

# Anata no ibasho



## Annual Report 2022

April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023

# Tackling Loneliness

What lies behind the social challenges where people cannot talk with or rely on others is the presence of 'loneliness'.

Anata no Ibasho builds a system that enables people to reach out to someone they can trust when they face a struggle. Along with volunteers across countries, we aim to tackling the 'loneliness'.

## Three approaches to tackling loneliness

SNS Consultation Service

Educational programs to prevent loneliness

Advocacy of policies on social isolation and loneliness

## Message from CEO

I would like to express my gratitude for your ongoing support of the organisation. 2022 marked the highest number of child suicides as well as the significant increase in chat requests, making us painfully aware of the heightened seriousness of the challenges we tackle. All the staff and counsellors are committed to continue to make the utmost effort in 2023.

CEO, Anata no Ibasho  
Mr. Koki Ozora

大空幸星



# To the community, to the country, and to the world!

Ibasho has implemented the "Cooperative Agreement on Measures against Suicide, Loneliness and Isolation" with Yokosuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture, the first such agreement signed in Japan. In addition to the engagement with the private sector and cooperation with the federal government to materialize measures against loneliness and isolation within Japan, our operations are extending worldwide, including consultation support for Japanese citizens living abroad (and overseas Japanese corporations).

Number of consultations:

**315,556**

Number of countries where  
counselors reside:

**21**

Number of local governments and  
corporations engaged or collaborated:

**31**

Number of consultations from abroad:

**2,752**

April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023



Empathize with  
'loneliness' - Chat-  
based Consultation

# Providing a place with a sense of belonging, to connect with someone one can trust anytime.

Anata no Ibasho Chat-based Consultation is an SNS-based consultation service supported by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's Suicide Prevention Subsidy Program. It is the only consultation service in Japan available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We actively listen to the clients with acceptance, empathy, affirmation and approval, and we are always there for them. Our main goal is to guide our clients to feel 'zero (neutral)' from 'negative'.

## 24-hour service enabled by utilizing different time zones

Suicide occurs most frequently, from late at night to early in the morning. During this time, the number of consultations also increases. We have made it possible to provide consultation services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, by taking advantage of 'time differences' and having overseas Japanese counsellors respond at late night peak time. We have approximately 597 counselors (as of March 2023) working throughout Japan and in 21 different countries around the world. At our consultation support offices in Tokyo and Osaka, supervisors, regional coordination coordinators and specialized counselors are available 24 hours a day to provide support to our volunteer counselors, respond to clients with high suicide risk, and provide them with referrals to external organizations and authorities.

## "Barrier-free" consultation services

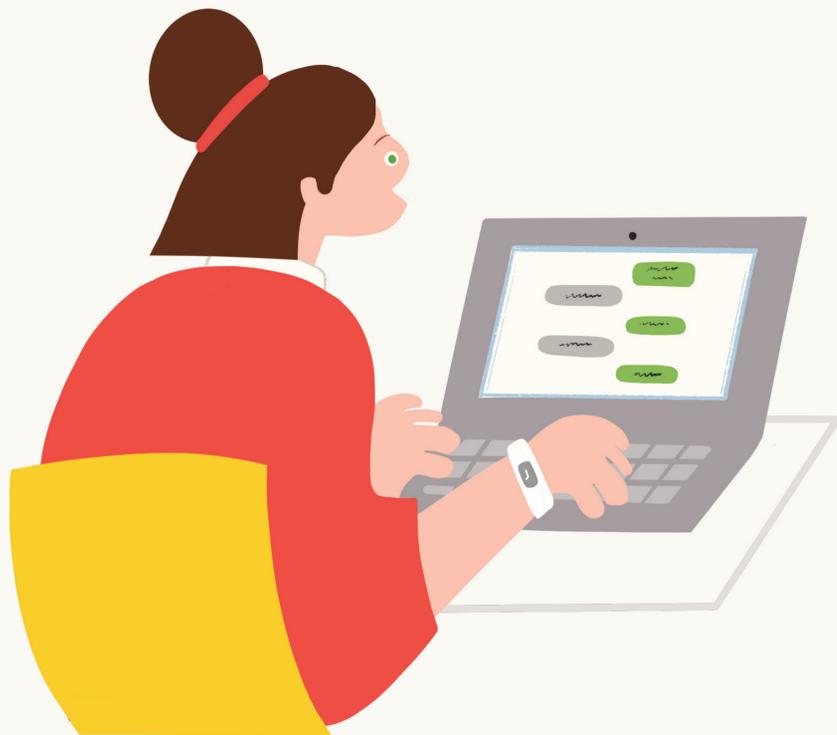
Some of our clients are elementary and junior high school students who do not have phone numbers or cell phones yet. In order to "create a barrier-free consultation service," we do not use like LINE which requires the registration of a phone number, but use a chat consultation system on our website that anyone can access. This makes it possible to consult from laptop computers distributed to each student under the GIGA School Initiative, as well as from school computer rooms and game consoles.

