



May 29, 2026

Invitation to the 20th World Conference of Historical Cities in Himeji, Japan

Dear Mayors of the League of Historical Cities,

It is with great pride and joy that we will welcome you all to Himeji this November 2026, as the City of Himeji has the distinguished honor of hosting the 20th World Conference of Historical Cities and welcoming participants from around the world.

Himeji joined the League of Historical Cities in 2021. In 2024, the city attended the 19th conference in person in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Under the theme “Creating a Vibrant Walkable City Centre through Sustainable Urban Mobility,” it had the valuable opportunity to learn from the diverse policies of the participating cities.

Himeji is a city rich in history and culture, epitomized by Himeji Castle, a structure that has stood for over four centuries and was the first site in Japan to be registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city also boasts a wealth of regional treasures passed down through generations, including cultural properties, festivals, traditional crafts, and local industries.

The experience of the 1995 Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake has driven Himeji City to commit to building a resilient city that safeguards the lives of its citizens and ensures these invaluable resources are preserved for future generations.

The 20th Conference will bring together historic cities from around the world under the theme “Preservation and Utilization of Cultural Heritage for a Sustainable and Resilient Future” where they can share insights and experiences on passing cultural heritage to the next generation, aiming to achieve Target 4 of SDG 11. It is our sincere hope that this experience will raise awareness of the importance of protecting cultural heritage and inspire participants to channel this awareness into efforts to create safer and more secure communities.

The World Conference of Historical Cities serves as a vital platform for historic cities to share their experiences and achievements in addressing the challenges they face. We would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you and look forward to seeing many of you in Himeji this November.

Yours Sincerely,

清元秀泰

KIYOMOTO Hideyasu
Mayor of Himeji

松井孝治

MATSUI Koji
Chairperson of the LHC, Mayor of Kyoto



HIMEJI, JAPAN
20th World Conference
of Historical Cities 2026

20th World Conference of Historical Cities

November 10-12, 2026

Theme Preservation and Utilization of Cultural Heritage
for a Sustainable and Resilient Future

Venue Arcrea HIMEJI (Himeji City, Japan)



20th World Conference of Historical Cities

Date: November 10 (Tue) - 12 (Thu), 2026
Venue: Arcrea HIMEJI (Himeji Culture and Convention Center)
143-2, Kamiyacho, Himeji-city, Hyogo, Japan <https://www.himeji-ccc.jp/en/>

Main Theme

Registration Required

Preservation and Utilization of Cultural Heritage for a Sustainable and Resilient Future

The 20th World Conference of Historical Cities will focus on the following Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) and Target:

SDG 11

Sustainable cities and communities

Target 4

Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

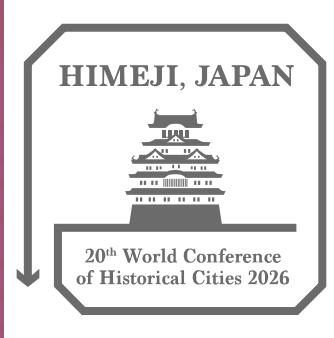
SDG 11 aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The cultural heritage mentioned in Target 4 refers to areas and structures that have cultural and historical significance. By preserving these heritage sites and sharing their value across countries and regions, we can learn the importance of understanding and respecting diverse cultures and histories. However, due to changes in the natural environment and social conditions, cultural heritage is exposed to various threats, including natural disasters, environmental issues, and man-made hazards.

The 20th Conference will bring together historical cities to share knowledge and experiences regarding initiatives to

appropriately protect and utilize cultural heritage exposed to these threats, with the aim of raising awareness of cultural heritage preservation and reaffirming the importance of a safe and secure society that promotes well-being.

About the logo

The counterclockwise spiral is inspired by the “spiral-shaped layout” of Himeji Castle. This represents the distinctive feature of Himeji Castle, with moats arranged in a counterclockwise direction around the castle complex with the main keep being in the middle. This highly defensive structure symbolizes “resilience.” Through the 20th Conference, we hope to connect the resilience of cities around the world to the future, thereby creating a safe and secure society for all people.



