

**Creative Well-being Tokyo:
International Conference on Open Access to Culture 2026**
To be held at the Tokyo International Forum
from October 28 (Wed) to November 1 (Sun), 2026.
Under the theme of Moving Together—A Culture of Mutuality



Design: Higuchi Maiko, Typeface "Clementite": François Dey / Silly Type Foundry

Moving Together — Five Days of Creating a Culture of Mutuality.
About the Conference: Open Access to Culture , now in its fifth year

The "Conference on Open Access to Culture" has been held since 2022 as part of Creative Well-being Tokyo, an initiative led by Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Arts Council Tokyo. The theme of its fifth edition is "Moving Together—A Culture of Mutuality." Reflecting on progress made thus far, the conference will consider how arts and culture can help each individual live a better life, while exploring the nature of well-being and the future of society based on the idea of mutuality.

In recent years, well-being has garnered attention across a wide range of fields and contexts, prompting discussion about what constitutes an ideal vision of individual happiness. Yet in a complex and ever-changing world marked by the climate crisis, disasters, conflicts, pandemics, and rapid technological advances, should well-being be tied solely to the individual? At a time when the concept of well-being is shifting, this conference will reexamine its meaning through arts and culture, which weave new relationships with everything around us, while also reflecting on the meaning of coexistence and sharing these insights from Tokyo with the world.

This conference will be held in conjunction with the 15th World Cities Culture Summit 2026, which will take place in Tokyo during the same period.

Ahead of the main conference, which begins on October 28, we will hold kick-off event (Three sessions) August and September. We will carry forward to the main conference the empirical insights and knowledge that broaden the foundation for considering the future of well-being.

The Speaker for our Kick-off, on Monday, August 3, will be Ishikawa Naoki, a photographer who won the Yomiuri Prize for Literature for his book "Saigo no Yama" (The Last Summit, Shinchosha, 2025). For registration, please visit our official website.

About Key Visual Concepts :

This key visual evokes a multispecies worldview through the interplay of Clementite—a typeface shaped from wild clematis vines—and traces of ink bleeding caused by drops of water accidentally falling onto printed paper. The very process of creating this typeface, through collaboration between François Dey and patients at a psychiatric hospital, embodies the conference theme, Moving Together.

Event Overview

Event Title	: Creative Well-being Tokyo: International Conference on Open Access to Culture 2026 Moving Together—A Culture of Mutuality
Dates	: October 28 (Wed) – November 1 (Sun), 2026
Venue	: Tokyo International Forum (3-5-1 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) October 28 (Wed) – November 1 (Sun): Lobby Gallery October 30 (Fri) – November 1 (Sun): Hall B5, Hall D5
Organizers	: Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Arts Council Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture)
Admission	: Free (Registration required)
Languages	: Japanese, English, Japanese Sign Language, and International Sign * Simultaneous interpretation and subtitles available (International Sign will be provided in Hall B5 only.)
Official Website	: https://creativewell.rekibun.or.jp/creativewell-conference/2026.html

Expanding the horizons of well-being—From Tokyo to the world About Creative Well-being Tokyo

[Background and Concept]

The Conference on Open Access to Culture has been held continuously since 2022 as part of Creative Well-being Tokyo, a project led by Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Arts Council Tokyo to explore well-being through arts and culture to implement diverse practices.

This project is being implemented based on Tokyo Cultural Strategy 2030, the cultural policy of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government toward 2030. In collaboration with metropolitan cultural facilities and cultural projects, as well as NPOs and practitioners addressing social issues, it promotes and disseminates activities essential for the future of arts and culture. The Conference on Open Access to Culture is held as a platform for fostering networks that drive these activities forward.



* Scenes from International Conference on on Open Access to Culture 2024

A kick-off event exploring the daily insights and perspectives of artists and researchers engaged in dialogue with the nature “Multispecies” Kick-off Event (Three sessions)

Ahead of the main conference, which begins on October 28, a kick-off event will be held in August and September. Artists and researchers whose work centers on cultures that live with the sea, mountains, and land will share their thoughts and feelings. These experiences and insights, which broaden the foundation for considering well-being in the future, will be carried forward to the main conference.

* Multispecies: a mode of thinking that focuses on how all beings, including humans, are interconnected and collectively shape the world

[Vol.1] Speaker : Ishikawa Naoki August 3 (Mon) 18:00 – 20:00



Photo: Ishikawa Naoki, at the summit of Denali, Alaska, in June 2026

- Speaker : Ishikawa Naoki (Photographer)
- Date and Time : August 3 (Mon), 2026, 18:00 – 20:00
- Venue : Jiyu Gakuen Myonichikan Hall,
2-31-3 Nishi-Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo
- Capacity : 30 participants (Registration required; first-come,
first-served)
- Admission : Free
- How to Register : Registration opens on the official website on July 13
(Mon).
- Language : Japanese *Japanese Sign Language interpretation
and subtitles available



Photo by Andrea Cossu

Guest Profile

Ishikawa Naoki was born in Tokyo in 1977 and completed a latter doctoral program at the Graduate School of Fine Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts. Interested in anthropology and ethnology, he has traveled widely, visiting diverse environments ranging from urban to remote regions, while creating outstanding works along the way. In 2008 he won the Newcomer's Award from the Photographic Society of Japan and the Kodansha Publication Culture Award for Photography for his NEW DIMENSION (AKAACA Art Publishing) and POLAR (Little More Co., Ltd.). In 2011 he received the Doman Ken Award for his CORONA (Seidosha) and in 2020 he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Photographic Society of Japan for his EVEREST (CCC Media House) and MAREBITO (Shogakukan Inc.). He has also written numerous books, including The Last Summit (SHINCHOSHA Publishing Co.,Ltd.) for which he received the Yomiuri Prize for Literature.

