



Press release

Osaka, September 30, 2023

The Consulate of Switzerland in Osaka opens its doors as the first Science Consulate in Japan

The new Consulate of Switzerland in Osaka will officially open its doors on September 30, 2023, in the presence of Martina Hirayama, State Secretary for Education, Research, and Innovation, a high-level academic delegation, and an impressive local audience. The opening will showcase breakthrough innovations in sustainability, and highlight the close link to the Swiss Pavilion of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai.

Switzerland will increase its foothold in Japan with a new Consulate in the Kansai region, devoted to science, research, and innovation. This reflects the strengths of Switzerland and strong potential in Japan in those critical fields. Two Swiss Presidents have shown their support to the new Consulate during past visits to Japan. Federal Councillor Guy Parmelin announced the establishment of the consulate in August 2021 in Tokyo, and Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis officiated its groundbreaking ceremony in April 2022 in Osaka. The new Consulate is the first science consulate in Japan and part of Swissnex, the Swiss global network connecting Switzerland and the world in education, research, and innovation.

As stated by Martina Hirayama, State Secretary for Education, Research, and Innovation, “our presence in Osaka will be an important step to further strengthen Switzerland’s already excellent bilateral research cooperation with Japan. The new Swissnex location will help to further promote projects between universities, research institutions, and startups. We aim to have a tangible impact and contribute to the well-being of both countries by thinking ahead and finding innovative solutions for pressing challenges of tomorrow”.

Great potential for Swiss-Japanese scientific cooperation

Japan’s high level of technology and quality standards align well with Switzerland’s. Japan is one of Switzerland’s priority countries and an excellent partner for bilateral research cooperation, as demonstrated by the Switzerland-Japan Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement signed in 2007. In Kansai, Japanese and Swiss universities already have concluded around 20 collaboration agreements. Since 2022, Swissnex has been managing a new university mobility program in Japan, the second most sought-after destination for Swissnex programs. In strategic areas such as quantum science, AI, or robotics, Switzerland is increasingly collaborating on a systemic level with like-minded countries, including Japan. The country’s high-level technology and quality standards also benefit startups. Last year, Swissnex supported 53 startups exploring expansion opportunities in Japan.

Consulate of Switzerland in Osaka

Breakthroughs in sustainability

For the official Grand Opening, the new Consulate of Switzerland has chosen the theme 'Breakthrough Trends in Sustainability.' State Secretary Martina Hirayama, accompanied by an academic delegation, and nine startups will showcase outstanding achievements in the presence of high-caliber dignitaries from government, academia, and industry. Demonstrations will include solar fuels, carbon capture from the air, ambient PET recycling, autonomous-legged robots, and drones.

Strong link to Swiss Pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai

The new Consulate's presence in the Kansai region is closely tied to the upcoming World Expo 2025 in Osaka, themed "Designing Future Society for Our Lives." The Swiss Pavilion will present innovations for a sustainable future with the themes "Life" – life sciences, health, and nutrition; "Planet" – environment, sustainability, climate, and energy; and "Augmented Human" – robotics and artificial intelligence, which align with the mission of Swissnex.

The new Consulate of Switzerland is the first Consulate in Japan with a primary focus on science. As part of the Swissnex global network, it connects Switzerland, Japan, and the world in education, research, and innovation. Its mission is to support the outreach and active engagement of its partners in the international exchange of knowledge, ideas and talent. The six central Swissnex locations are strategically established in the world's most innovative regions: San Francisco, Boston and New York in the United States, Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, Shanghai in China, Bengaluru in India, and Osaka in Japan. Together with around 20 Science Offices and Counselors based in Swiss Embassies, the Swissnex network significantly strengthens Switzerland's profile as a world-leading innovation hotspot.

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Consulate of Switzerland in Osaka – Swissnex in Japan

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((Swissnex Info Box))

Swissnex in Japan is the global network connecting Switzerland, Japan and the world in education, research, and innovation. Our mission is to support the outreach and active engagement of our partners in the international exchange of knowledge, ideas and talent. We thereby contribute to strengthen Switzerland's profile as a world-leading innovation hotspot.