



Press Release

Kick-off of the Vulcanus in Japan 2009-2010 Programme 46 European students arrive in Tokyo

Tokyo, September 2nd 2009

Friday, September 4th 2009 marks the welcome reception of 46 European students with a background in engineering, science and architecture who were awarded with a scholarship under the 1-Year Vulcanus in Japan Programme. Ahead of them lies a year of intensive Japanese language studies and project work in Japanese companies and research institutes.

The event takes place at the premises of the EU-Japan Centre with the attendance of Ambassador Hugh Richardson, Head of Delegation of the European Commission to Japan, Mr. Hidehiro Muramatsu, Director of Europe Division, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), Ambassadors of EU-Member states in Japan and students.

The Vulcanus Programme was established in 1996 as an in-company traineeship programme for promising students in engineering, science and architecture. The programme includes 4-months of intensive Japanese language studies, an 8-months traineeship in a Japanese company or research centre as well as seminars on EU-Japan cultural and economical issues. Since the start of Vulcanus, an overall number of 566 students have successfully joined, both from Japan and European Member states (240 Japanese students with Vulcanus in Europe/ 326 European students with Vulcanus in Japan). Every year, there are more than 20 applications for each available scholarship.

The Vulcanus Programme is funded by the European Commission, METI and host companies' contributions. When the programme was established, its initial goal was to create a pool of engineers, scientists and architects familiar with both the European and the Japanese cultures. During their traineeships at Japanese companies, students are integrated into Japanese teams and accomplish projects matching their educational background. A number of past projects have turned into registered patents or research results presented on an international scale.



About the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation

The Vulcanus Programme is organised by the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation in Tokyo and Brussels.

The EU-Japan Centre was created as a joint venture between the European Commission and METI in 1987. It aims at improving EU and Japanese companies' competitiveness and cooperation by facilitating exchanges of experience and know-how between EU and Japanese businesses.

To support this, the EU-Japan Centre organises events where EU and Japanese policies in specific areas of joint interest are presented and confronted, so that EU and Japan business people, academics and policy-makers can share best practices and identify areas for future cooperation, with a view to provide feedback to the European Commission and the Japanese Government. Such fields include energy, environment, Climate Change; FDI; Industrial Policy (standards, IPR issues, SME policy, and competition law). The Centre also launched an information service and a helpdesk for EU and Japanese clusters to facilitate international cooperation and implement EU-Japanese policy guidelines in this regard.

EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation

PR Contact: Mrs. Keiko Sato

Round Cross Ichibancho 4F.,
13-3 Ichibancho,
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0082

Tel: +81-3-3221-6161
Fax: +81-3-3221-6226
Email: satok@eu-japan.gr.jp

Links:

Vulcanus Programme

Tokyo: <http://www.eu-japan.gr.jp/english/students/european/index.cfm>
Brussels: <http://www.eu-japan.eu/global/vulcanus.html>

EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation

Tokyo: <http://www.eu-japan.gr.jp/>
Brussels: <http://www.eu-japan.eu/>



Retrospective: Farewell reception of Vulcanus in Japan 2008-2009

On August 27th 2009, the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation held the graduation ceremony and the farewell reception of 35 students who had spent a year in Japan learning Japanese and working for Japanese companies. During the day, the students presented and exchanged their project results and their overall feedback to their colleagues – this in Japanese language. The graduation ceremony took place in the Grand Palace Hotel in Kudanshita in attendance of Ambassador Hugh Richardson and Hidehiro Muramatsu, the Ambassadors of EU Member States, representatives of host companies and Vulcanus Alumni, Julien Guerrier and Hiroshi Tsukamoto, both General Managers of the EU-Japan Centre.

Both Ambassador Hugh Richardson and Hidehiro Muramatsu showed high appreciation for the student's insertion to the programme and the host companies' commitment. Once more, the importance was emphasized, that Vulcanus is a programme that builds bridges between the EU and Japan.

The Vulcanus participants' presentations outlined, that their stay in Japan was not only about mastering daily working life in a completely different culture or being able to communicate in Japanese. They have gained a lot of benefit from their Japanese professional life. Integrated into Japanese teams, assigned with certain projects they had the chance to enhance their scientific and professional knowledge. These projects cover a whole spectrum of areas: biological and chemical engineering, research in the field of robotics, Linux-based device programming for consumer electronics or plant tube development to name a few examples.

Some Vulcanus participants will remain in Japan after having received a direct job offer. Others will go on working in Europe and some will follow up their research on international conferences and at their returning universities. Many students expressed that their Japanese experience has given them a broader perspective. And it is not only that they want to come back to Japan, they also feel that their stay in Japan has made them realize what it means to be European.



Final presentation session in Japanese



Students receive their diplomas from Julien Guerrier



Toast by Hidehiro Muramatsu (m.)



Vulcanus Participants 2008-2009



Greetings by Ambassador Hugh Richardson