup>2</sup> Jebb, A. T., Tay, L., Diener, E., & Oishi, S. (2018) Happiness, income satiation and turning points around the world. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 2(1), 33-38.

<sup>3</sup> Dunn, E. W., Aknin, L. B., & Norton, M. I. (2008) Spending money on others promotes happiness. *Science*, 319(5870), 1687-1688.

as “I want memorial items,” “I want extra uniforms,” and “I just want to be there.”

Non-monetary rewards for volunteers are different between welfare and disaster relief volunteering and event volunteering.

**Work descriptions and travel expenses Boundaries between paid work and unpaid work**

For this reason, commercial event volunteering requires much more consideration of the boundaries between paid work and unpaid work and the balance between monetary rewards and non-monetary rewards than volunteering in welfare services and disaster relief.

Table 4-2 shows the descriptions and characteristics of volunteer work. First, **in terms of the boundaries between paid work and unpaid volunteer work, it is possible to fix the boundaries as follows: jobs that allow participants to create fun memories or show initiative are set as volunteer work, and jobs that are strictly specified or require a big responsibility or burden are set as paid work.**

For example, in the Tokyo 2020 Games, although there were many applicants as venue guides who attended domestic and international tourists, there were not many applicants as courtesy drivers for the Games officials. Courtesy drivers have the lives of those people in their hands, which bears a heavy responsibility. This was one of the reasons why this happened.

Conversely, this is relatively unknown that jobs near security gates were separated into paid and unpaid work: jobs outside under the hot sun were for paid workers, and guiding jobs inside the venue were for volunteers.

As there are enormous jobs, substantial efforts and decisions are required to separate unpaid volunteer

work and paid work. Event hosts should show their direction early and sort it out specifically.

**Consideration to young people who drive the subsequent culture**

Even if volunteer work is not associated with salary, **event hosts should cover travel expenses to commute to a venue and meals in highly commercial events that recruit many young people, at least.**

In the events for future urban planning and fostering culture, it is essential to share experiences with the young generation to make events successful. A survey showed that volunteer intention increased after volunteer experience in young people more than in middle-aged and older people.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it is meaningful to establish a friendly environment for young people to participate in volunteering when they want to do so.

In the Tokyo 2020 Games, 1000 yen was paid per day to each volunteer as compensation for travel expenses. The percentage of people who answered that the amount was “inappropriate” or “somewhat inappropriate” remained at 26.9% for those in their 50s, as compared with 50.6% for those in their 20s (Figure 4-3).<sup>5</sup> In those with higher incomes, their happiness is not raised by income increase. However, those with lower incomes, such as students and young people, need compensation for travel expenses to commute to and from a distant venue and meals (with a decent volume that suits their physical capacity).

It is difficult for event hosts to respond to a significant number of volunteers individually based on their circumstances. Event hosts, therefore, need to re-consider how expenses necessary for volunteering should be compensated in future large-

Table 4-2 Characteristics of Volunteering

		Volunteer work descriptions		
		Continuous support for people in need	Emergency disaster relief	Limited-time, large-scale event
Social ties and public nature	Support target	People in need	Disaster victims	Event hosts (spectators and participants beyond event hosts)
	Financial capability of the support target	No	No	Yes
	Governmental involvement and responsibility	High	High (however, governmental offices may also be victims)	It depends on the event's position (i.e., co-hosting with local governments or independent hosting by an event host)
	Sense of unity with peers and those receiving services	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Presence of a story	Yes (help people in need/ deal with social issues)	Yes (help people in need/ overcome emergency situations)	Yes (support the success of the event/ become a person involved)
Spontaneity and initiative	Motivation to participate in volunteering	Want to help people in need/ want to do something about the issue	Want to help people in need/ want to do something one can do	Want to get involved in the event/ want to make fun memories
	Self-determination required for work	Moderate (services are decided with volunteering peers as the situation of support target demands)	High (flexible self-determination and teamwork are required as the situation of on-site demands)	Low (event hosts decide on the descriptions to some extent + there is room to show originality and ingenuity)
	Self-responsibility for safety	There are mental burdens and fewer physical risks	There are physical and mental risks such as injury and secondary disaster	Event hosts formulate a plan for making activities as safe as possible
Gratuitousness	Monetary rewards	No (it may be paid)	No	No
	Payment of costs i.e. travel expenses	Volunteers' own expense (it may be paid)	Volunteers' own expense	Event hosts compensate certain amounts
	Non-monetary rewards	Psychological contentment/ connection with people	Psychological contentment/ connection with people	Psychological contentment/ connection with people/ uniforms and goods/ participation in a highly rare event
	Boundaries with paid staff	It is desirable to draw the line, but roles may overlap in some sites and activities.	Heavy machinery is usually operated by paid staff, but the line sharing roles can be blurred when a workforce is short.	Positions allowing participants to enjoy themselves and show initiative are performed by volunteers. Positions with high responsibility and burden that do not allow participants to show initiative are performed by paid staff.

