

NEW DIRECTOR FOR THE JAPAN SOCIETY AND MERGER WITH JAPAN 21

The boards of The Japan Society and Japan 21 are pleased to announce the merger of the two charities, with Heidi Potter as the new director of the combined organization.

This is an exciting move for these two charities, which share a mission to enhance British - Japanese understanding and links between the two countries. The merger will enable the new organization to offer a broad range of programmes and services in a coherent and effective way. Japan 21's existing programmes, focussed on schools, young people and grassroots organizations, are complementary to those of The Japan Society, with its long history of business-related, academic, and cultural events. The Japan Society will absorb the activities of Japan 21 and the combined organization will be called The Japan Society.

Plans for the merger were set in train when Robert Guy, having reached the age of 60 and having run The Japan Society for 10 years, indicated his wish to retire. The Society has developed strongly over the last 10 years and we are most grateful for all that he has done. Robert retired on 30 September; we are delighted that he will continue to work for the Society as a consultant, working on development and events.

We are delighted also to announce the appointment of Heidi Potter as the new director of the combined organization as of 1 October. Heidi is one of the leading professionals in the field of UK-Japan cultural and educational exchange. After studying Japanese at SOAS she has spent her entire professional life in this field; she has run Japan 21 since its inception.

There will be opportunities for members of the Society who do not know Heidi to meet her at forthcoming events, especially the annual dinner on Monday 15 October.

We are confident that, under the leadership of Heidi, with the continuing support of Robert, and with the broadening of its activities in the educational and grassroots fields around the country, the Society is embarking on an important new stage in its history. We believe that this will be attractive to members, to donors, to volunteers and to schools and other partner organizations. The Society will be even better placed to fulfil its objective to be the leading body in the United Kingdom dedicated to the enhancement and celebration of UK-Japan commercial and cultural affairs.

1 October 2007