

Introducing the fantastic committee of ICEE 2021!



ICEE Founder: Kuryu (Michihiro) Matsumoto

Born in 1940, Kuryu Matsumoto is the founder of ICEE, now in its 34th year. He is an expert English speaker who had never studied abroad, but he became an interpreter for the US Embassy.

He is the author of many books, including his latest, *The Unafraid Onomatopoeia Dictionary from Japanese to English* by Sakura-sha. Formerly an advanced English conversation instructor at NHK, he is the inventor of Hexagonal Debate, which fosters logic and emotion. He is currently the anchorperson of Musubi Channel online and President of Matsumoto Online Academia. He is a proponent of the Way of English “Eigo-do” and promotes Japanese culture overseas. He is Director of Kodokan and President of the International Debating Society.



ICEE Chief Judge: David K. Groff

A native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, Mr. David K. Groff is an educator, writer, and translator, as well as a practitioner and researcher of traditional Japanese martial arts and culture. In 2012, his new translations of the writings of 17th-century swordsman and strategist Miyamoto

Musashi were published in London as *The Five Rings: Miyamoto Musashi's Art of Strategy* by Watkins Press.

He is currently an associate professor in the School of Global Japanese Studies at Meiji University, where he mainly teaches language and communication, and an adjunct professor at Aoyama Gakuin University, where he teaches culture studies. Mr. Groff has been an ICEE judge since 2013.



Secretary of the ICEE Steering Committee: Sachiko (Jasmy) Sekura

Ms. Sekura is ICEE's 2011 Grand Champion. She has been Secretary of the ICEE Steering Committee since 2012. She became a member of Kodokan and assistant to Mr. Michihiro Matsumoto in 2010. She is a graduate of Waseda University where she studied Russian literature.

After graduation, she worked for a publishing company and then taught at a public junior high school before moving to Paris with her family. After returning to Japan, she ran a Benesse franchise school. Currently, Ms. Sekura runs BE studio Misawa School. She also teaches English at a private junior and senior high school. She supports Hunger Free World and has attended the International Conference in Ethiopia. She is committed to education for SDGs.

ICEE Administrative Support: Yoshie Takashima



Ms. Takashima is an ELT instructor at LACOMS and iCOM staff. She used to work as a junior high school teacher at Tokyo Metropolitan for 18 years. She previously took part in the production of GLOBAL INSIDE, Mr. Matsumoto's internet program distributed by NONES CHANNEL.

ICEE Judge: Nafisa Minai

Educator, translator, editor, writer. Long term resident of Japan and proficient in Japanese. Enamored of Japanese traditional arts and crafts and an avid student of the performing arts.

Years of experience teaching in public and private schools, as well as planning curriculum and content for junior and senior high school students. Currently researching pre-war education and texts.

Involved with Matsumoto Sensei's Kodokan and ICEE since time immemorial. As a judge for ICEE, I have been privileged to meet and work with remarkable people who each bring a unique perspective to language learning and teaching.

Publications include *Eigo de Yoji Jukugo* and a Japanese translation of "Look Me in the Eye" by Barbara McDonald and Cynthia Rich.

ICEE Judge: Neil Butler

Mr. Butler, 63, graduated from Monash University, Melbourne, Australia with a Bachelor of Business degree. He first arrived in Japan in 1982. He has 40 years of experience in business in Japan and throughout Asia. He has held senior management positions for international organizations for the past 38 years. He has experience in trade facilitation, branding,

management, business development and international business. He implemented Australia's largest single consumer marketing program in any overseas market; the now famous 'Aussie Beef' brand in Japan.

Mr Butler returned to Australia in 2001 and worked as an advisor for the Australian Government to assist over 250 companies gain export access to international markets. He re-branded and re-positioned Australia's largest regional university.

Mr. Butler returned to Japan in 2009 to run a media/marketing business. He is now President & CEO of Japan Partnership Holdings Inc. He has a strong desire to build bridges between Japan and the world by helping Japan improve its communication and connections.

