

SESSION 4

Identifying and Nurturing Outstanding Future Leaders through Effective Program Administration

Isamu Maruyama, Program Officer, Tokyo Foundation

I would like to talk briefly about the administration of the Sylff program. For old timers, you may have heard this many times in the past, but we are also happy to have newcomers to the Sylff community here today. In order for us to have a common basis and awareness, I would like to help everyone understand the overall scheme of the Sylff program and what is expected of Sylff institutions.

I. FRAMEWORK OF SYLFF

In the Sylff program, there are four main stakeholders:

- (1) The Nippon Foundation, the funding organization of the Sylff program;
- (2) Tokyo Foundation, the administrative organization for the program;
- (3) Sylff institutions, the recipients of the Sylff endowment of 1 million US dollars each; and
- (4) Sylff fellows, the recipients of Sylff fellowships.

II. THE TOKYO FOUNDATION

The Tokyo Foundation has three main tasks, namely:

- (1) Working with Sylff institutions and ensuring prudent management of their Sylff programs;
- (2) Offering programs to support Sylff fellows' research, initiatives and efforts to contribute to society; and ultimately
- (3) Helping cultivate and support future leaders through the Sylff program.

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SYLFF INSTITUTIONS

What are the roles and responsibilities of Sylff institutions? Before going further, I

would like to stress the importance of the Sylff steering committee.

The Sylff program is a decentralized scheme, and each committee has the overall responsibility for operating the program and managing the fund. The committee's enthusiasm and commitment to the program is thus the key to the success of the Sylff program.

First let me talk about several basic documents.

• *Agreement*

The roles and responsibilities of Sylff institutions are stated in the original Agreement that was signed between the Nippon Foundation and respective Sylff institutions. This agreement serves as the basis for effective administration of the Sylff program.

The agreement describes management of the fund and the operation of the program, membership of the Sylff steering committee, reporting to the Foundation, and others. There are two appendices to this agreement.

Appendix 1 deals with the endowment, that is, how it is managed, including the name of the financial institution, portfolio, and so on, and Appendix 2 deals with the operation of the program, that is, the name, objective and scope of the program, eligibility for the fellowship, fellowship amount, and so on.

• *MOU*

Whenever there is a need to make a major revision to Appendix 1 and/or 2, the Tokyo Foundation works with the institutions and agrees on the revisions by preparing a document. We call this an MOU, or a memorandum of understanding. This document is signed by the Tokyo Foundation and the Sylff institution.

- *Operational Manual*

There is a document called the Sylff Operational Manual that describes in detail how the Sylff program is to be managed at each institution and includes the report forms. We have included a copy of the Manual in the meeting kit, and so please take a look at it at your convenience. It is also downloadable from the Sylff website (www.sylff.org/admin).

Now, I would like to briefly talk about the roles and responsibilities expected of Sylff institutions.

Communicating with the Tokyo Foundation

The first responsibility of a Sylff institution is timely reporting to and close communication with the Tokyo Foundation. It is crucial for us to know the current situation of your institutions and information on the fellows.

As stated in the original Agreement, each institution is supposed to submit an annual program report, which includes a list of Sylff fellowship recipients, and an annual financial report. Usually, these reports are to be submitted within three months after the academic and fiscal years end, respectively. Whenever you have problems or something you would like to discuss with us, please feel free to contact us anytime.

Let me add that the submission of the most recent reports by the Sylff steering committees is one of the requirements for your Sylff fellows to be able to participate in the Sylff Research Abroad program.

We must report to The Nippon Foundation on a regular basis concerning the current situation of the Sylff program, so your cooperation in timely reporting is greatly appreciated.

We put the submitted data on the fellows into our Sylff database, send each of them a welcome package, and use this information to plan future programs for Sylff fellows.

Operation of the Sylff Fellowship Program

The second task of the Sylff steering commit-

tee is to operate the Sylff fellowship program effectively.

There are several components.

