

Australia–Japan Research Centre
ANU Japan Institute



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Japan Update 2026

JAPAN'S NORMALISATION



9 September 2026

Australia–Japan Research Centre



Australia-Japan
Research Centre

The Australia–Japan Research Centre (AJRC) is the centre for research, teaching and outreach on the Japanese economy in Australia. Established in 1980 with support from governments and business communities in both Australia and Japan, AJRC conducts research to better understand the Australia–Japan relationship and both countries’ strategic interests in the regional economy. AJRC’s research areas encompass trade, finance, macroeconomics and international economic relations.

ANU Japan Institute



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Japan Institute

The ANU Japan Institute is Australia’s largest network of distinguished and emerging scholars with professional expertise on Japan. The Japan Institute researches and teaches in disciplines spanning art, economics, environment, health, history, international relations, language, law, linguistics, politics, regulation and Japanese studies.



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JAPAN UPDATE 2026 PROGRAM

Physics Auditorium, ANU Research School of Physics

- 8:30 – 9:00am Tea and Coffee (please be seated by 8:50am)
- 9:00 – 9:45am Welcome and Opening Keynote
- Welcome: Shiro Armstrong, Professor & AJRC Director, ANU
 - Introduction: Rebekah Brown, Interim Vice-Chancellor, ANU
 - Keynote: Tim Ayres, Minister for Industry and Innovation & Minister for Science
 - Vote of Thanks: HE Kazuhiro Suzuki, Japanese Ambassador to Australia
- 9:45 – 10:45am Session 1: The New Normal in Japan's Economy
- Keynote: Koji Nakamura, Executive Director, Bank of Japan
 - Chair: Ippei Fujiwara, Professor, Keio University & University of Tokyo
 - Katrina Di Marco, Deputy Secretary, Treasury
- 10:45 – 11:15am Morning Tea
- 11:15am – 12:45pm Session 2: Foreign Policy and Political Choices
- Chair: Lauren Richardson, Lecturer, ANU
 - Naoko Eto, Professor, Gakushuin University
 - Evelyn Goh, Professor, ANU
 - Tomohiko Satake, Professor, Aoyama Gakuin University
 - Yves Tiberghien, Distinguished Professor, Taipei School of Economics and Political Science & University of British Columbia
- 12:45 – 1:45pm Lunch
- 1:45 – 3:00pm Session 3: The State of Japanese Studies in Australia
- Keynote: Sawako Shirahase, Project Professor, University of Tokyo
 - Chair: Simon Avenell, Professor, ANU
 - Kent Anderson, AJRC Advisory Board Chair, ANU
 - Nana Oishi, Associate Professor, University of Melbourne
 - Carolyn Stevens, Emeritus Professor, Monash University
- 3:00 – 3:30pm Afternoon Tea
- 3:30 – 4:50pm Session 4: The Next 50 Years of the Australia–Japan Relationship
- Keynote: Peter Drysdale, Emeritus Professor, ANU
 - Chair: Geraldine Doogue, ABC
 - Shiro Armstrong, Professor, ANU
 - Melissa Conley Tyler, Honorary Fellow, University of Melbourne
 - Kate Kitagawa, Professor, La Trobe University
- 4:50 – 5:00pm Closing
- Ippei Fujiwara, Keio University & University of Tokyo
 - Simon Avenell, ANU

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



Kent Anderson

Kent Anderson is Chair of the Advisory Board of the Australia–Japan Research Centre at The Australian National University and Emeritus Professor at the University of Newcastle. Previously, he was Deputy Vice-Chancellor Global at University of Newcastle, Executive Director of Australian Technology Network of Universities, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Community and Engagement at University of Western Australia, and Senior Advisor for two ministers. After working in airline marketing and as a commercial lawyer, Kent started his academic career as an Associate Professor at Hokkaido University. He was Professor of Asian Studies and Law at The Australian National University and Director for the ANU School of Culture, History and Language.



