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# 2002-2004 JSPS Fellowship: A personal perspective

- Where?
- Why?
- What?
- How?
- A retrospective
- Summary



# Where?

## Kyoto




Tokyo 8.0 mil  
Yokohama 3.4 mil  
Osaka 2.5 mil  
Nagoya 2.1 mil  
Sapporo 1.8 mil  
Kobe 1.5 mil  
Kyoto 1.4 mil  
Fukuoka 1.3 mil  
Hiroshima 1.1 mil



# Kyoto



 Ancient capital known for its many beautiful old temples and gardens



# Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine



# Why?

- For the science
- For the sense of adventure
- For my career



# What?

■ Ophthalmic research

■ Corneal Stem Cell Transplantation



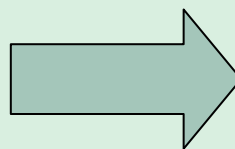
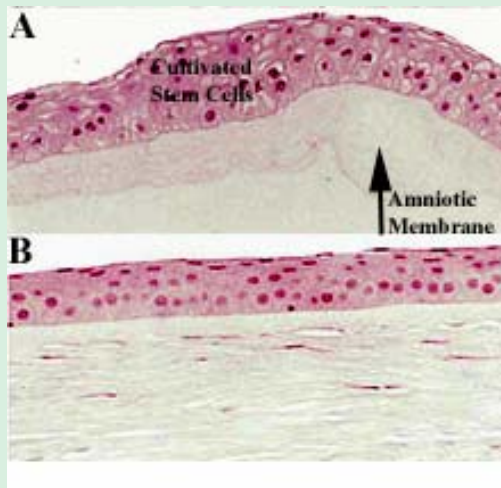
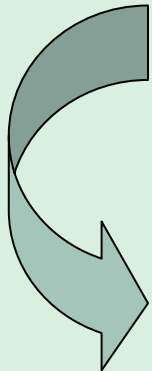
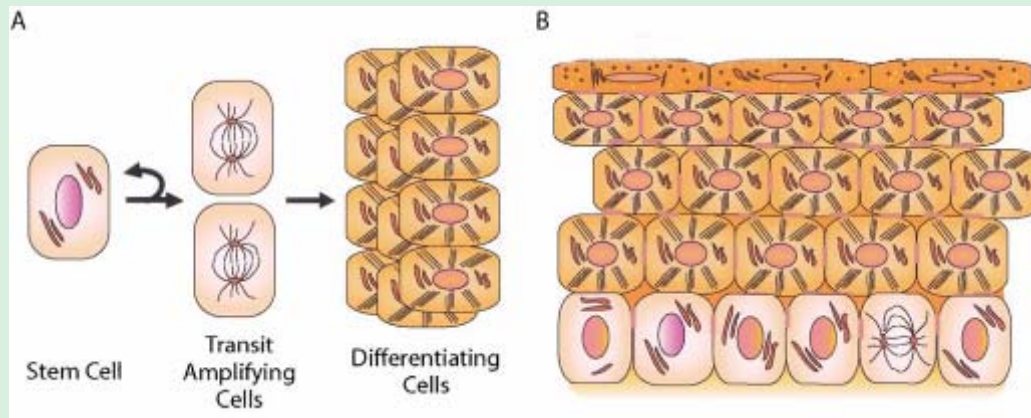
Vision seriously impaired –  
Cloudy cornea  
(Stevens-Johnson syndrome)



Vision restored –  
Transparent cornea



# Ex vivo expansion of corneal stem cells on amniotic membrane





# Present work (Cardiff University)

- Investigating the basic and therapeutic properties of amniotic membrane
  - Using stem cell culture system as a novel platform to study epithelial differentiation in vitro
  - Development of an animal alternative to the Draize eye irritancy test
  - Structure of diseased amniotic membrane pPROM



# How?

- Pre-departure
- Organising your home life
- Organising your work life



# Pre-departure

- Do you need to make NI contributions?  
[www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk) for details (£2 p.w. by dd)
- What clothing to take?  
Japan can be cold, no central heating  
Take only clothing for one season, buy clothes once in Japan (N.B. big feet!)



# Pre-departure

- Don't forget your bible! (text book)
- Ask your Host to nominate a helper.







Ideally this person should:

- Be able to speak English
- Have good local knowledge
- Be available from your arrival
- Have previously lived abroad



# Organising your home life

## A helper can:

-  Smooth your entry into Japanese life
-  Lessen the number of social blunders
-  Find an apartment
-  Set up bank account
-  Set up utility companies
-  Choose a Hanku?



# Organising your work life

- Bring a present for your lab/Host
- Background reading on culture
- Find English speaker
- Try to speak a little Japanese
- Never pass up opportunities to socialise



# Organising your work life

- Don't get frustrated
- Respect the Hierarchy (it is not a mere formality)
- Be prepared to help you colleagues with their English
- Be prepared to work long hours



# A retrospective

- Cutting edge science
- Strong collaborations
- Improved team working skills
- Chotto Nihongo o hanashimasu
- Love of Japanese food





# A retrospective

■ Learnt how to be a more tidy person

■ And to enjoy the simple things



# Summary

- Kyoto is a beautiful location
- The JSPS Fellowship made a significant contribution to my academic career
- Established important collaborations
- Returned 3 times since 2004
- Engaged with Japanese culture



# Conclusions

- Japan has a broad and deep cultural heritage, see and enjoy what you can of it
- Think of your fellowship as the start of a long relationship between you and Japan
- Try to remain in harmony with your Japanese colleagues
- Be prepared to work hard and play hard!  
(strong drinkers welcome)



**Gambatte!**  
(Good luck)