(1) Announcement and recruitment

The Sylff steering committee, or a university-wide scholarship committee, makes an announcement of the Sylff program through such means as fliers, posters, website, and e-mails. Some schools organize an orientation session for potential applicants. In making an announcement, make sure that the fellowship is called "Sylff," funded by The Nippon Foundation and administered by the Tokyo Foundation, and note that the fellowship recipients are expected to become leaders in various fields and professions.

(2) Selection

Then you receive the applications. At some institutions, the applications first go through pre-screening at the faculties and departments that the applicants belong to. The submitted applications are then put forward for screening through document assessment and interviews.

The Sylff fellows are supposed to be students who have not only academic excellence but also leadership potential. How do you assess leadership potential? There is no single clear set of criteria, and it can be different from school to school. I think you can find some ideas from the presentations by several Sylff colleagues and also in breakout discussions later in the morning.

The scope of the fellowships must fall within the parameters of the social sciences and humanities, but recognizing the growing tendency toward interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary approaches, students are eligible as long as they approach such research themes from a social science or humanities perspective.

(3) Awarding of fellowships

I think an awarding event is quite useful in enabling recipients to become acquainted with Sylff and with other fellows, and in instilling

a better sense of being a Sylff fellow. If you are planning to organize something and would like to have Sylff-related materials, we will be happy to send them to you, or if timing allows, we would be happy to participate in these events.

(4) Follow-up

Organizing periodical meetings with current fellows and hearing about their research progress or inviting Sylff alumni to speak to current fellows can be some ways to maintain contact with the fellows. Also, at the awarding events or subsequent events, you can introduce them to opportunities, like Sylff Plus, that the Tokyo Foundation is providing or planning to provide.

Management of Sylff Endowment

The third role of the Sylff steering committee is to manage the Sylff endowment. As stipulated in the original Agreement, each institution is supposed to manage the fund “in a safe and secure manner.” I am afraid that this

is too broad a definition and does not make much sense in the real world.

Let me just say that our basic stance is that the value of the endowment should be kept at or above the original capital amount, and we have requested that a certain portion of the annual proceeds be returned to the capital so that the capital can grow to hedge against future inflation and other financial difficulties. When the fund goes below par, we ask that the Sylff fellowship be suspended temporarily until the original capital amount has been recovered.

Considering the global financial crisis and its adverse impact on the endowments, the Tokyo Foundation, together with The Nippon Foundation, is reviewing the investment guidelines and hopes to be able to send them to you in the near future.

Other than that, the situation varies greatly from institution to institution, and so for the details, we would like to discuss the matter individually with each institution.

PRESENTATIONS BY SYLFF INSTITUTIONS

Excavating Leadership Potential

Carlos Azzoni, University of São Paulo

I've been the chairman of the Sylff steering committee at the University of São Paulo for the past 15 to 20 years. Our policy is to provide grants to students only after they have finished their coursework for either a master's degree or PhD. We make sure to create a bit of noise in announcing the program so that everyone at the university knows about the Sylff program. We often use the Sasakawa name.

Our initial criterion is that a research project must be international to qualify for a grant. We don't care if an applicant teaches or has another job; this is especially important for lawyers who have a practice, making the fellowship very attractive for them.

This year we received 27 applications, 6 or 7 of which we rejected because they didn't satisfy this basic criterion. If the research covers only one country, we don't consider it.

The students who apply have generally been preselected, and so they are already good students with outstanding grades. We call them for an interview. It's actually more than an interview; we call all of them the same day, and we also call the previous year's fellows to

help us select the new fellows. The applicants have to make a presentation for about 15 minutes on whatever topic they choose. They can talk about their research, they can talk about themselves, about their goals, whatever. It's their choice.

And from that we start evaluating them for other talents that would reveal their leadership potential. We interview them after this presentation, and then we move to the decision-making process involving the previous year's students too.

This is how we operate. We just had our most recent interview two weeks ago.

