

2010 JAL Scholarship Program

Theme: Tourism and Cross-cultural Understanding

Tourism is not a new concept. The last century has seen large-scale movements of people across national borders as the tourism industry continues to expand and allow increasing accessibility to the remotest parts of the world. Today, it is regarded as an important revenue-churning tool for many modern economies. Beyond the dollars and cents though, how has tourism benefited or affected us? Has tourism brought the world closer together or was it our cross-cultural knowledge that boosted tourism? Is the age-old adage 'when in Rome, do as the Romans do' still relevant today? Has tourism promoted tolerance and encouraged interaction between cultures or has it reinforced stereotypes and accentuated differences? Tourism has often been considered an effective catalyst in fostering cross-cultural understanding. To what extent has it been effective and what challenges does it pose to us in the future? These are some of the critical issues that will be dealt with, as the theme of the 2010 JAL Scholarship Program brings our focus to the relationship between tourism and cross-cultural understanding.