## Utilizing consultation data and know-how for society

In 'Anata no Ibasho Chat-based Consultation', approximately 1 million words (equivalent to about ten paperback books) are exchanged daily. This data becomes incredibly vital as a mental health database. By analyzing consultation data using natural language processing technology, developing consultation systems and chatbots, and verifying the effectiveness of SNS consultations, and by widely publicizing the results of these efforts, we are helping to resolve social challenges such as suicide prevention and measures to tackling loneliness.

## Cooperate with child guidance centers, police, and local authorities

For urgent cases such as suicidal behavior, domestic violence, and abuse, we connect (refer) them to related agencies such as child guidance centers, police, and local governments, and provide ongoing support as needed. From April 2022 to March 2023 the number of referrals for abuse, suicide, domestic violence, and impoverishment amounted to 20 cases. We also provide consultation services to Japanese nationals residing abroad, which are also referred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

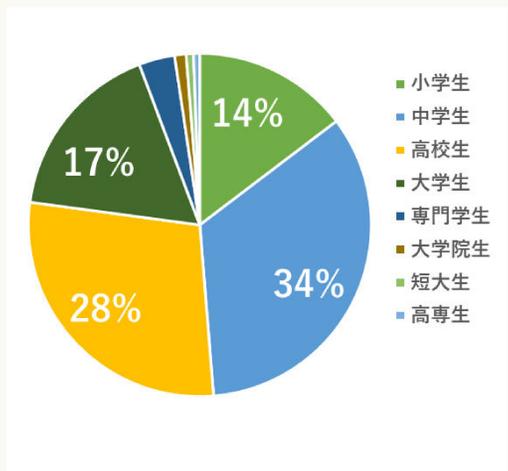


# Chat-based Consultation at glance

FY2022 was a year with weakened 'human connections' due to the prolonged coronavirus pandemic. Anatano no Ibasho Chat-based Consultation received a variety of severe chat requests related to economic insecurity, abuse, domestic violence and bullying, and the number of consultations increased day by day. Our consultation data allows us to reflect on the demographic of our clients and what caused their suffering.

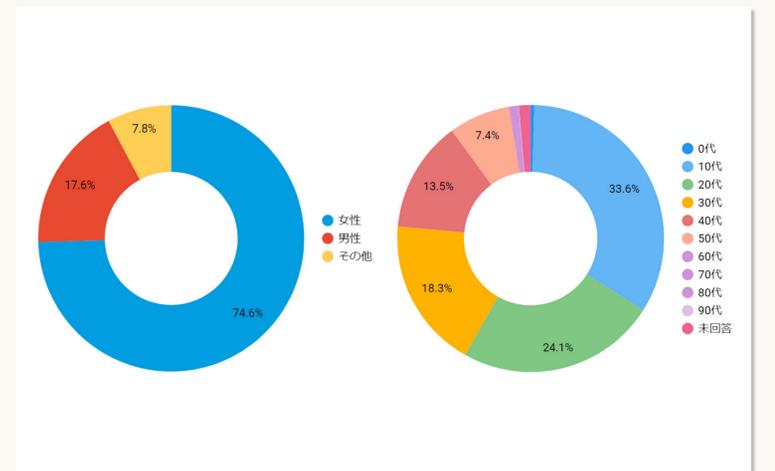
## Attributes of clients

Consultations from children and students have been the most common, with junior high and high school students being the most conspicuous. Furthermore, the number of consultations from elementary school students has been increasing due to the distribution of PCs at schools and the spread of cell phones among them. (Ratio of elementary school students: 9.7% in FY2021 → 14.1% in FY2022)



## Gender of clients

More than 70% of the consultations came from women. It is also noteworthy that those who answered "other" as their gender accounted for more than 10% of the total.