Shiro Armstrong

Shiro Armstrong is Professor of Economics at the Crawford School of Public Policy at The Australian National University. He is Director of the Australia–Japan Research Centre, Editor of the *East Asia Forum*, and Director of the East Asian Bureau of Economic Research. He is also Visiting Professor at Keio University, Research Associate at the Center on Japanese Economy and Business at Columbia Business School, and Non-Resident Fellow at the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan. Shiro is the recipient of the 2024 Nakasone Yasuhiro Award and Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation in 2026. He is also a member of the Board of the Australia–Japan Foundation and serves on the Advisory Council of the Asia Development Bank Institute.



Simon Avenell

Simon Avenell is Director of the ANU Japan Institute and Professor of Japanese History in the ANU School of Culture, History and Language, specialising in the social and political history of postwar Japan. His books include *A History of Postwar Japan: Recovery, Prosperity, and Transformation* (Hawai'i, 2025); *Asia and Postwar Japan: Deimperialization, Civic Activism, and National Identity* (Harvard Asia Center, 2022); *Transnational Japan in the Global Environmental Movement* (Hawai'i, 2017); and *Making Japanese Citizens* (California, 2010). His research has been supported by an ARC Future Fellowship, a Japan Foundation Japanese Studies Fellowship, and a Hakuhōdō Grant. Before joining the ANU in 2013, he spent nine years at the National University of Singapore. He received his PhD from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2003. His current research examines the history of generational politics in postwar Japan.



Tim Ayres

Raised on the north coast of New South Wales, Senator Ayres studied Industrial Relations at the University of Sydney. After university, he held senior elected positions in the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union. He was elected as a NSW Senator in 2019 and served as Assistant Minister for Trade, Manufacturing and Future Made in Australia. He has consistently advocated for strong, sovereign manufacturing and secure, well-paid jobs. In 2025, he became Minister for Industry and Innovation and Minister for Science.



Rebekah Brown

Professor Rebekah Brown is internationally recognised for her contributions to environmental studies, with expertise in urban water systems, sustainable development and transdisciplinary research. She is a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and began her career as a civil engineer, delivering major infrastructure projects across the United Kingdom, Europe, Southeast Asia and Africa. She commenced as Interim Vice-Chancellor and President of The Australian National University in September 2025. She holds a Bachelor of Civil Engineering (Honours) from Monash University and a PhD in Environmental Studies from the University of New South Wales.



Melissa Conley Tyler

Melissa Conley Tyler is Honorary Fellow at the Asia Institute, the University of Melbourne. Previously she was Founding Director of the Asia-Pacific Development, Diplomacy & Defence Dialogue (AP4D), an initiative funded by the Australian Departments of Defence and Foreign Affairs. For 13 years, she served as National Executive Director of the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA). Under her leadership, AIIA was recognised for three years running as the top think tank in Southeast Asia and the Pacific and one of the top 50 think tanks worldwide in the University of Pennsylvania's 'Global Go To Think Tanks Index'. Melissa is a prolific commentator on Australian foreign policy, Australia's key relationships across Asia, and the practice of diplomacy.



Katrina Di Marco

Katrina Di Marco is Deputy Secretary at the International Corporate and Investment Group, the Australian Treasury. She joined the then Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources as a graduate in 2005. She worked in the Treasury's Budget Policy Division and Macroeconomic Conditions Division from 2008 and undertook a secondment to BHP Billiton as a Senior Economist based in Singapore in 2014. She was the Director of Policy and Senior Adviser (Economic) in the Office of the Prime Minister from 2015 to 2018 and worked in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet from 2018 to 2019. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce (Economics) and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Wollongong.



Geraldine Doogue

Geraldine Doogue started her journalistic life in Perth as a reporter for The West Australian, moving onto The Australian, 2UE and Channel Ten News. Her career highlights include receiving a United National Media Peace Prize and two Penguin awards for her reporting on the Gulf War in 1991, setting up the influential social affairs program *Life Matters* on Radio National in 1993, and presenting Australia's long-standing religious affairs program *Compass* on ABC TV until 2019. Geraldine was awarded a Churchill Fellowship for social and cultural reporting in 2000, a Walkley Award for Outstanding Contribution to Journalism in 2023 and was admitted to the Australian Media Hall of Fame in 2018. In 2023 she became an Officer in the Order of Australia. She has received several Honorary Doctorates of Letters from the University of Western Australia, the University of Sydney, The Australian National University, Macquarie University, and Australian Catholic University.