ICEE MC and Judge: Namiko Tsuruta



Ms. Tsuruta is currently Program Director of Global Language Institute and Creative Director of thetokyolife.jp. A Japanese returnee, she has taught in the States and Japan for 28 years. She is also a bilingual teacher trainer with 18 years of experience working with ALTs and JTEs. Her interests include primary and secondary school English education, oral communication, fluency, learner identity and autonomy.

A frequent ETJ and JALT presenter, Ms. Tsuruta has been the MC for ICEE since 2016. She attended Choate Rosemary Hall and the University of Michigan, where she studied piano performance at the School of Music, Theater and Dance and majored in psychology.

ICEE Judge Andrew Tinashe Soda



Mr. Soda was born in Zimbabwe and raised in Dallas, Texas. After spending the majority of his life in the States, he relocated to Japan in 2011 and started gaining recognition as a singer. Mr. Soda has been an ICEE judge and performed on stage for our participants for many years. His unique narrative and his passion for singing, music and people warms our hearts every year.

He officially became Gospel Square's partner artist in 2011 and participated in a recording for a JPOP cover album alongside other professional musicians. In 2012, he became a contestant for のど自慢 The World and represented Zimbabwe. In 2014, he sang backup vocals for Yoshi Kazuya of the Yellow Monkeys at the Budokan.

In 2018, Mr. Soda started TISU, a NPO dedicated to helping disenfranchised children in Zimbabwe. He is a guest speaker in schools, and collaborates with many musicians in live and live-streamed performances 5 times a year. In June 2022, he will launch a debut EP featuring an array of talented musicians.

ICEE Judge: Andrew T. Kamei-Dyche, Ph.D.

Dr. Kamei-Dyche is an associate professor in the School of Global Studies and Collaboration at Aoyama Gakuin University. He has an M.A. (UBC) and Ph.D. (USC) in Japanese history, and he is a scholar of Japanese book history and print culture, specializing in the history of reading and publishing. He is particularly interested in studying networks among publishers and intellectuals, and is also interested in the history of media and media culture in general. His publications

include articles on publishers, bookstores, and reading. He is currently working on one monograph about reading spaces in modern Japan and another on the publisher Iwanami Shoten.

ICEE Judge: Matthew Ownby



Mr. Ownby is Tedx Speaker with 20 years of experience working at NASA, Cisco, etc., and helping business people become better presenters in sales and training. He has conducted training for hundreds in more than 10 countries across Asia and Europe. He is the former head of the Japan branch of Toastmaster International, an NPO for public speaking, and he was also involved in helping social entrepreneurs improve their pitches while working with YY Contest, Hult Contest, etc.

Soon to publish in December, *The Ultimate Guide to Speech Evaluations*, a niche guide for coaches, managers, etc. on how to give sound advice for any presentation and improve their own evaluation skills.

ICEE Judge: Brian Shaw

Mr. Shaw is a graduate of Columbia University in New York. He worked as a systems developer on Wall Street, a project manager at a multinational corporation in New Jersey, and later as VP of software development at a startup in Silicon Valley.

Since 2012, Mr. Shaw has been managing two profitable businesses and a real estate portfolio from his home in Osaka. He was Chief Judge for ICEE's Youth Osaka in 2018 and 2019.

ICEE Judge: Noah “Lucky” Gesher

Between the ages of 3 and 9, Noah “Lucky” Gesher frequented a neighborhood Japanese restaurant with his grandparents in California, and he learned his first kanji there. The hannya mask on the wall, the smell of the tatami flooring, sitting in the horigotatsu and the background music playing folk ballads all left a strong impression on his young mind. From that time, he dreamt of coming to Japan, and ten years ago, he achieved his dream. Frequenting various underground scenes of Kansai, he enjoys exploring the depths of Japanese art, history, religion, literature, nature, and music.

ICEE Judge: Yuichiro Hori

Mr. Hori is a translator and an interpreter (Japanese to English, English to Japanese). He has lived in the United States for more than 20 years and received an MBA from St. Mary’s University.

Mr. Hori used to work at an international trading company. He is interested in topics related to cross-cultural communication in general. He also enjoys learning how to cook healthy and tasty meals, and actually cooks for himself every day.