4 the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center (2022) "Post-Games Survey on Sponsor Employee Volunteers at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games"

5 the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center (2021) "Post-Games Survey on Field Cast and City Cast at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games"

scale events. Needless to say, event hosts should take measures to ensure the safety of event volunteers, including the purchase of insurance relating to volunteer participation and the prevention of heat stroke.

**Event hosts and volunteers build an event together**

Volunteering becomes a brilliant activity precisely because volunteer participants are allowed to demonstrate initiative based on their intention. Therefore, **event hosts must have a stance that makes the event successful with volunteers, not that uses volunteers conveniently.** To achieve this, it is essential to tell volunteers about the expectation for building the event together and establish such opportunities. In the Tokyo 2020 Games, e-learning programs for volunteer participants were well enriched. Training

programs on leadership, understanding and support for people with disabilities, and English communication notably received positive feedback. These programs were provided to work together with various types of members when volunteers actually started working at their job site to make the Games successful. This type of learning is another non-monetary reward for volunteers. The perception of using volunteers for cost savings will never generate such an idea that enriches volunteer training programs. To have volunteers as peers to make the event successful together, it is essential to tell volunteers about the philosophy and goals of the event with the knowledge and skills required to achieve them. In the Tokyo 2020 Games, volunteers got involved in every process, including deciding the names of volunteers, screening, and implementing pre-Games events. Building an event with volunteers in this way amplifies volunteers' enthusiasm and energy.

**Sociality that represents diversity**

**What is the social significance of recruiting volunteers?**

Social objectives to host large-scale events vary. The narrow sense of objective of the Olympic and Paralympic Games is to promote sports. That of the World Exposition is to demonstrate progress in technologies and commercial goods. The reason for recruiting volunteers at large-scale events is not always linked to the social significance of the entire event, which is a factor that invites criticism. Taking an example, if the Tokyo 2020 Games had a mission to expand sports volunteering and invited Pro Bono<sup>6</sup> of sports associations and local sports volunteers to liven up the event together, in addition to volunteers directly involved in the Games, understanding and empathy of volunteering at the Olympic and Paralympic Games could have been more raised. The reason for building an event with unpaid volunteers together should be thus verbalized when volunteers are recruited for large-scale commercial events. One of the candidates to be of social significance in many event volunteer opportunities is to promote Diversity & Inclusion to change a society where everybody plays an active role.

