

Curriculum Policy

Our policy on Curriculum Design

There is a need in Asia, to develop human potential creating individuals who can play a leading role in their region and the world in the future, based on wide perspectives and high professionalism with specialized knowledge, finding priority issues and possessing the motivation and capacity to think of solutions and take action for a better future.

In order to nurture such a professional human resources, the IATSSS Forum places an emphasis on a curriculum that helps obtain the following 5 capacities, providing a platform of “Thinking and Learning Together”.

Target Capacities

- Foundation of leadership and organizational management (CP1)
- Insight based on interdisciplinary approach (CP2)
- The ability to generate creative ideas for sustainable and peaceful development (CP3)
- Interpersonal and communication skills (CP4)
- Influential power and ability to execute ideas (CP5)

The IATSS Forum program is also divided into three key segments:

1. In the first segment, participants obtain a general overview of leadership and management as well as the necessary interpersonal skills to engage in meaningful dialogue, through lectures and workshops focusing on leadership.
2. In the second segment, participants obtain insight based on an interdisciplinary approach and interpersonal empathetic skills through various seminars and field study.
3. In the final segment, participants obtain the ability to generate creative ideas, influential power and the communication skills necessary to draw out the full potential of a team through group research and self-reflection.

General Overview of the Curriculum

The IATSS Forum curriculum has General Study components and Applied Study components. General Study components consist of “Lectures and Workshops”, as well as “Seminars”, Applied Study components consist of “Field Study” and “Group Study/Research”.

In the “Lectures and Workshops (6 days)”, participants are able to obtain the foundation of leadership and organizational management(CP1) and the necessary interpersonal skills to engage in meaningful dialogue(CP4) by sharing of the often intangible aspects of the forum through direct interaction with people and intellectual stimulation.

In the “Seminars (6 days)”, participants are able to obtain insight based on an interdisciplinary

approach(CP2) and communication skills (CP4) by conceptualizing the essence of the tacit knowledge in various specialized fields through profound discussions and dialog.

In the “Field Study (14 days)”, participants are able to obtain the ability to generate creative ideas for sustainable and peaceful development (CP3), and interpersonal and empathetic skills (CP4) through compiling concepts that are generated by each group at each site.

In the “Group Study/Research (7 days)”, participants are able to obtain influential power and executive ability(CP5) and communication skills necessary to draw out the full potential of a team(CP4) by making models combining shared concepts generated by various groups and creating feasible proposals with a clear vision that make a change for a better future working with a diverse group of people beyond the barriers of specialized fields, sectors and differences of positions.

Our Guiding Principles for Curriculum Design

- To acquire proactive and creative learning methods through various styles of learning including lectures, prior research, presentations, discussions and group research.
- To nurture leaders who have a flexible mindset and take a multilateral approach using knowledge in and outside of their own specialized fields, by demonstrating an understanding of the conflicting points of view relating to the differences of fields and stances that participants encounter throughout the program (lecture, site visit, presentations and discussions)
- To obtain ideas for countermeasures to the current issues that their countries are facing by selecting a topic that is in line with the current situation and the needs of targeted countries and introducing actual cases in Japan, Asia and the world.
- To gain awareness and absorb a deeper learning experience by providing site-visits and hands on experience to stimulate the senses.
- To generate awareness for fostering leadership by providing opportunities to expose participants to practitioners who play a leading role in various fields with their own philosophies, visions, and actions from the past to the present.
- To generate awareness for personal growth by providing diversity in specialized fields, countries, and occupations among participants and leading to profound interaction with their own self and with the diverse perspectives of others.
- To cultivate leadership capacity by repeating the cycle of participants’ understanding of their own leadership styles, setting goals, exercising them in a diversified environment, and reflecting on this as well as taking in the perspectives of others.
- To practice delivering clear messages for a diversified group of people by providing opportunities to express opinions and ideas in group discussions, presentations and report making.

Core Curriculum Including Before and After the Program in Japan

<Before Coming to Japan>

- **Prior Assignments:**

Participants are required to submit an assignment prior to the program in Japan. They undertake research on a given topic including outlining the current situation, the major challenges and their countermeasures, and making a presentation. By consulting with staff, participants develop the contents of their presentation.

