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Host Research Institution: University of Tokyo

Host Department: Department of the History and Philosophy of Science

Host Researcher: Professor Takehiko Hashimoto

My JSPS fellowship enabled me to spend a wonderful 12 months in Japan from June 2014 in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Tokyo.

During the year I worked primarily on developing my book manuscript on the popularization of science in Japan during the Meiji period. However, because of the vibrant atmosphere in the department, I was able to become involved in other activities. These included co-designing and co-delivering a postgraduate seminar course and co-organizing an international symposium on the topic of my research.

In addition, I participated in reading groups and seminars at the University of Tokyo and beyond. Particularly helpful was a bi-monthly *kuzushiji* (cursive script) seminar, which improved my literacy of early Meiji texts immensely.

The University of Tokyo was an ideal place for my research as most of the materials I required were available in the University's many collections, as well as at other Tokyo-based institutions, such as the National Diet Library and the Imperial Household Agency. The JSPS's generous research fund enabled me to acquire rare material unavailable elsewhere. And, without the opportunity to travel to Japan, I would not have made the many fortuitous discoveries of materials in second hand bookshops.

The year was not all work though. During my stay I joined a taiko club and was able to take part in a public performance – most certainly a 'once-in-a-lifetime experience'! In addition, I made many friends through my running club and gym. One of my fondest memories of the year was participating in my 'local' Shibuya ekiden.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my host, Professor Takehiko Hashimoto for his superb guidance, and to the administrative staff in the department for their patience and professionalism. They took

care of accommodation, office space and other arrangements, making my stay largely hassle-free.

My advice to anyone taking up a JSPS fellowship is to use this invaluable opportunity to develop a wide network within Japan, as it may be difficult to do so while outside the country. In addition, I found attending the pre-departure briefing in the UK helpful. While in Japan I was able to catch up with other researchers I had met there. There may be times when you will want to trade tips with someone in the same position as you.

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