<Contact>

Organizer : Himeji City Tourism and Convention Division
E-Mail : convention@city.himeji.lg.jp

The official conference website will be launched in May and will be posted at the link below.
<https://www.lhc-s.org/conference/> (You can also access the conference by scanning the QR code at the top of the cover of this flyer.)

Please check the website for details about the conference and excursions.



Conference Registration (for member and non-member cities worldwide)

Please carefully review the information provided in the Conference Registration Fee List section below before registering. Registration is scheduled to begin in June. Please register via the official conference website, which will be launched in May. The deadline for registration is **Wednesday, September 30th**, but registration will close once capacity is reached.

Notes

*You can register for only one of the excursions listed below: No. 2, 3, or 4.

*To register for excursion No. 2, 3, or 4, you need to register for No. 1: Conference.

Conference Registration Fee List

No.	Category	Registration fee (per person)	Remarks
1	Conference Registration	80,000 yen (tax included)	<p>Capacity: 200 people</p> <p>Conference registration includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conference participation (November 10th to the morning of November 12th) ● Transportation from Kansai International Airport (KIX) to your hotel in Himeji on the 9th If you are arriving at Kansai International Airport on the 10th, please contact us separately. If you arrive after the 11th, we cannot arrange transportation. ● 3-nights' accommodation at a hotel in Himeji City (check-in: 9th, check-out: 12th) ● Meals during the event 10th: breakfast, lunch, dinner 11th: breakfast, lunch, dinner 12th: breakfast ● Site visit to Himeji Castle and Koko-en Garden <p>Excursions are not included. Please apply separately.</p> <p>Transportation from the excursion destination to Kansai International Airport is included in your excursion registration.</p> <p>If you are not participating in an excursion and need transportation to Kansai International Airport after the Closing Ceremony on the 12th, transportation from the conference venue (Arcrea HIMEJI) to Kansai International Airport is included in your conference registration. In that case, you will arrive at Kansai International Airport around 14:00 on the 12th. Please note that lunch on the 12th is not included.</p>
2	Excursion Registration (optional) Himeji City	Not required	<p>Capacity: 40 people</p> <p>Excursion registration in Himeji City includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participation in the excursion (afternoon of November 12th) ● Lunch on the 12th ● Transportation from Himeji to Kansai International Airport after the excursion (Arrival at Kansai International Airport is scheduled for around 18:00 on the 12th.) <p>Please note that dinner on the 12th is not included.</p> <p>Accommodation on the 12th is not included. If you would like to extend your stay at the hotel in Himeji City by one day (check-out on the 13th), please contact us separately. In this case, an extension fee will be charged.</p>

No.	Category	Registration fee (per person)	Remarks
3	Excursion Registration (optional) Kyoto City	40,000 yen (tax included)	<p>Capacity: 80 people</p> <p>Excursion registration in Kyoto City includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participation in the excursion (afternoon of November 12th to November 13th) ● Transportation from the conference venue (Arcrea HIMEJI) to Kyoto City ● Meals during the excursion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12th: lunch, dinner 13th: breakfast, lunch ● Accommodation on the 12th (check-out on the 13th) ● Transportation from Kyoto to Kansai International Airport after the excursion (Arrival at Kansai International Airport is scheduled for around 17:00 on the 13th.) <p>For the Kyoto excursion, a registration fee for municipalities in Japan will be set. The details will be announced on the official website.</p>
4	Nara City	40,000 yen (tax included)	<p>Capacity: 80 people</p> <p>Excursion registration in Nara City includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participation in the excursion (afternoon of November 12th to November 13th) ● Transportation from the conference venue (Arcrea HIMEJI) to Nara City ● Meals during the excursion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12th: lunch, dinner 13th: breakfast, lunch ● Accommodation on the 12th (check-out on the 13th) ● Transportation from Nara to Kansai International Airport after the excursion (Arrival at Kansai International Airport is scheduled for around 17:00 on the 13th.)

Conference Registration (for municipalities in Japan)

[Accommodation and transportation to/from the airport are not included]

The following special rate will be set for participating municipalities within Japan. Registration is scheduled to begin in June. Please register via the official conference website, which will be launched in May. The registration deadline is **Wednesday, September 30th**.

