



› An introduction to the XXXII International Horticultural Congress in Japan: IHC2026

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■ Figure 1. Kyoto International Conference Center.

the world to the Kyoto International Conference Center in August, 2026 (Figure 1). This location holds deep personal memories for me and no doubt, after your attendance at the Congress, you too will have many fond memories of Japan.

Japan is honored to host the XXXII International Horticultural Congress (IHC2026). IHC2026 will provide an outstanding opportunity to share and exchange knowledge and culture related to horticultural science and the environment across the globe. Over one week, IHC2026 will bring together thousands of participants. The backbone of the Congress will be a series of plenary sessions and symposia. In addition, through workshops, business meetings, side events and student placements, IHC2026 participants will "Explore the Diversity of Horticulture".

I am delighted to announce that I have been appointed Chair of the Publications Committee for the forthcoming International Horticultural Congress (IHC2026). The International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) has been very kind to me over many years, and it is with great pleasure that I have accepted this role.

Looking back, I was a master's student at the previous International Horticultural Congress in Japan, in 1994. I remember Prof. Akira Sugiura from Kyoto University, who was the president of the Japanese Society for Horticultural Science (JSHS) at that time, greeting the participants at the reception. I also remember the Japanese taiko drum performance, especially when the Congress participants joined the performers on stage to beat the drums. Although I was not yet able to present my own research in English, I had the pleasure of meeting and conversing with the great agronomist, Lesley Currah from Warwick in England, who conducted research similar to mine. These happy memories are forever etched in my mind.

Although almost 30 years have passed, our Planning Committees are now looking forward to welcoming scientists from all over



■ Figure 2. Kyoto, a fascinating city that attracts many international tourists.

IHC2026 will address key horticultural topics and issues under four main pillars:

- Innovation and skills in the horticultural sector
- Food, health and well-being
- Sustainability of production systems
- Traditional cultural heritage

This world-class Congress will provide a unique opportunity to discover the ancient capital of Japan, Kyoto (Figure 2), and the surrounding region through a rich program of social events (Figure 3) and, after the Congress, through a variety of professional excursions and tours (Figure 4) to introduce participants to the Japanese “art of living”, or “Washoku” (Figure 5).

In preparing for IHC2026, we have established a number of Committees (Figure 6). The Executive Committee consists of our President (Dr. Ryutaro Tao, Kyoto University), Vice Presidents (Dr. Katsuhiro Shiratake, Nagoya University; Dr. Tadahisa Higashide, Institute of Vegetable and Floriculture Science; and Dr. Akiko Ito, Institute of Fruit Tree and Tea Science), our Treasurer (Dr. Takeshi Takasaki-Yasuda, Kobe University) and Secretary (Dr. Chitose Honsho, University of Miyazaki). We also have an Advisory Board consisting of two past presidents of the Japanese Society for Horticultural Science, Dr. Yoshinori Kanayama (Tohoku University) and Dr. Saneyuki Kawabata (University of Tokyo). Approximately 18 months out from the Congress, a series of articles especially written for *Chronica Horticulturae* will provide an overview of horticulture in Japan and highlight some of our unique methods and achievements. The editorial team, consisting of myself, Masayoshi Shigyo (Yamaguchi University), Dr. Shinya Kanzaki and Dr. Megumi Ishimaru (Kindai University), Dr. Kazuyoshi Nada (Mie University), Dr. Kunio Yamada (Gifu University), Dr. Takeshi Kurokura (Utsunomiya University), Dr. Tomoya Esumi (Shimane University), Dr. Takuya Tetsumura (University of Miyazaki) and Dr. Shungo Otagaki (Meijo University), will work with a broad range of scientists and technical experts to provide these reviews.

In the words of our President, Professor Ryutaro Tao, compared to other agricultural and plant science fields, horticultural science is the field of science that focuses on a great diversity of plants from domesticated to wild plants. Horticulture covers a wide range of fields from social sciences to medical sciences, and a wide range of professions including scientists, growers, distributors, and marketers.

The theme of IHC2026 is to “Explore the Diversity of Horticulture”, to respect the diversity of horticulture and to apply it to enrich future human life. We would like to invite all of you to explore with us the inte-



Figure 3. A social visit to the traditional beauty of Japan. A. Zen meditation, B. Tea ceremony, C. Kyoto artisans.



Figure 4. Technical tours with intensive and unique ways of horticultural production in Japan, like plant factories, transgenic blue roses and intensive cultivation of fruit crops.