**Various individuals can stay who they are Everyone can participate**

Diversity & Inclusion in Japanese society is very behind. This is obvious from a series of resignation fuss in the Organising Committee that happened

before the opening of the Tokyo 2020 Games. Of 70,970 Field Casts at the Tokyo 2020 Games, four volunteers were registered as non-binary, which was 0.006% of the volunteers (Table 2-1). As compared with the survey results that 1 of every 11 persons is LGBTQ+,<sup>7</sup> it is tough for sexual minorities to participate in volunteering while staying who they are. In the Tokyo 2020 Games, people with disabilities also participated as volunteers. In the Beijing 2022 Winter Games, over 1 million people applied for the positions of volunteers, which were 27,000 for the Olympic Games and 12,000 for the Paralympic Games. Of those, the number of people with disabilities was as many as 30,000.<sup>8</sup> In Japan, living in harmony with people with disabilities is still on a learning curve. However, it is seen that “trust in diversity” and “understanding of social issues and awareness of coexistence” were raised after volunteering experience in the Tokyo 2020 Games (Figures 3-7 and 3-8). Through volunteering, interacting with others with different positions or values broadens their horizons and human relationships (Figure 2-2). Participation of individuals with different values and lifestyles enhances the inclusion of an event, leading to much more empathy. The diversity of human resources also provides volunteer participants with the experience of cooperation with others they do not usually interact with, enabling them to obtain new awareness, learn something, and meet new people. Above all, promoting Diversity & Inclusion in large-scale events that attract public attention is expected to yield a high ripple effect. **To aim for a society in which respect is given to all members, large-scale events should be a place where**

Figure 4-3 Appropriateness of Compensation of Travel Expense (1000 yen per day)



6 Pro Bono is volunteer work utilizing professional skills and expert knowledge for social and public purposes. Pro Bono comes from the Latin phrase "Pro Bono Publico," which means "for the public good."  
 7 Dentsu (2020) "2020 LGBTQ+ Survey"  
 8 Vokatsu! (2022) "Talk about Volunteering at the Olympic and Paralympic Games 'Connect Tokyo 2020 and Beijing 2022—Online Exchange Program with China Youth Public Exchange Group'" <https://vokatsu.jp/journal/1644977927274x541665342735777800>

diverse human resources can be active regardless of gender, nationality, and with or without disabilities.

### Event hosts, supervisors, and managers Align the stance of persons involved

In large-scale events, it is essential to emphasize volunteers' diversity and align the way of various persons involved in working with volunteers at the host end.

Natsuki Den from the Organising Committee said that she had asked staff at the call center receiving inquiries from volunteers to speak to them as if they are in a relationship of equals. Meanwhile, Noboru Hayase from the Osaka Voluntary Action Center and Kazuto Sawatari from the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center pointed out that the management of volunteers varied among job sites in the Tokyo 2020 Games as a challenge.

As mentioned before, because some event hosts, on-site supervisors, and managers intend to use volunteers to their advantage, event hosts need to align the awareness among all persons involved by penetrating a recognition that volunteers are peers to make the event successful together and require those persons to communicate with volunteers based on the recognition.

Coordination among persons involved is also crucial to have many volunteers display excellent performance. Fortunately, the preparation period for large-scale events is extended, allowing event hosts to fully consider and promote the coordination among volunteers and persons involved.

### Festive events during a crisis Ambiguity of volunteering

The Tokyo 2020 Games, a worldwide sports festival, generated fun volunteering. However, at the same time, the volunteering was during the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, which tested the determination and preparedness of each of the volunteers.

As a result, should we summarize this event that it was disappointing that volunteers could not sufficiently do their jobs due to COVID and that we felt sorry for volunteers because COVID placed an extra strain on them?

In volunteering, volunteers often find something different from what they expected, both positively and negatively, when they get to their job site. How they deal with such surprises is also a real thrill in volunteering.

Likewise, in the Tokyo 2020 Games, some volunteers were dissatisfied because they could not do the volunteer work as they expected, and others tried everything they could and suggested their ideas at the job site, creating new roles. In an environment with significant constraints, the initiative of volunteers makes their experience different.

Mr. Sawatari from the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center said, "Volunteers are supposed to make full use of their capabilities when society is not functioning." Taro Edami, Director of the Fuji Welfare Foundation, apprenticed to Mother Teresa, said, "Volunteering has an aspect of warriors who fight against unjust discrimination." Mr. Sawatari and Mr. Edami, who both have extensive experience in altruistic volunteering, think that how volunteers face society is put to the

test in volunteering.