Category	Registration fee (per person)	Remarks
Registration for Japanese municipalities	10,000 yen (tax included)	<p>Registration for Japanese municipalities includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conference participation (November 10th to the morning of November 12th) ● Meals during the event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10th: lunch, dinner 11th: lunch, dinner ● Site visit to Himeji Castle and Koko-en Garden <p>Excursions are not included. Please apply separately.</p> <p>Accommodation and transportation to/from the airport are not included. If you would like us to arrange accommodation and/or transportation to/from the airport, please register through “Conference Registration (for member and non-member cities worldwide).”</p> <p>This registration is limited to municipalities in Japan.</p>

Call for Speakers!

(1) Roundtable: Co-creating a sustainable future for cultural heritage preservation

The roundtable will feature presentations and Q&A sessions on initiatives to protect cultural heritage from threats such as natural disasters, environmental issues, and man-made hazards, as well as case studies on the reconstruction and restoration of cultural heritage, providing an opportunity to think together about a sustainable future.

Examples of presentation themes

- The impact of global warming on cultural heritage and countermeasures
- Environmental destruction caused by overtourism and countermeasures
- Traditional techniques for protecting cultural heritage from natural disasters (earthquakes and typhoons)
- Building disaster-resistant communities and preserving cultural heritage
- Case studies of reconstruction of destroyed architectural heritage
- Introduction of digital technology in cultural heritage restoration

Number of speakers invited

7 cities (Speakers must be representatives of municipalities.)

Presentation format

PowerPoint presentation

Presentation time

10 minutes presentation, 5 minutes Q&A

Language

English (If necessary, an interpreter can be present. In this case, the presentation time will remain as stated above.)

Application procedure

- Applications will begin in June. (Applications will be accepted via the official conference website, which will be launched in May.)
 - Submit the speaker's name and presentation title by **Tuesday, June 30th**.
 - Submit presentation outline (500 words or less in English) by **Friday, July 31st**.
- *If the number of applicant cities exceeds the capacity, selection will be made based on the outline of the presentation content.
- *Details such as where to submit speaker's name, etc. and the equipment available for presentations will be announced on the official conference website.

(2) Mayors' Session: Building a virtuous cycle of cultural heritage preservation and utilization

At the Mayors' Session, participating cities will exchange views and seek solutions to issues and challenges in not only protecting cultural heritage but also utilizing it appropriately to create a virtuous cycle of preservation and utilization.

Issues to be discussed

To be announced as soon as they are determined.

Number of speakers invited

8 cities (Speakers must be representatives of municipalities.)

Presentation format

Panel discussion (Each speaker will give a presentation using one PowerPoint slide to share their views on the issues and initiatives undertaken in their city, followed by a panel discussion with a moderator.)

Language

English (If necessary, an interpreter can be present.)

Application procedure

- Applications will begin in June. (Applications will be accepted via the official conference website, which will be launched in May.)
 - Submit the speaker's name by **Friday, July 31st**.
 - Submit presentation outline (views on the issues; 200 words or less in English) by **Monday, August 31st**.
- *If the number of applicant cities exceeds the capacity, selection will be made based on the outline of the presentation content.
- *Details such as where to submit speaker's name, etc. and the equipment available for presentations will be announced on the official conference website.

Call for Youth Program Participants!

(1) Art Exhibition: My Town's Treasure

Participants in the art exhibition will be asked to draw a “treasure” in their town that they would like to pass on to the future. These “treasures” include tangible things such as historical buildings, as well as intangible things such as local scenery and traditional local events. Participants are asked to draw their cherished “treasures” with all their heart, expressing the unique charm of their town. Submitted works will be exhibited at the conference venue. We hope that through this exhibition, participants and visitors will reaffirm their feelings for their own town while also deepening exchanges with other towns.

Eligibility

Elementary school students (6 to 12 years old)

Painting size

A4 size (210 mm x 297 mm) paper

Application procedure

- Applications will begin in June. (Applications will be accepted via the official conference website, which will be launched in May.)
- Submit the title of the painting and the reason for painting it (in English) by **Wednesday, September 30th**.
- * Applications for the art exhibition should be compiled and registered by each city participating in the conference. There is no limit to the number of works submitted per city.
- * The title and reason for submission will be displayed as a caption alongside the work.
- * The paintings to be exhibited should be brought to Himeji by the cities participating in the conference. Details such as where to submit will be announced on the official conference website.