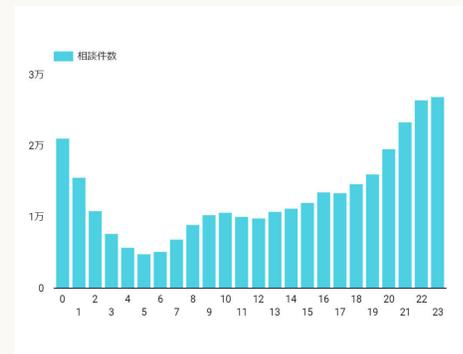


## Age of clients

More than half (57.7%) of all chat requests came from people in their teens and 20s, with the increasing proportion of consultations from teens increasing yearly.

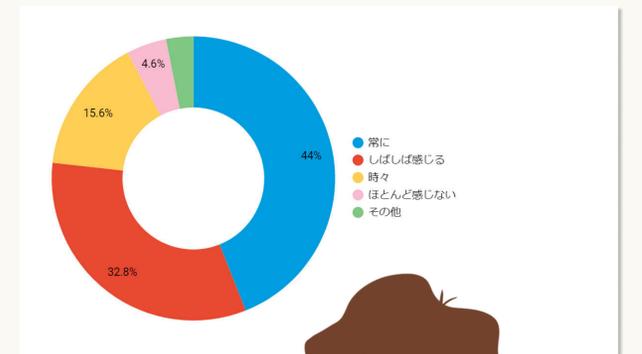
## Time of day most consulted

Over the course of the day, the highest number of consultations are received between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m., with more than 70,000 consultations received annually in the 10 p.m. time slot alone. Regardless of age, many consultations are received during the hours when people tend to be alone.



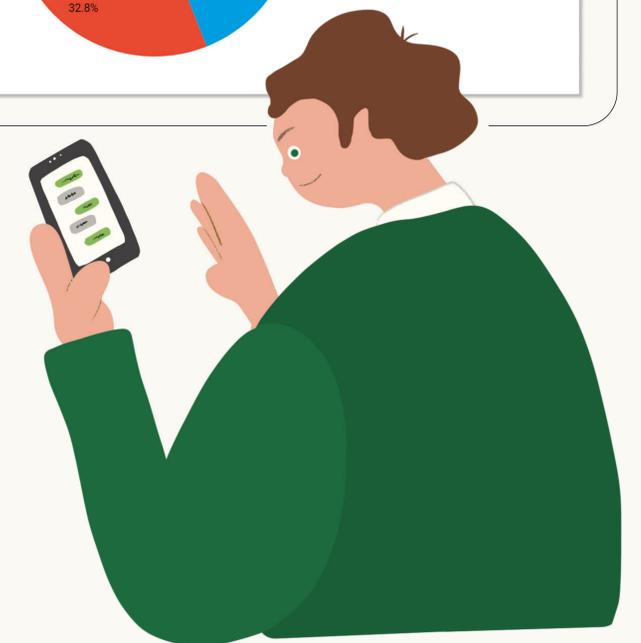
## Proportion of clients feeling lonely

Nearly 40% of the clients said they "always feel lonely". In addition, almost 90% of the clients responded that they "sometimes feel a little lonely", indicating that connecting with others at school or work does not necessarily alleviate loneliness.



## Word cloud

The word cloud visualizes frequently used words from the consultations. In FY2022, many consultations touched on content related to 'death'. It also shows that many consultations were related to human relationships, such as 'friends, parents and married couples'. Moreover, many clients expressed feelings such as 'lonely, exhausted, painful and anxious'. On the other hand, there were many cases in which we received positive words such as "thank you" from the clients after continuing the consultation.



## Empathize with 'loneliness' - Chat-based Consultation

# Individual contribution becomes the power to support society.

We believe that behind various problems people face exists 'loneliness' where people have no one to rely on when they want. We need a system that allows people to 'always' have access to someone they can depend on when they face a challenge. With our volunteer 'Ibasho Counsellors', we aim to be a 'trusted place' that anyone can turn to in times of need.

### Volunteer 'Ibasho Counselors'

As of March 2023, over 600 'Ibasho Counselors' are volunteering at Anata no Ibasho. To become an Ibasho Counselor, you must undergo a screening process and an interview, and complete online training for specialized knowledge and on-the-job training. In addition, Ibasho Counselors participate in semiannual refresher training to improve the quality of counselling skills and to strengthen the collaboration with other counsellors.

### Remote consulting and counselor support.

Since its establishment, we have consistently developed a remote consultation and counsellor support system so that 'Ibasho Counselors' can work anywhere in Japan or worldwide. By doing everything remotely, from recruiting and training counselors to undertaking consultations, we have enabled the 24-hour operation of the consultation service. Furthermore, it has allowed Counselors to receive detailed and personalised support from supervisors and other staff at any time. This remote system also tackles the time and hassle of commute, making recruiting Counselors from the busy working-age population possible.