We now have three fellows for next year, and they already know the previous group. They'll be attending a presentation in December, when the current fellows will make their last progress report. We have these meetings every three months, which are attended by members of the steering committee, previous Sylff fellows, and members of the Brazilian Sylff Fellows Association.

When the current fellows present their research, the steering committee members discuss the contents, and we evaluate their progress. This is something we do as part of the university's rules.

By doing that, we make sure they perform. We create opportunities for them to meet and interact with the previous group to create a feeling of belonging to a community. We explain what Sylff is all about and I think we have been successful in creating a certain set of values.

I want to report that we have just had our first second-generation fellow. In our last selection, we chose a student of a former Sylff fellow, who has now become a faculty adviser. His student will be doing research with us. So, this gives you an idea of the success of this program.



David Platt, University of Texas at Austin

Our program is for graduate students in business, and we focus on students who can provide an international perspective on business issues. We work through a steering committee in the same way that Carlos described. I have been the chair of our steering committee for about ten years. Our selection process is a little different from the way the program is run at many other schools because we are a graduate school and yet our students are not going through a dissertation or research process.

The majority of the students that we have are MBA students. We focus on full-time students, many of whom are seeking a change in their careers, so the program is a chance to influence the kind of career they will choose later on. We also have doctoral students, but this is a relatively small pool.

Speaking now of the MBA side, due to the high cost and two-year duration of the MBA program, if we were to make a significant-



sized grant to cover the costs of participating in the program, just one student would tie up all of our grant money for two years. So rather than making large grants, the steering committee has tried to support the broadening of international education in the MBA program. We select students who show leadership qualities and then use relatively small grants to reach a large number of students, which multiplies the effect of the grant.

We have four kinds of grant programs. The biggest in terms of money is called the Sylff Double Degree Program. The Sylff Double Degree Fellows are MBA students who in their second year choose to go to one of our seven double degree partner schools around the world, all outside the US and Canada. And of this very select group of students we choose two or three whom we will award a fairly large fellowship of about \$10,000.

The second is called Sylff Europe Fellows. European students are underrepresented on our campus because they tend to go to East Coast or West Coast (US) schools. They don't often come to Texas. For purposes of having good geographic diversity, it's very important to try to get more European students. And so we target Sylff money to them.

Our third program is for doctoral fellows who demonstrate leadership on the international stage in the area of business. Often, the main purpose of the grant is to help offset the cost of conducting research internationally, rather than just staying in Austin. We want to encourage an international perspective.

The fourth program is what we call the Global Connections Sylff Fellows Program, or more generically, the Global Study Program. This is our most active program. It involves six students per year to whom we make a relatively small contribution of \$2,500 of Sylff money. We try to identify students who have international leadership potential and then develop that potential with a program that uses them to internationalize the other MBA students. Even though the amount is modest, it is highly prestigious, and all of the MBA students, like

Carlos said, are familiar with Sylff through this program because it's well advertised and there is heated competition.

One major challenge that we confront in running the program effectively is choosing the right students. One error would be choosing somebody who follows the typical MBA path, for example going straight to Wall Street, which is not the leadership quality we're looking for. So, we've worked very hard in the selection process to screen out the students who are likely to follow the traditional path and are simply interested in a little bit of extra money.

The second challenge is to get them to identify with Sylff and the Sylff brand. So we hold various events to make sure they know

that they are Sylff fellows. We hold a closing lunch at the end of the academic year. We bring together all the Sylff fellows from the various programs, including those who've returned from a double degree and the doctoral students. We bring them all together so they can see that Sylff is more than the program that they were in and instills the Sylff brand. But this isn't quite enough to create a lasting perception of the brand.

I would enjoy working with the Tokyo Foundation to figure how to keep in touch with students who aren't traditional researchers and also what we can do that would add value for them after their graduation so they would continue to identify with the Sylff brand.