[Upcoming Events]

[Vol.2]

Guest: Koretsune Sakura (Contemporary Artist)

Date: August 20 (Thu), 2026

[Vol.3]

Guest: Fujihara Tatsushi (Historian, Professor at the Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University)

Date: September 3 (Thu), 2026

* Details and registration methods for each session will be released sequentially on our official website.

A total of five sessions reconsidering well-being with leading artists, practitioners, and researchers from various fields

Conference

The Conference, one of the three venues hosting our diverse programs, will take place in Hall B5.

The Conference will feature a total of five sessions designed to reconsider well-being alongside participants, inviting a diverse lineup of practitioners, including leading artists, practitioners, and researchers from various fields. Serving as moderators throughout the three-day conference are Horiuchi Naoko and Roger McDonald, who have curated numerous projects at Arts Initiative Tokyo [AIT]. Drawing on their extensive knowledge of the international art scene and Tokyo's cultural policies, the two will accompany all five sessions, passing the baton of cutting-edge dialogue from one session's speakers and participants to the next. In the final session closing session, we will synthesize the discussions and ideas generated throughout the preceding sessions to broadcast, directly from Tokyo to the world, the vital role of arts and culture in shaping the future of well-being.

The Conference will run from Friday, October 30 to Sunday, November 1 and requires advance registration. Guest speakers will be announced soon!

[Conference | Introduction of Moderators]



Horiuchi Naoko

Curator, Arts Initiative Tokyo [AIT], Project Director of "dear Me," Childcare worker

Organizes exhibitions and educational programs at Arts Initiative Tokyo [AIT]. Since 2016, she has led "dear Me," a project that connects children and young people in various living situations with art. While exploring the intersection of art, care, and welfare, she is also active as a childcare worker.



Roger McDonald

Curator, Arts Initiative Tokyo [AIT], Art Historian

After studying mysticism in the UK, he earned a doctorate in modern art history. He has curated numerous exhibitions both in Japan and abroad. Founder of "Fenberger House" in Saku City, Nagano Prefecture, and has served as Director of the Tatsue Mingei Museum since 2023. Publications include DEEP LOOKING. At AIT, which he co-founded, he works to connect art and climate action.

Photo by Sayaka Takizawa

[Prologue] October 30 (Fri) 18:30–19:00

Prior to the opening session, we will take a moment to share the journey of the Conference on Open Access to Culture to date. Following an opening remarks by a previous keynote speaker, the two moderators will review past discussions and introduce this year's conference, establishing a shared conceptual framework for both speakers and participants.

[Opening Session] "A Future Woven by Arts and Culture" October 30 (Fri) 19:00–21:00

In today's complex and ever-changing world, well-being is increasingly being redefined not as something confined to the individual, but as something shaped in relation to others, the environment, and a broader timespan. The speakers, who create spaces for dialogue from perspectives that go beyond a human-centered view (multispecies) and have pursued research and initiatives at the intersection of nature, cities, and human life, will explore the role of arts and culture in the years to come.

[Session 1] "Practicing Interdependence" October 31 (Sat) 10:00–12:00

Natural disasters and unforeseen accidents can suddenly transform familiar places and routine life, forcing people to live in radically changed environments. In such moments, when established ways of communicating and caring for one another must be reconsidered, how do emerging artists and researchers make sense of the situations before them and forge new relationships unlike those that existed before? Drawing on Practices born out of interdependence, this session will explore what a culture of mutuality might look like.

[Session 2] "Identity and Culture" October 31 (Sat) 15:30–17:30

In our society, our sense of self is shaped by a wide range of factors, including culture, history, the body, the land, and our relationships with others. However, things taken for granted in society can sometimes silence certain individuals and obscure their culture and roots. In everyday life, questioning our sense of self may inevitably also mean questioning our relationships with others. Together with experts whose creative and academic practices are informed by their lived experiences, this session will explore the challenges and tensions inherent in living together, as well as the possibilities created by dialogue and expression.

[Session 3] "Moving Together—Living through Dreams" November 1 (Sun) 10:00–12:00

Society, culture, and the circumstances of the age may sometimes hinder our freedom and dignity, yet people can still find hope and seek their own paths in life. The speakers, who have pursued creativity and practices across different lands and situations, have passed on their respective experiences and visions to others while cherishing their dreams. Through a series of case studies in which the dreams of an individual connect with those of others, this session will reflect on human dignity.

[Closing Session] "Creative Well-being—A Culture of Mutuality" November 1 (Sun) 15:30–18:00

In response to our complex and ever-changing society, we will share from Tokyo the concept of "Creative Well-being" born from the efforts of arts and culture. Reflecting on discussions that began with a multispecies perspective of the world and expanded to themes of interdependence, identity, and human dignity, speakers well-versed in art and cultural policy will offer thoughts on the future.

Inquiries regarding this press

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