### A place where we can help each other and learn from each other.

We hold remote 'Ibasho Cafe' sessions as opportunities for counselors to connect with others voluntarily and help and learn from each other. Participants can share their feelings and questions about the consultation they have undertaken. It allows participants to gain new perspectives and insights. At the same time, by having someone else listen to their feelings, they gain a deeper understanding of themselves and the energy to move on to the next consultation.

### Ibasho Cafe held in FY2022

**Newcomers Cafe**  
Sharing any anxiety and problems new counselors may be facing

**Student Cafe**  
A session for students who are a minority among Counselors

**North American/European Cafe**  
Overseas residents can exchange information about the current situation in Japan and differences with other countries.

**Themed Cafe**  
Voluntary study groups led by counselors with expertise in specific areas. (Topics: LGBT, developmental disabilities, self-assertion, nursing, etc.)

Preventing  
'loneliness' among  
adults: Loneliness  
Prevention Program

# The world's first Loneliness Prevention (LP) Program dealing with the 'loneliness of working people'.

Loneliness Prevention Program (LP Program) is a workshop for adults developed to help them acquire and apply accurate knowledge about loneliness and a course of action. The primary purposes include deepening the understanding of loneliness, responding to it appropriately and preventing loneliness from occurring or becoming chronic among participants and people around them. Through collaborations with corporations and municipal governments, the program's content is tailored to the specific needs of the participants.

## Caring for oneself and others through acknowledging loneliness

LP Program consists of two workshops: the first session for understanding loneliness, and the second session for learning active listening as a response to loneliness. 'Loneliness' tends to be confused with isolation and social isolation and is often generalised when, in fact, individuals hold diverse personal feelings. This is why the first session is designed to give participants a shared mindset on 'loneliness'. Following the first session, participants learn about active listening, one of the approaches for dealing with loneliness, and put their learning into practice through chat simulations.

Loneliness is something a large number of people experience at least once in their lifetime. By having correct knowledge of loneliness and how to treat it, more people can care for themselves and those around them. We are committed to widening the circle of the LP Program as one of our initiatives to prevent loneliness.

## Case study: Japan Allergy Tomo no Kai

As part of the skill matching program held by Sanofi, a global healthcare company, we conducted the LP Program over two sessions for the Chief Director and counselors. The first session consisted of a lecture about understanding loneliness, and the second session invited participants to experience chat-based consultations with hypothetical clients. Following our LP Program, staff members from our organisation participated in the program run by Japan Allergy Tomo no Kai that shared summaries and case studies of phone and email consultations with us, enabling the exchange of opinions and feedback.



## Preventing loneliness among children: Children Loneliness Prevention Program

# CLP Program preventing the 'loneliness among children'

The 'Children Loneliness Prevention Program' (CLP Program) is an educational program for preventing issues such as loneliness, isolation and suicides among children. The primary purposes include deepening the understanding of loneliness, responding to it appropriately and preventing loneliness from occurring or becoming chronic among participants and people around them. Through collaborations with schools, the program's content is tailored to the specific needs of the participants. Increased familiarity with chat-based SNS consultation services, campaigning on how to send an SOS to others, and improved awareness among teachers and parents regarding loneliness issues are expected to contribute to the prevention of loneliness.

### Caring for oneself and friends through acknowledging loneliness

CLP Program consists of three workshops: the first session for understanding loneliness, the second session for learning active listening as a response to loneliness, and the third session for experiencing chat-based consultations.

'Loneliness' tends to be confused with isolation and social isolation and is often generalised when, in fact, individuals hold diverse personal feelings. This is why the first session is designed to give participants a shared mindset on 'loneliness', aiming to establish modes of mutual communication. Following the first session, participants learn how to send an SOS and the attitude for listening to personal matters (active listening) through practical role plays and hypothetical chat simulations.

Regardless of age, young people will be able to care for themselves and others by understanding that there is nothing to be ashamed about asking for help, that anyone can have lonely moments, and by knowing appropriate ways to deal with situations.