Peter Drysdale

Peter Drysdale is Emeritus Professor of Economics, Founding Director of the Australia-Japan Research Centre, Head of the East Asian Bureau of Economic Research and Editor in Chief of the *East Asia Forum* at The Australian National University. Widely recognised as the leading intellectual architect of APEC, he is the author of a number of books and papers on international trade and economic policy, including his prize-winning book, *International Economic Pluralism: Economic Policy in East Asia and the Pacific*. He is a recipient of the Asia Pacific Prize, the Weary Dunlop Award, the Japanese Order of the Rising Sun with Gold Rays and Neck Ribbon and the Australian Centenary Medal, and he is an Officer of the Order of Australia.



Naoko Eto

Naoko Eto is Professor in the Department of Political Science at Gakushuin University. Her main research interests include East Asian affairs and Japan–China relations. She is a member of the Expert Committee on Industrial and Technological Infrastructure Strengthening for Economic Security and the Industrial Structure Council at the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), as well as the Customs and Foreign Exchange Council at the Ministry of Finance, Japan. She was also Visiting Research Fellow at the Peking University's School of International Studies and the National University of Singapore's East Asian Institute, and Visiting Senior Fellow at the Mercator Institute for China Studies.



Ippei Fujiwara

Ippei Fujiwara is Professor of Macroeconomics at Keio University and the University of Tokyo. He is Honorary Professor and Japan Director of the Australia–Japan Research Centre at The Australian National University. He is also Research Fellow at the Centre for Economic Policy Research, Fellow at the Asian Bureau of Finance and Economic Research, and Faculty Fellow at the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry. Professor Fujiwara holds positions as Associate Editor for the *European Economic Review*, Officer for the Central Bank Research Association (CEBRA), and overseas member to the Council of Advisers for Monetary Research of the Hong Kong Institute for Monetary and Financial Research (HKIMR). He completed his PhD in Economics at the University of Oxford. Professor Fujiwara's research focuses on international finance, monetary economics and macroeconomics.



Evelyn Goh

Evelyn Goh is the Shedden Professor of Strategic Policy Studies and Research Director at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at The Australian National University. She has published widely on US–China relations and diplomatic history, regional security order in East Asia, Southeast Asian strategies towards great powers and environmental security. She is the Co-Managing Editor of the *Cambridge Studies in International Relations* book series and serves on the Editorial Boards of various academic journals, including *International Security*; *International Theory*; *Asian Security* and the *Journal of Global Security Studies*.



Kate Kitagawa

Kate Kitagawa specialises in space education and is currently Professor of Practice in Space Research and Education at La Trobe University. She was previously an advisor to the Senior Vice President of Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and Director of JAXA's Space Education Office, where she led the development of digital learning modules and collaborated with creative studios to produce innovative educational tools. She holds a BSc in Mathematics and Life Sciences from the University of British Columbia and a PhD in History from Princeton University and has over a decade of teaching and research experience at universities across the United States, United Kingdom, Germany and South Africa.



Koji Nakamura

Koji Nakamura is Executive Director in charge of the Monetary Affairs Department, Financial Markets Department and Institute for Monetary and Economic Studies at the Bank of Japan. He joined the Bank of Japan in 1992 and has held a variety of senior positions in the Monetary Affairs Department, Research and Statistics Department, Financial System and Bank Examination Department, and International Department. From 2003 to 2006, he was Economist in the Policy Development and Review Department, the International Monetary Fund. He was a member of Analytical Group on Vulnerabilities, Financial Stability Board from 2014 to 2015. He holds a MA in Economics and MBA from Boston University, and a BA in Economics from the University of Tokyo.



Nana Oishi

Nana Oishi is Associate Professor in Japanese Studies and Head of the Japanese Studies Program at the University of Melbourne. Her main research areas are international migration and social cohesion in Japan and Australia. She previously served as Professor of Sociology at Sophia University and Policy Analyst at the International Labour Organization, Geneva. She has also advised the United Nations on migration and served on various Japanese government advisory boards. She completed her PhD in Sociology at Harvard University as a Fulbright Scholar and has received several academic honours. Her recent publications include *Handbook on Asian Migration* (Edward Elgar, 2026), co-edited with M. B. Asis and B. Khadria; 『地域の未来と外国人』 (明石書店, 2026); and 『流出する日本人—海外移住の光と影』 (中央公論新社, 2024).