A Unique Training Platform for Researchers

Joyashree Roy, Jadavpur University

Jadavpur University is the 67th Sylff institution, and we started this program in 2003. The way we look at the program is as a visionary campus initiative. We are experimenting with an institutional process which can encourage independent and innovative ideas for future leaders. This program itself is a research program for me as a Sylff director. We feel it's important to identify leaders but also to build a community within the institution. We need to set visionary goals and implement those goals within the institution so that the right kinds of leaders are selected.

The director is responsible for creating the vision and the goal and implementing it. But the director needs support from the steering committee and mentors who serve as academic advisers.

Gradually, we also get the students into the peer group and receive their input in the selection process. We have made Sylff into an inclusive process over the last seven years,

revising it over time. That's why I said that it's an experiment in the institutional process.

At Jadavpur University, we believe that leaders need deeper understanding of social realities and problems. Sometimes you don't know which discipline should address a particular problem, so we encourage a multidisciplinary and holistic approach. This is the Sylff theme.

We follow a well-planned strategy to identify enthusiastic young minds so they can pursue innovative research on this theme. When we received the Sylff endowment, we thought this would give us an opportunity to work in a niche within the university system. So, we did not put it into our scholarship bureaucracy but kept it as a special program.

We believe that unless we get the word out to everyone, we cannot get the right kind of leaders. So, we want the whole pool to be well informed. We start the process one year ahead of time and advertise in the all-India university newsletter and the internal notice circulation. The JU Sylff Association helps us by their classroom interaction, social networking sites, poster campaign, peer-to-peer e-mailing,



and they have created and maintained a JU Sylff website.

We have three independent reviewers to check for the academic quality of the proposal, leadership quality of the applicant, and compatibility with the Sylff goal. The applicants are shortlisted and asked to defend their proposal in an open forum in front of experts, other applicants, steering committee members, and graduated and current Sylff fellows.

Leaders need to be trained continuously, so we consider Sylff to be a unique training platform for researchers with leadership potential. After we advertise, within a month we

ask them to assemble on a particular day and try to get them to switch to a research mode. We show them how to write a good research proposal and conduct a “progress report” workshop every quarter. They have to present in front of other fellows and mentors the progress they are making with their research.

To facilitate multidisciplinary interaction, we need space for discussion. The university has given us an office and a room for Sylff fellows where we can meet each week. The director voluntarily conducts active mentoring and planning for Sylff Research Abroad and other follow-up programs and networking.

The JU Sylff Program provides mentoring support to fellows to think and act out of the box, which is really important for a leader. The Sylff Association was formed in 2005 with money from the Sylff Network Program of the Tokyo Foundation. It publishes a newsletter and meets each Monday to plan social action programs. For example, members volunteer their time to visit the Leprosy Mission Hospital in Kolkata. We must first go beyond our own stigmas and barriers before we can influence others. So once a year the fellows go to the leprosy hospital and spend the whole day there.

A Three-Level System to Ensure Fairness

Rong Li, Peking University

I work with the Peking University Education Foundation and am in charge of the operation of the Sylff program and other funds donated to the university.

Sylff was established at PKU in 1992. So far, over 960 talented fellows have benefitted from the program. We cherish the precious support and are dedicated to ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the program. Today, I would like to report on



three aspects of our program: Sylff administration, Sylff Plus promotion, and Sylff network building.

In Sylff administration we mainly focus on announcement, selection, and the award ceremony. To keep all eligible students informed, we use all channels available to announce the program, including the website of Peking University and the PKU Education Foundation newsletter.

Every year, we publish a handbook to introduce all scholarships donated to our university. Every program, including Sylff, is described in detail. We e-mail announcements to each college and department. We provide information to them and also ask them to nominate qualified students.

Due to the high reputation and the large amount provided, Sylff attracts many students, and the application process is very competitive. To ensure fairness, openness, and transparency, we have set up a three-level system. The first level is the college and department responsible for nomination and preliminary review. The second level is the PKU Education Foundation in charge of verifying the submitted materials, and the Sylff steering committee is the third level. The committee makes the final decision on fellowship applicants.