For this reason, there are two stories in the sociality of volunteering: one is given by people around volunteers, and volunteers themselves make the other one. The Tokyo 2020 Games was a rare occasion in which fun volunteering under untoward circumstances emerged simultaneously, which are supposed to be opposite in regular times. This resulted in an opportunity to seek ambiguous aspects of the sociality of volunteering.

### By utilizing technologies new volunteering emerged

To overcome constraints due to COVID-19, online events and volunteering were performed at the Tokyo 2020 Games. For example, City Casts saw athletes and event officials off at Narita Airport via their avatar robots and Zoom communication.

To further advance from this point, Eiichi Yamamoto from the Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition said, "We are also seeking a way of volunteering where volunteers do their work remotely by utilizing virtual reality and digital technologies because its concept is People' Living Lab. The participation of volunteers from all around the world will be able to expand the scope of volunteering further."

For volunteers, meeting new people and interacting with others are significant attractions of volunteering (Figure 2-2). If the interaction can be expanded using digital technologies, the volunteer work will attract more people.

The Tokyo 2020 Games led to the development of platforms to provide individuals with volunteer information one after another, such as the Tokyo Volunteer Legacy Network of the Tokyo

Metropolitan Government, Team Fujisawa 2020 of Fujisawa City, and Vokatsu! of the Nippon Foundation Volunteer Support Center. Some companies have strengthened the delivery of volunteer information to their employees.

"Information on Volunteering is insufficient" is the second position of the factors that interrupt volunteer participation.<sup>9</sup> The development of such platforms is one of the positive changes from the Tokyo 2020 Games. It is expected that information uploaded to those platforms and their users will increase.

## Volunteer Legacy

### How long will the impacts of the Tokyo 2020 Games last?

While looking back on the Tokyo 2020 Games, we discussed how volunteering should be implemented for at large-scale events. Lastly, we discuss how to transform new signs and momentum on volunteering generated through large-scale events into long-term changes as legacies.

As mentioned before, a legacy of the Olympic and Paralympic Games is a positive effect that lasts over 10 years after the Games. As we previously introduced, many positive changes and signs relating to volunteering have been seen after the Tokyo 2020 Games.

Some individuals have privately started new volunteer work or promoted volunteering after the Games. Other individuals keep their high passion to hold workshops while wearing volunteer uniforms for the Tokyo 2020 Games, even after a half year after the end of the Games.

However, due to on-and-off COVID-19 semi-

<sup>9</sup> Cabinet Office "2019 Survey on Social Contribution of Citizens"

emergency measures still disallow volunteers to do face-to-face volunteering even after the Games like before. The reality is that even when the volunteer intention has risen, it is challenging to keep such heated momentum because places for volunteer work are still limited.

Naoki Hashi from NEC, which has supported other large-scale events, including the Rugby World Cup, said, “It cannot be denied that our volunteers could have had a much richer experience if there were spectators.” Norihiro Nihei from the University of Tokyo expressed his concern, “Because the sense of accomplishment at the Tokyo 2020 is weaker than it was at the Nagano Games, it makes it that much more difficult to leave a legacy.”

Therefore, **the momentum of volunteering generated at the Tokyo 2020 Games requires to be handed down much more intentionally than the Nagano 1998 Games and the London 2012 Games.**

### It takes time and effort to change the icy climate

Furthermore, a tendency to sneer at volunteering exists in Japan. While Japan’s first year of volunteering was 1995, when the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake occurred, Osaka currently ranks at the bottom of the prefectures on volunteer rate. It is not uncommon that people who are less willing to do volunteering make a biased evaluation of people who are actively willing to do volunteering.<sup>10</sup>

In short, it is not easy to promote volunteering in Japan. However, multi-layered mutual support is demanded more than before because social functions are deteriorating and social issues are becoming complex because of population decline.