### Contents of the CLP Program:

<Lecture>

- Introduction to services by 'Anata no Ibasho'
- CEO's understanding of the social issues and how he took action to respond to them
- How the organisation was established and the outlook of the organisation

<Workshop>

- Sending an SOS using words (seeking help)
- Think about what you can do for someone in struggle
- Let others know when you're tired
- Introducing the chatbot by the Cabinet Office

### Comments by middle school students who participated in the CLP Program:

- There were a lot of things that I resonated with. I've thought about ending my life, but it's terrifying to actually do it. There is no one I can trust even if I want to seek help. I feel anxious thinking about my future.
- I thought I should consider the feelings of those who can't attend school, rather than negatively perceiving them. I learnt through the imagery of loneliness that each person thinks differently.
- I learned about how to interact with someone who is feeling low. A close-ended question like 'Are you okay?' limits the respondent's answer to either 'no' or 'yes'. I have always asked 'Are you okay?' so I thought there might have been people who were actually not okay.
- I used to feel lonely when I was a primary school student and couldn't ask for help from people around me. But I remember feeling refreshed when my sister listened to my concerns. I think loneliness destroys people's spirits. There is nothing beneficial to holding on to it, so I want to be able to let it go.

## Tackling Japan's Loneliness [Advocacy of policies on social isolation and loneliness]

# Being the trailblazer in advocating the measures against social isolation and loneliness

At Anata no Ibasho, we have been advising government stakeholders since March 2020 on the 'loneliness' issue, encouraging them to involve the entire society in tackling it. At the House of Representatives plenary session in January 2021, then-Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga declared that the issues relating to loneliness had come to light, establishing the Minister for Loneliness and Isolation post in February. We will continue collaborating with government bodies and corporations to advocate for measures against social isolation and loneliness.

### [Cooperation with the federal government]

- Public and private sector collaborative platform for tackling isolation and loneliness: on February 25 2022, the Cabinet Secretariat established the 'public and private sector collaborative platform for tackling isolation and loneliness', and we attended it as the organiser of a branch meeting.
- An inspection by the Office for Policy on Loneliness and Isolation: the officers for policy on loneliness and isolation from the Cabinet Secretariat visited our office to inspect our consultation services.
- Holding the first symposium: the CEO spoke at the panel discussion session.  
Moderator: Ren Ohnishi, Policy Advisor, the Office for Policy on Loneliness and Isolation, the Cabinet Secretariat  
Panelists:  
Koki Ozora, CEO, Anata no Ibasho  
Ayaka Ishii, President, LightRing  
Chiaki Iwai, Counselor, Aichi Prefecture Toyoake City Hikikomori Consultation Desk
- 'Working group for investigating the realities of isolation and loneliness': The CEO has been nominated as a member on the items related to the fact-finding investigation.
- SNS Consultation Services Consortium: The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare considered the cooperation between the SNS consultation services providers crucial in tackling issues including suicides, loneliness and isolation. The Ministry formed the SNS Consultation Services Consortium involving five organisations in Japan, including Anata no Ibasho, and holds a meeting every two months. By sharing each organisation's know-how and data with other organisations, the consortium seeks to improve consultation techniques and promote SNS Consultation Services in society.

### [Cooperation with municipal governments]

- Concluding an agreement on suicide prevention with Yokosuka City: On March 30 2023, we concluded an agreement for the cooperative services as part of Yokosuka City's counseling program responding to loneliness, isolation and suicide.
- Inspection of welfare service facilities and the distribution of stickers in Ehime Prefecture



### [Cooperation with private companies and organizations]

「Panel display at an academic conference of the Japanese Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect」

「Cooperation with Certified Non-Profit Organizations」  
We cooperated with the authorized NPO SOS Kodomo no Mura JAPAN and authorized NPO Hoboku as a referral destination for clients visiting our chat counseling.

「Cooperation with East Japan Railway Company (JR East)」  
As part of the East Japan Railway Company's (JR East) efforts to promote Suicide Prevention Month in April, a display showing "Anata no Ibasho Chat-based Consultation" was posted on signage at stations in the JR East metropolitan area.



## Tackling the world's loneliness [Advocacy of policies on social isolation and loneliness]

# Taking action on loneliness and isolation with the world through global cooperation

While the perception that loneliness is a problem of the elderly remains strong in many countries around the world, Anata no Ibasho is unique in the world in that 'young people' initiated efforts to tackling loneliness 'on a national scale'. In recent years, numerous countries have published studies showing that loneliness is more serious among the younger generation. We work with relevant organizations and international institutions in respective countries to disseminate various issues.