Our experience in past years has shown that the three-level system works very well. After the fellow is selected, an award ceremony is held to honor them. Every year in December, PKU holds a ceremony to award all scholarships, including Sylff. We also invite local donors to come to the university to recognize their contribution. Mr. Maruyama said you may be able to attend the ceremony;

we would be very happy to invite you. It is an important event for the university to highlight our top students.

Sometimes, we hold an award ceremony just for the Sylff program when a representative of the Tokyo Foundation comes to visit us. The small-scale ceremony is a good instrument for fellows to better understand the program and build a sense of belonging.

We have seen many fellows become socially responsible leaders in various areas, including in academia and the IT industry.

As for Sylff Plus promotion, we use a website and e-mails to keep fellows updated on the program. When needed, we organize group gatherings or make fliers to deliver the information. We try to serve as a bridge between the Tokyo Foundation and Sylff fellows.

From 2007 to 2010 we sent three PKU fellows for Research Abroad and welcomed three fellows from other institutions.

The third part of our activities is Sylff network building. In order to heighten awareness of belonging as Sylff fellows and as part of the global Sylff network, we set up a website for PKU Sylff fellows in 2004. This is a platform for providing information to and promoting communication among fellows. During the process, we realized that our communication was mainly one-sided. We need feedback from fellows. So, we designed a questionnaire for new fellows.

Since its inception, Sylff has made a profound impact on the university. So on behalf of Peking University, I would like to express our sincere thanks to The Nippon Foundation and Tokyo Foundation. Thank you for your long-term support to our university.

Thematic Orientation to Finding Leaders

Wilhelm Löwenstein, University of Bochum

My name is Wilhelm Löwenstein. I am a professor at the University of Bochum and chairperson of Sylff Bochum. I've been involved with the Sylff steering committee since the very beginning in the late 1990s.

Sylff Bochum has a thematic orientation and is focused on developing policies, dealing with European economic policy and humanitarian aid. This orientation has had a tremendous impact on the selection process and on all follow-up activities, such as tracking the students. Because of our thematic orientation, we have invited the directors of the development research, humanitarian aid, and European economy programs to join the Sylff steering committee.

There is another person representing, the rector of University, so the steering committee is three-quarters academic and one-quarter administrative.

The impact of a thematic orientation on selection is as follows. The fields of development management, European economic policy, and humanitarian aid in international development studies are highly competitive. On average we have between 6 to 12 applications for one place. That means all students are already extremely highly charged.

We want to award the best and brightest, but they are not automatically future leaders. So how can we identify them? We ask them to submit a CV to learn whether they have done any community work. Did the students with very good marks ever engage in activities that were not directed at fulfilling their individual goals? This is the main criteria we use to find bright academics with the potential of becoming future leaders.

The fellowships are usually for one year. This can be extended, based on the self-estimation of how far students have achieved their objectives. We also have supervisors write



recommendation letters. This way, we know the progress of research from both the inside and outside.

We track all our alumni in the development's research group. We just did a tracking exercise and found out that a little more than 50 percent are working for an international organization in development assistance, and roughly 30 percent are working in this field in a developing country. The rest are working at universities.

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That concludes my remarks on what we do at my university, and now I'd like to talk about some of the issues we should address in our breakout session.

There are a number of perceived problems, perceived options, and open questions which I would like to share with you. One that has already been mentioned is the financial crisis. This is a very interesting topic from the perspective of an economist, but a very bad one as a member of the Sylff steering committee, especially if you are living in Europe. The dollar, in which we were obliged to put our investment, is weak. We have very low interest rates and high living expenses for students. If we continue to fund individual doctoral students, for example, we would be able to support only one and a half students.

From my perspective, the right way to deal with this is to adjust our funding formats so we can support more people with reduced re-

turns on investment. An interesting idea that was raised earlier is not giving full scholarships but smaller portions for purposes where they would really make a difference. When students are starting to study, they already have their own source of funding to a large degree. If they had no funds whatsoever they wouldn't even think of applying. Giving a full fellowship is therefore solving a problem that doesn't exist. It would be nice for the recipients, but other uses of the money would probably make a bigger difference.