In addition, volunteering enriches individuals’ lives. Now, it is time to change our society to enable us to do volunteering with no hesitation. **To stop people from giving icy stares or thoughts to volunteers and change our society to one that respects volunteering as a diverse lifestyle, it is essential that government bodies, companies, and individuals set a desired direction and sustain related efforts accordingly.**

Under the circumstances, large-scale events are a perfect opportunity for penetrating volunteering to raise awareness even for those who are less willing to volunteer and take long hours for preparation.

### Legacy plan for event volunteering

**Event hosts need to promote measures for volunteering with an emphasis on five things to leave a volunteer legacy through large-scale commercial events.**

The first requirement is to discuss a volunteering-related policy from the planning stage of a large-scale event to disseminate the policy widely.

In the Tokyo 2020 Games, the major theme of the legacy concept for the entire Games did not initially include volunteering.<sup>11</sup> The concept of volunteer legacy was shown for the first time in the “Volunteering Strategy for the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020,” jointly announced by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and the Organising Committee in December 2016. In Japan, where an icy climate for volunteering exists even though an intangible legacy is essential in such a mature society, the measures to penetrate volunteering should be strategic.

The second requirement is to have event hosts and

operators communicate with volunteers as peers working together to make an event successful. Because some people still regard volunteers as a convenient workforce to save personnel costs, all those who actually work with volunteers, not only part of event hosts, need to be aware of this stance to reflect in how they speak to volunteers and how they ask volunteers for tasks.

The third requirement is to draw accountable lines relating to paid work and costs covered by event hosts in a commercial event. Volunteers do not exist for event hosts to make their profits. Volunteers are to liven up events and connect visitors to the event areas and their residents. Therefore, the distinction in roles between paid staff and volunteers and the cost bearing for traveling expenses and meals should require good reasons for many people.

The fourth requirement is to clarify the social significance of creating an event with volunteers, particularly in a highly commercial event. In the Tokyo 2020 Games, the Olympic Games was strongly criticized, while the Paralympic Games

attracted empathy. This happened because the social significance of the Paralympic Games was more precise.

A staff member from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government said, “We aim to develop a symbiosis society, but the reality is that there are not so many opportunities to interact with people with disabilities. For this reason, we think that it is an important step where many people can watch how people with disabilities deliver great performance through parasports. However, we really hope that many people get actually involved, rather than just watching. Because such an involvement deepens the understanding of people with disabilities. We wanted to set as many roles that interact with people with disabilities as possible for volunteers at the Paralympic Games.”

Event volunteers act as a bridge between a large-scale event and residents’ daily lives. Event hosts need to verbalize what social significance is intended to be actualized by co-creation with volunteers.

## 5 Requirements to Leave a Volunteer Legacy

- Requirement 1 **Discuss a volunteering-related policy from the planning stage of a large-scale event to disseminate the policy widely**
- Requirement 2 **Event hosts and operators communicate with volunteers as peers working together to make an event successful**
- Requirement 3 **Draw accountable lines relating to paid work and costs covered by event hosts in a commercial event**
- Requirement 4 **Clarify the social significance of creating an event with volunteers, particularly in a highly commercial event**
- Requirement 5 **Start preparing how to hand down volunteering-related systems and know-hows after the event, during the event period**

<sup>10</sup> Akie Nakamura (2021) “Creating Volunteer-Friendly Workplaces” “CSR White Paper 2020” the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research

<sup>11</sup> The Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (2021) “TOKYO 2020 ACTION & LEGACY REPORT”

The fifth requirement is to start preparing how to hand down volunteering-related systems and know-hows after the event, during the event period. A large-scale event is promoted extensively and picks up steam. However, such an event is held for a limited period, and its hosts eventually dissolve. On the other hand, it is vital to penetrate volunteering continuously.

For this reason, to expand a volunteer culture, the way to keep volunteering-related know-hows and systems fostered through a large-scale event should be considered. In the Tokyo 2020 Games, placing Tokyo at the top of the list, some local governments that hosted competitions took the position to receive such a system and know-how.