### Deepening Relationships with British Charity Organizations

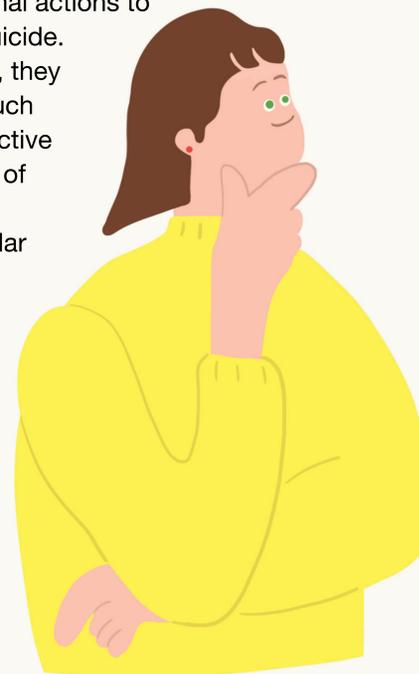
From 2022 to 2023, CEO Koki Ozora and Director Masanobu Kikuchi visited Shout, a chat counseling service in the UK providing support to young people on matters involving isolation and loneliness. Furthermore, they interacted with the Samaritans, a charity organisation for suicide prevention with 70 years of history. The UK was the first country in the world to create a post of Minister for Loneliness, and the first politician to tackle the issue was MP Jo Cox. However, she was murdered in 2016 before she could accomplish her ambitions. CEO Koki Ozora also interacted with the MP's sister, Labour MP Kim Leadbeater and shared with her the movement to pass the bill to prevent loneliness and isolation in Japan. We will continue to develop opportunities for exchange with the UK.



In March 2023, CEO Koki Ozora and Director Masanobu Kikuchi visited the Labour MP, Kim Leadbeater, in the United Kingdom.

### Report on legislative progress in Japan at the GILC regular meeting

In September 2021, Anata no Ibasho joined the Global Initiative on Loneliness and Connection (GILC), an international network of nonprofit organizations tackling the issue of loneliness. GILC works worldwide to end loneliness. Only one organization from each country is eligible for membership after the screening process, and Anata no Ibasho is the only member from Asia. Member organizations are involved in their national actions to tackling loneliness and suicide. At regular GILC meetings, they report on the spread of such movements in their respective countries and the release of white papers by their governments. At the regular GILC meeting, Mr Ozora briefed other members about Japan's efforts to prepare a bill to tackling loneliness while the efforts to combat loneliness and isolation continue to develop worldwide.



### CEO Koki Ozora Joined the WHO Working Group on Loneliness and Isolation as a Global Expert

The first meeting of the Working Group on Loneliness and Isolation was held at the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, and the CEO Koki Ozora attended it as a specialist in loneliness and isolation prevention. With the shared understanding at the WHO that the issues of loneliness and isolation have critical health ramifications for people, preparations are underway to establish a committee to address this issue. Following the meeting, WHO and GILC have also found a working relationship, with GILC providing materials to be included in a research report on loneliness and isolation as part of WHO's public relations activities.

<https://www.who.int/westernpacific/people/koki-ozara-japan#>



Corporation Name:

# Specified Nonprofit Corporation Anata no Ibasho

Founded:

March 2020

Location:

Matsuura Building 2F, 2-9-3 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo Japan

CEO

Koki Ozora

Director

Kunihiro Ogiwara  
Masanobu Kikuchi  
Masakazu Negishi

Auditor

Reiya Kamata

Statement of activity	April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023
<b>I Operating revenue</b>	
1.Membership fees	132,000
2.Donations	8,283,686
3.Grants	136,925,843
4.Program revenue	1,776,257
5.Other Revenues	89,027
Total revenues from operating activities	147,206,813
<b>II Operating expenditures</b>	
1.Program expenses	136,875,964
2.Administrative expenses	3,595,528
Total operating expenditures	140,471,492
Total changes in net assets before income taxes	6,735,321
Corporation taxes and other	0

Balance Sheet	As of March 31, 2023 Unit: Yen
<b>I. Total Assets</b>	
1.Current assets	111,402,538
2.Fixed assets	
(1) Tangible fixed assets	0
(2) Intangible fixed assets	0
(3) Investments and other assets	
Deposit	2,732,000
Total assets	114,134,538
<b>II Liabilities</b>	
1. Current liabilities	98,281,457
2. Fixed liabilities	0
Total liabilities	98,281,457
<b>III Net asset</b>	
Total net assets	15,853,081
Total liabilities and net assets	114,134,538

※This financial statement is prepared according to accounting standards applicable to nonprofit organizations.