<Beginning of the Program>

1. **“Gasshuku”, overnight team building training based on experiential learning:** Through various activities, participants deepen self and mutual understanding, and form a team as a foundation of the mutual learning environment which encourages the self-development of each of the participants.
2. **Lectures and Workshops on Leadership:** Participants are exposed to various ideas of leadership, including definitions, major theories and different styles. That will lead to participants’ understanding their leadership styles and goal setting as well as to explore what leadership is throughout the program.
3. **Sharing of Leadership Experience:** Participants who have various professional and cultural backgrounds share their own leadership experience. Looking back at their own experience, participants can make clear goals for participating in the program. Also knowing the various leadership styles of each other stimulates mutual learning about leadership throughout the program.

<Mid Program>

1. **Seminars in various fields:** 1 or 2-day seminars on each topic consist of “lectures”, “country presentations on the country’s current situation and challenges”, as well as “group discussion.” The lectures demonstrate the conflicting points of view relating to the differences of fields and stances. Participants then discuss priority issues in Asia from various perspectives in order to develop a flexible mindset and take a multilateral approach using knowledge in and outside of their own specialized fields.
2. **Field Study on the actual cases of “Sustainable Development”:** Based on the general understanding of the United Nations’ SDGs, Sustainable Development Goals, and other international frameworks which are key measures of sustainable development, participants proceed with on-site case studies of “Sustainable Development” in Japan.
The underpinning section demonstrates the response of various stakeholders in Japan to natural and man-made disasters which are obstacles to sustainable development. Through this, participants can acquire the idea of building a society with resilience and in harmony with nature. The latter half shows the Japanese way of development with safety and security, and how stakeholders have taken initiatives not only tackling challenges, but also creating innovative

solutions twisting the challenging situations into opportunities to grow and develop. Participants acquire ideas for sustainable development of their own countries and region.

<Final Stage>

1. **Group Study/Research:** Participants proceed with group study/research, utilizing all the learning elements gained from seminars and field studies in the program. In the series of group discussions on leadership and selected topic, each group summarize discussion result in presentation slides and report as an outcome of the program. In the process of the Group Study/Research, lecturers and staff may become involved, if necessary, in order to achieve following points.

<Process of Group Study/Research>

- In the 6-day discussion, participants conceptualize learning points from program contents, making models by molding these concepts into an Asian context, and creating feasible solutions. Participants will learn the entire process from generating ideas to making a tangible proposal.
 - Participants work in the same group which has diversity in terms of country, specialized fields, and occupations for 6 days. Each member is responsible for developing their team from the forming stage to the performing stage, as a leader and a follower. In the process of team development, each member will enhance their own leadership capacities by repeating the cycle of setting goals, exercising them, and reflecting on this, as well as allowing for the perspectives of others.
2. **Final Group Presentation:** There will be a presentation of the outcome of the program to lecturers, volunteer members and honorary guests. Participants practice delivering clear messages, including how to select information, make storylines and communicate effectively
 3. **Individual Presentation and Report:** Participants submit a completion report and make individual presentation based on the report. The theme is “how to apply ideas gained from the program in their own countries, organizations, and in their specialized fields and what kind of leadership you will play.

<After Returning Home>

Participants are expected to;

1. Make presentations based on the final group presentation and individual report and receive feedback from the Country Committee Chairperson.
2. Execute ideas and awareness from the program after returning home to their community, organization, and through the alumni association.
3. Nurture the next generation of leaders by sharing their own knowledge and experiences through the IATSS Forum program*, as well as seminars and events organized by alumni association when participants become experienced leaders.

(*The IATSS Forum invites a few selected alumni members to lecture during the program period)

Deepening and Fixing Learning Experience

In order to deepen the learning experience, the IATSS Forum program also has the following learning opportunities for participants in the program in addition to the above program contents.

- Prior study and preparation for seminars: Information is provided beforehand in the seminar syllabus or in the briefing sessions
- Group discussion at each site and receive feedback from stakeholders
- Individual report on each seminar topic and field study