



Nasushiobara & Linz

Time to say goodbye

See you again!



Hello everyone! First of all I want to thank you for reading my newsletter.

After completing my two-year term as a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) in Nasushiobara City, I will be returning to Austria this August. I'd like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you.



From online exchanges between schools and para-athletes to Expo-related projects, I had the chance to engage with many students. Thanks to workshops and lectures about Austrian culture, I got to know so many kind people in Nasushiobara. Every exchange and lecture was truly enjoyable! Through acting as MC and interpreter at events, and representing Nasushiobara outside the city, I gained many valuable experiences that I will carry with me into the future.

I fully enjoyed everything Nasushiobara has to offer in my personal time as well—from running the Yukemuri Shiobara Onsen Marathon and performing with the Kuroiso Chamber Ensemble, to skiing at Hunter Mountain and taking horseback riding lessons at Nasu Training Farm. More than ten friends from abroad came to visit me during these two years, and every time I proudly guided them around, showing them the many charms of Nasushiobara. It was a great joy for me to discover the city's many attractions through different experiences and encounters, and to be able to share them with others. I hope I was able to share a little bit of Austria's charm with you in return.



When I first arrived, I never imagined I would be involved in so many different projects as a CIR in Nasushiobara. I'm so grateful for the past two years. I truly consider myself lucky to have served in this role—it has been an incredibly rewarding experience. To everyone in Nasushiobara: thank you so much for the wonderful memories and invaluable experiences. I hope you will continue to value the connection with Austria and stay engaged in international exchange!

🌍 I'll be back to visit again!



Austrian pianist Dorothy Khadem-Missagh playing a concert at Mishima Hall (5/13)



Workshop with German language class „Edelweiss“ (7/8)



Austrian cooking workshop with a local cooking-group (6/27)



Austrian culture seminar at Nasu-Takuyo High School (5/16)



Introducing Nasushiobara in German!

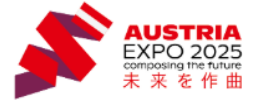


We made the Austrian dish Spätzle together!

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We went to the Expo 2025 Kansai, Osaka! World Expo International Choir Exchange Program Sister City Student Choir Nasushiobara & Linz



From July 22 to 29, the long-awaited World Expo International Choir Exchange Program was held in Nasushiobara and Osaka! This program aimed to foster exchange between students from Linz and Nasushiobara through choir, culminating in a joint performance of Austrian and Japanese songs at the 2025 Osaka-Kansai Expo. Thanks to the students, instructors, organizers from both cities, and the many supporters of the project, the performance at the Expo was a great success, and the students were able to share their wonderful voices with the world.



Ten students from Linz, Austria's Adalbert Stifter Music High School arrived in Japan on July 22, first visiting Nasushiobara City. The next day, they joined 21 local junior high school students. They kicked off their time together with an exchange, introducing themselves in English and swapping snacks before two days of intense practice. On July 25, the 31-member choir traveled to Osaka, where they continued rehearsals for their July 27-28 performances, also enjoying a visit to the Expo site.



Finally, on July 27 the long-awaited ceremony took place at the Austrian Pavilion. With Austrian government officials and supportive parents looking on, the choir performed both countries' national anthems, followed by one Austrian and one Japanese song. The Japanese students explained their songs in English, and the Austrian students did so in Japanese, delivering truly moving and wonderful vocal performances. Following the ceremony, everyone also enjoyed viewing the impressive exhibits at the Austrian Pavilion!

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In addition, as part of a culinary exchange with our partner city, Linzer Augen cookies, a specialty of Linz, were sold at the Austria Pavilion! These were made by the local confectionary “Nemunoki” using an original recipe created by students from Nasu Takuyo High School and sandwiching Tochigi Prefecture's "Tochiotome" strawberry jam inside. The blend of the flavors of the sister cities was absolutely delicious!



On the afternoon of July 27, the "Linz x Nasushiobara" choir held a concert on an outdoor stage within the Expo site! Many spectators gathered to witness the culmination of about a year's worth of practice. The students earnestly sang a total of nine songs in both German and Japanese. They delivered a magnificent performance that resonated with the audience, spreading music filled with feelings of friendship and hope to the world. They even sang two encores!



On July 28, the final performance was held at the EXPO Messe "WASSE," as part of the "Resolution of LOCAL JAPAN Exhibition." Nasushiobara, Toyonaka (Osaka), and Okinawa (Okinawa) jointly performed on stage where each city's charm resonated through sound.: Toyonaka showcased the "Toyonaka Piano," Nasushiobara highlighted their choir with sister city Linz, and Okinawa featured "Eisa and Okinawan folk



songs." The event concluded with all three cities performing an Okinawan song and dancing the Kachāshī, hyping up the crowd!



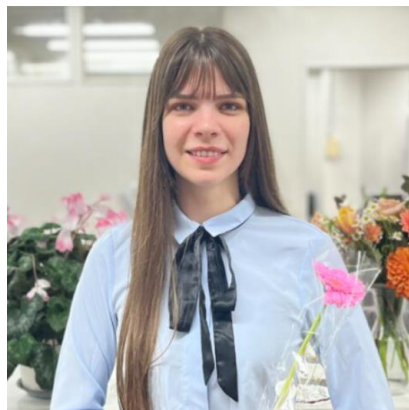
Finally, on the 28th, a farewell party was held where the students exchanged goodbyes and swapped gifts. We hope these valuable experiences helped them grow and they'll carry the memories with them for many years to come.



Nasushiobara & Linz

Introducing our new CIR !

Verena Mirt



On August 8, Verena Mirt took up her position as our new CIR of Nasushiobara! In fact, Verena is a good friend of former CIR Yukari! After studying Japanese studies together at the University of Vienna, Verena deepened her Japanese knowledge at a language school in Tokyo for one year. She then moved on to do her master's thesis in economics and successfully graduated right before she came to Nasushiobara. She is also a great fan of Japanese cuisine!



Profile

Surname: Mirt
First name: Verena
Born in: Berndorf
(Niederösterreich)
Placed in: Nasushiobara
Graduated: University of Vienna
Strengths: Languages
Hobbies: Dancing, Reading,
Karaoke

Message from our new CIR

Hello everyone! My name is Verena Mirt and I'm the new CIR. Please call me Rena.

The first time I came to Japan was thanks to a homestay exchange between my hometown Berndorf and its Japanese sister city Hanamaki City in Iwate Prefecture. During that time in Japan, I ate Takoyaki for the first time and from there, my love for Japanese food grew. But it was the kind people I met who ultimately inspired me to study Japanese. I'm looking forward to the time in Nasushiobara to work as an CIR and to bridge cultures between Austria and Japan. I'll do my best to step into Yukari's footsteps!

Quiz

What is CIR Rena's favorite Japanese food?

A : Sushi

C : Omurice

B : Okonomiyaki

D : Curry



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Answer : B