Lauren Richardson

Lauren Richardson is Lecturer in the Department of International Relations at The Australian National University. She was Director of Studies and Lecturer in the ANU's Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy from 2018 to 2020 and Director of the ANU Japan Institute from 2020 to 2022. Prior to that, Dr Richardson taught Northeast Asian Relations at the University of Edinburgh. Her research focuses on the role of non-state actors in shaping diplomatic interactions in Northeast Asia, particularly Japan–Korea relations. Dr Richardson is also the lead academic lecturer for Academy Travel tours to Japan and Korea.



Tomohiko Satake

Tomohiko Satake is Professor at the School of International Politics, Economics and Communication at Aoyama Gakuin University. He previously served as Senior Research Fellow at the National Institute for Defense Studies and as Deputy Director in the International Policy Division at Japan's Ministry of Defense. His research interests include Asia Pacific security, Japanese foreign policy and Japan–Australia strategic relations. He received his BA and MA from Keio University and his PhD in International Relations from The Australian National University.



Sawako Shirahase

Sawako Shirahase is Research Professor and Founding Director of the Global–Local Initiative for Inclusive Future at the Graduate School of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Tokyo. She previously held positions as Junior Research Fellow at Columbia University, Senior Research Fellow at the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Assistant Professor at Tsukuba University and Professor at the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, the University of Tokyo. She earned her PhD in Sociology from the University of Oxford. Her primary research interests include social stratification and inequality, demographic change, gender and family dynamics and social security systems, examined from cross-national perspectives.



Carolyn Stevens

Carolyn Stevens is Emeritus Professor of Japanese Studies at Monash University. She is also Editor in Chief of the journal *Japanese Studies*. Originally from the United States, Carolyn came to Australia in 1994 after living in Japan for four years. She has had visiting research and teaching positions with Sophia University, Obirin University, University of Tokyo (Faculty of International and Public Health), Meiji Gakuin University (Faculty of International Studies and PRIME), the National University of Singapore and the International Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken). She holds a BA (*magna cum laude*) in Social Anthropology from Harvard College and a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Columbia University.



HE Kazuhiro Suzuki

Kazuhiro Suzuki was appointed as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Australia in March 2023. Preceding this assignment, he was Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey from 2020 to 2023. He began his career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan in 1986 and held a variety of positions, including Minister for Economic Affairs at the Embassy of Japan in Washington DC from 2016 to 2018 and Assistant Minister/Director-General of the North American Bureau from 2018 to 2020. From 2013 to 2016, he served as Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative of Japan to the African Union. He holds a BA in International Relations from the University of Tokyo, a MA in Political Science from Stanford University and a MA in International Relations from Columbia University.



Yves Tiberghien

Yves Tiberghien is Distinguished Professor and Dean of the Taipei School of Economics and Political Science at Tsinghua University (Taiwan). He is also Professor of Political Science, Director of the Center for Japanese Research and Konwakai Chair in Japanese Research (on leave) at the University of British Columbia. He is Adjunct Chair Professor at Chengchi University, Visiting Professor at the University of Tokyo's Graduate School of Public Policy and Vietnam's Foreign Trade University, Distinguished Fellow at the Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada, and Senior Fellow at the University of Alberta's China Institute. In 2022, he served as a Member of the Advisory Committee on Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy to the Foreign Minister of Canada. His research focuses on the global order, the comparative political economy of East Asia, and global economic and environmental governance. His latest publications include *The Hedgers: How the Global South Navigates the Sino-American Competition* (2026, with Zaki Laïdi) and *The Global Economic Order on the Brink* (2026, co-edited with Shiro Armstrong). Professor Tiberghien co-founded the Vision 20 initiative in 2015 and was made a Chevalier de l'ordre national du mérite by the President of France in 2017. He received his PhD from Stanford University.



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