

Schull Institute Conference 2025 in Japan Report

1. Overview

The Schull Institute Conference 2025 in Japan was held on Saturday and Sunday, March 15–16, 2025, in Mishima City, Shizuoka Prefecture. This marked the first time the international symposium—traditionally held in Houston, Texas, USA, around Dr. William J. Schull’s birthday (March 15)—was hosted in Japan.

The conference took place at the Mishima Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the networking dinner was held at the Mishima Plaza Hotel. Renowned researchers, educators, and students from both Japan and abroad gathered to present and exchange ideas on a wide range of topics, including medicine, genetics, space science, and regional tourism.

2. Background and Purpose

The Schull Institute was founded in 2000 with the aim of addressing disparities in healthcare and supporting the development of young researchers.

It carries on the legacy of Dr. William Jackson Schull (1922–2017), a pioneer in human genetics, whose philosophy, “The Schullian Way,” blends scientific rigor with warm mentorship.

This first-ever Japan-based conference aimed to strengthen collaboration between Japanese and international researchers, support the growth of young talent, and bring positive impact to the local community.

3. Conference Details

- Dates: March 15 (Sat) – 16 (Sun), 2025
- Venue: Mishima Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2-29 Ichibancho, Mishima, Shizuoka)
- Reception: Mishima Plaza Hotel (March 15, 18:30–)
- Organizer: The Schull Institute
- Sponsor: Motoo Kimura Foundation
- Support: Society for the Promotion of Genetics



4. Keynote and Invited Speakers (Excerpt)

Keynote Lectures:

Wen-Hsiung Li (Institute of Information Science and Genomics Research Center, Academia Sinica, Taiwan)

"Identifying Regulatory Mechanisms That Distinguish Humans from Other Primates"

James M. Musser (Houston Methodist Research Institute)

"Genomic Research and Mentorship During the COVID-19 Pandemic"

Zhongming Zhao (The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston)

"Deep Learning Analysis of Gene Regulation and Cell-Specificity in Alzheimer's Disease"

Tomoko Y. Steen (Georgetown University)

"The Past and Future of Radiation Research—Toward Space Exploration"

Alla Shapiro (Former FDA)

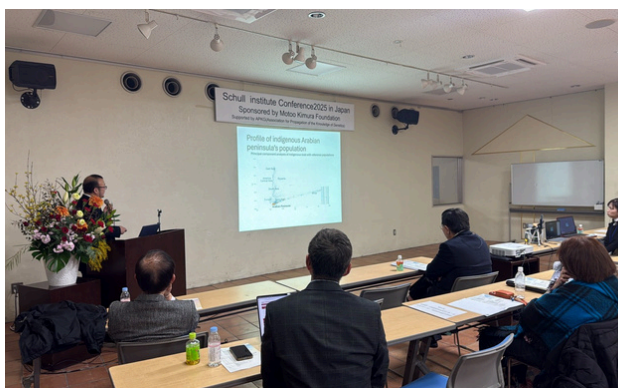
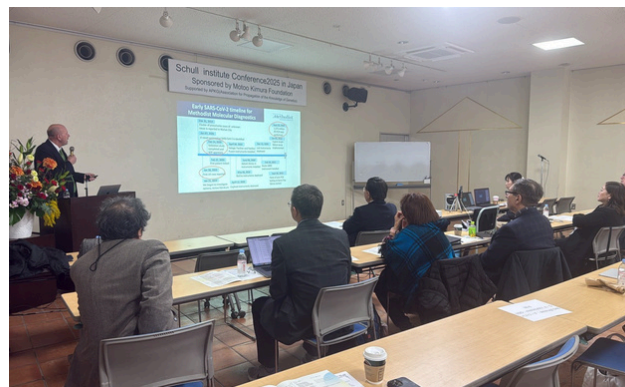
"Research on Radiation Countermeasures for Space Travel"

Invited Talks:

Colm O'hUigin (Georgetown University): "HLA-Mediated Protection in Infectious Diseases"

Heath Mills (Rhodium Scientific): "Space Science and Business"

Other speakers included Robert Volpe, Robin Brigmon, Tatsuya Ota, Katsuhiko Mineta, and more.



Special Session: High School Student Presentations

Students from local high schools in Shizuoka (Numazu Higashi, Mishima Kita, Nirayama, and Shizuoka Johoku High Schools) gave oral presentations on topics such as:

- "Reflection and Soundproofing of Sound"
- "Effects of Different Liquids on Pea Sprout Growth"
- "Design of Origami Gliders"

5. Special Highlights

- Presentations by Japanese high school students received high praise at this international conference, showcasing the strength of science education in Japan.
- A welcome speech was given by Mr. Takeshi Toyooka, Mayor of Mishima, demonstrating strong ties with the local community.
- A performance by the koto music club of Mishima Kita High School added a warm cultural touch, introducing international guests to the beauty of traditional Japanese music and the expressive talents of Shizuoka's youth.
- A local tourism tour was provided for international guests, highlighting Mishima's regional attractions.
- At the networking reception, performances by local violinists and speeches from participants fostered cross-cultural exchanges. In the elegant setting of the Mishima Plaza Hotel, an atmosphere of multicultural friendship and collaboration flourished.

6. Looking Ahead

This first Japan-based conference made significant contributions in three areas: expanding international networks, nurturing the next generation, and strengthening regional collaboration.

With continued commitment to "The Schullian Way," the integration of science and humanity is expected to grow through future activities.