In addition, there is the problem of getting funded students to identify with Sylff. This is not a problem for Sylff alone but for all fellowship donors around the world.

There are very few exceptions, and they are donors who undertake most of the administration of the fellowships themselves. Fulbright is a good example. Fulbright students get their fellowship from Fulbright, not from a degree-granting university, and they are always in touch with Fulbright and never with Bochum or with the Colegio de México or São Paulo. One of the world's largest fellowships today is the German Academic

Exchange Service. I made a survey in East Africa some years ago where we were trying to find out how well African students knew they were studying with German money. What we found was bad news for the service. More than 80 percent did not even know that they are studying with German taxpayers' money. The identification of Sylff fellows with the Sylff program is much stronger.

One more issue to consider is the perspective of potential future leaders. What do they need to really develop their potential? What would they need to show that they are not only potential leaders but capable of demonstrating true leadership? If we can define the needs of potential leaders, what would be the implications for the program and the instruments that Sylff and the Tokyo Foundation are offering?

This is not written in the preparatory papers for this session, but we may also think about additional instruments that can be provided by the Tokyo Foundation to answer needs from the perspective of the students, rather than the administration.

BREAKOUT SESSION

Major points raised in breakout group discussions and the Tokyo Foundation's responses are summarized below:

ISSUE It may be worth the Foundation's consideration to showcase the kinds of qualities an ideal fellow should possess by presenting a check list to be used for the selection of fellows.

RESPONSE The Tokyo Foundation has already included the desirable qualities of a Sylff fellow in the mission statement of the Sylff program, which is described in the Operational Manual. The Tokyo Foundation encourages members of the steering committee to consider such qualities in the selection process. However, such qualities are different in different cultures, societies, and institutions. The selection method and process within the Sylff community are also quite diverse. Therefore, the Foundation suggests that it is appropriate for each steering committee to decide how it should in-

corporate desirable qualities into the selection process.

ISSUE It would be helpful if current or graduated Sylff fellows could participate in the selection of new fellows.

RESPONSE The Foundation supports this idea as long as fellows' participation adds value to the selection in terms of its openness, fairness, and other factors. Subsequently, interaction among the fellows is expected to increase. Since the selection method and process are diverse within the Sylff community, each Sylff institution has the right to choose whether it wishes to invite the participation of current or graduated fellows during the selection phase.

ISSUE Sylff Connect should be opened to Sylff administrators to facilitate interaction and information-sharing among Sylff fellows and their institutions.

RESPONSE The Tokyo Foundation will be





pursuing this possibility. The Foundation will be reviewing the current performance of Sylff Connect and hopes to increase its usability among fellows before considering the possibility of giving access to Sylff administrators.

ISSUE Sylff fellow associations at the level of institutions should be strengthened.

RESPONSE The Foundation has provided funds in the past to local associations to cover administrative costs as well as project costs. Subsequently, however, the Foundation has reviewed the scheme and concluded that covering administrative costs alone does not strengthen the sustainability of local associations. The Foundation has thus decided to support projects and launched the Sylff Leadership Initiative (SLI), which supports Sylff fellows to undertake social action projects or organize forums on critical social issues. Local associations are welcome to apply for an SLI grant to facilitate their activities.



ISSUE There is a need for new programs or mechanisms to benefit graduated Sylff fellows.

RESPONSE The Foundation believes that Sylff fellows are a tremendous asset for the world and would like to stay in touch with them, support their initiatives, and pursue the possibilities of further collaboration with them for the betterment of society, even after they leave their institutions. The Foundation will continue to consider how best to do this, but at the moment, one way for graduated fellows to receive the Foundation's support is the Sylff Leadership Initiative (SLI), which is open to not only current and graduated fellows but Sylff steering committee members and administrators for collaborative endeavors. The Foundation always looks forward to receiving innovative proposals. Details about SLI can be found at: <http://www.sylff.org/2010/03/23/3054/>.