Measures for volunteering in the Tokyo 2020 Games were designed by referring to those in large-scale events, including the 2019 Rugby World Cup. As mentioned in the early conversation, the Expo 2025 Kansai, Osaka, Japan, will follow the measures taken in the Tokyo 2020 Games and advance them further.

Local governments take over the measures for volunteering in large-scale events as part of civic life, and the measures themselves are handed down to subsequent large-scale events.

Event hosts should start discussing who will be successors and how the knowledge and systems will be handed down after the Games early and work in cooperation with the successors to prepare for establishing a volunteer legacy. That enables the host events to transfer that knowledge and systems smoothly and allows the successors to advance them further.

### Local governments as successors should make volunteering attractive

Enhancing the attraction of volunteering is also critical for local governments to receive volunteer-related knowledge and systems and utilize the momentum warmed up at an event.

It had been hard to obtain information on volunteering before. However, access to such information is increasingly readily available because volunteering platforms have improved, and the information exchange in the SNS community becomes active.

It is expected that volunteer work advertised will become more attractive in the future. Specifically, volunteer opportunities with “working in cooperation with diverse people” and “facilitating self-reflection,” suggested in Chapter 3, should be increased.

For example, many sports associations, particularly parasports associations, lack the know-how and resources for their operations. If those sports associations recruit Pro Bono staff, someone who increased awareness of volunteering by the Tokyo 2020 Games may offer support. Some people may want to get involved in the planning or operation of measures for volunteering in the local governments as volunteers. Traditionally, volunteering primarily used to be charitable work, such as helping people in need, and whether volunteer work is attractive for volunteers has not been considered. However, **it is essential to increase volunteer opportunities that attract participants from the viewpoint of widening the scope of volunteering and fostering a volunteer culture.**

### Expectations toward companies as drivers for innovative changes

It is vital to increase the participation of corporate employees in volunteering to expand a volunteer culture in the future. Because there is a reality that corporate employees have the least access to volunteering, while companies are increasingly looking for people with high sensitivity to our society.

Corporate employees have the least access to volunteering because of time constraints as well as their workplace’s attitude that makes it hard to obtain understanding and empathy for volunteering; this is the epitome of icy stares in society.

However, with the expansion of ESG investments and SDGs, companies are now severely asked how they face social issues. Companies are in a position capable of sending persuasive answers about how they will deal with them through corporate messages or specific personnel strategies.

Companies are expected not only to attain employees’ hope of doing volunteer work and to satisfy corporate needs to increase the number of employees with high sensitivity to our society but also **to demonstrate an attitude that proactively encourages their employees to do volunteer work in order to break through the closed climate toward volunteering in Japanese society.**

### Toward society where volunteering is nothing special Keep connecting thoughts

Volunteering is an activity that enriches individual lives and mutual support in the local community. No excuses are needed to do volunteer work.

Sneering at volunteering is already outdated in a society with diverse lifestyles and complex social issues.

Volunteers at large-scale events are those who connect ordinary civic life and extraordinary festival. Through volunteering, amplified energy by working with others they do not usually interact with and experiencing cooperation with different types of people drives those volunteers to the subsequent volunteering.

Furthermore, volunteers at large-scale events leave legacies to local governments and hand over knowledge and systems to the subsequent large-scale events.

Thus, **various thoughts for volunteering generated from one single event will connect to people, the community, and the future.** The thought of every single volunteer is respected. When such a value and the diversity of acts are accepted, our matured society becomes eventually enriched.



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Japan is a country where volunteering

is sneered at and not expanded.

Volunteerism enriches individuals' lives and

acts as a trigger for a new step. Local governments  
are improving their volunteering-related environment.

Whether or not a sign of volunteer legacy generated

at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games

takes root is up to our future actions.

From the Tokyo 2020 Games to the future,

in such a way to relay a baton,

the Japanese volunteer culture will flourish.

## Works Report 2022

### The Volunteer Legacy of the Olympic and Paralympic Games

—A baton from the Tokyo 2020 Games to the Future—

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