Figure 5. Numerous Japanese foods available near Kyoto.

grated science of horticulture, combining social science, natural science, the best in agricultural practices, and the latest technological advances in robotics and genetics. From small household operations for local farmer's markets to large scale integrated supply chains for global production, IHC2026

will bring the latest horticultural findings, practices and future directions to you. We are currently working on the planning of the plenary sessions and various symposia, and we will spare no effort in welcoming you to Kyoto in the summer of 2026. 🌱

About the author



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COMMITTEES

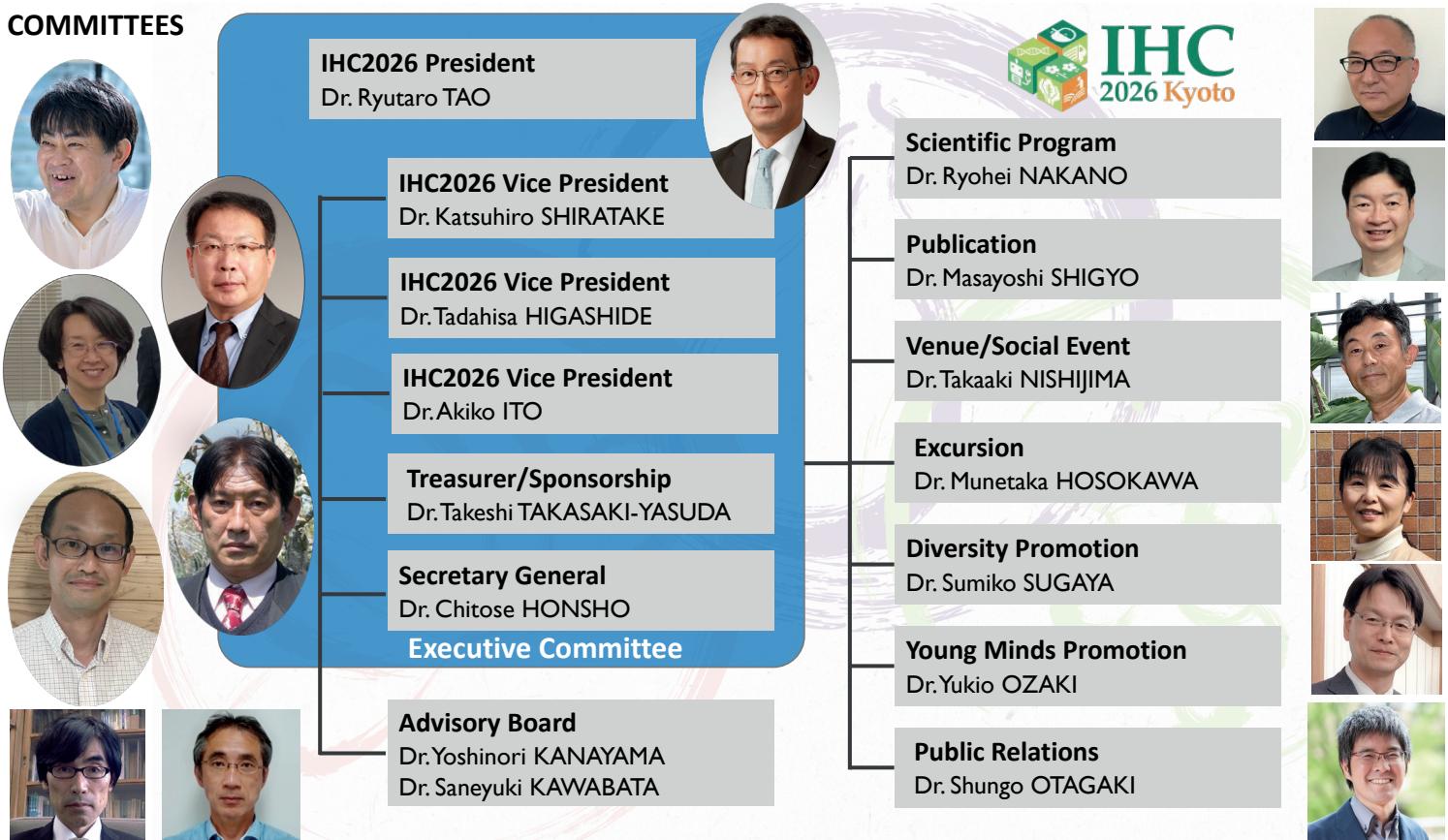


Figure 6. Committees for IHC2026.