(2) English Speech Contest: My Town That I Want to Share with the World

In the speech contest, participants will be asked to communicate the charm of their hometown in English. Themes can be freely chosen, such as nature, culture, history, food, events, or connections among people within the community. Please express in English why you want to tell the world about your town, incorporating your own experiences and thoughts. We hope that this contest will provide an opportunity for participants and spectators to rediscover the charm of their own towns and that the diverse charms of various towns will be disseminated to the world.

Eligibility

Junior and senior high school students (12 to 18 years old)

Speech length

3-5 minutes in English

Application procedure

- Applications will begin in June. (Applications will be accepted via the official conference website, which will be launched in May.)
- Submit speech video (in English) by **Wednesday, September 30th**.
- * Applications for the speech contest should be compiled and registered by each city participating in the conference. There is no limit to the number of speeches submitted per city.
- * The organizer will conduct a review based on the submitted speech videos. Excellent speech videos will be played at the venue. Details such as how to submit will be announced on the official conference website.

Call for PR Booth Exhibitors! (without charge)

PR booths will be set up at the conference venue for participating cities to showcase their traditional crafts and distribute pamphlets. Exhibiting at the PR booth requires prior application. Details on how to apply and available equipment (desks and exhibition panels) will be announced on the official conference website.

The League of Historical Cities (Secretariat: Kyoto City, Japan) <https://www.lhc-s.org/>

The League of Historical Cities is the international organization of municipal governments established to strengthen the exchanges among historical cities to pursue the shared theme, “Preservation and Development of the Historical Cities.”

Program

Date	November 9 (Monday)	November 10 (Tuesday)	November 11 (Wednesday)	November 12 (Thursday)		November 12 (Thursday) – November 13 (Friday)		
Category	All attendees	All attendees	All attendees	Excursion non-participants	Excursion participants			
					Himeji City (Fishing Industry Tour)	Himeji City (Mt. Shosha Engyoji Temple Tour)	Kyoto City	Nara City
Morning	Arrival at Kansai International Airport (KIX)	9:30 - 10:00 Opening Ceremony	9:30 - 10:50 Round Table Part 2	November 12 9:00 - 10:30 General Assembly & Closing Ceremony				
		10:00 - 10:40 Keynote Speech	10:40 - 11:00 Coffee Break					
Afternoon	Transfer from airport to hotel in Himeji	11:00 - 12:00 Round Table Part 1	11:10 - 12:00 Youth Program	<u>November 12</u> from 10:30 • Transfer from Himeji to Kansai International Airport	<u>November 12</u> from 10:30 • Himeji City Tour (Fishing Industry Tour) • Transfer from Himeji to Kansai International Airport	<u>November 12</u> from 10:30 • Himeji City Tour (Mt. Shosha Engyoji Temple Tour) • Transfer from Himeji to Kansai International Airport	<u>November 12</u> from 10:30 • Transfer to Kyoto by bus • Kyoto City Tour • 1 Night in Kyoto	<u>November 12</u> from 10:30 • Transfer to Nara by bus • Nara City Tour • 1 Night in Nara
		12:00 - 13:30 Lunch	12:00 - 13:30 Lunch	14:00 (November 12) Arrival at Kansai International Airport	18:00 (November 12) Arrival at Kansai International Airport	18:00 (November 12) Arrival at Kansai International Airport	Stay in Kyoto	Stay in Nara
		13:30 - 17:30 Site Visit to Himeji Castle and Koko-en Garden	13:30 - 14:40 Experts' Session				<u>November 13</u> • Kyoto City Tour • Transfer from Kyoto to Kansai International Airport	<u>November 13</u> • Nara City Tour • Transfer from Nara to Kansai International Airport
		17:30 - 19:30 Welcome Reception @Himeji Castle	15:00 - 17:00 Mayors' Session				17:00 (November 13) Arrival at Kansai International Airport	17:00 (November 13) Arrival at Kansai International Airport

*The details of the conference may change depending on international circumstances and other factors.