



First Circular

Invitation for <ICOFORT International Conferenc 2026 in Matsue> 8 - 11 November, 2026

The International Scientific Committee for Fortification and Military Heritage (ICOFORT), one of ICOMOS's scientific committees, is responsible for the conservation and research of so-called military heritage, including castles, fortresses and fortified towns. It has been assessing the heritage value of such sites scattered across the globe, proposing conservation measures and promoting academic research. While its activities were initially centred on Europe and the Americas, in recent years it has been actively expanding its work to include East Asia. In particular, among the three nations of Japan, China and South Korea, initiatives such as the compilation of a glossary of fortification terminology and joint workshops have been undertaken, and further exchanges and deeper research are anticipated in the future.

Japan's early modern castles are the focus of ICOFORT's keen interest as a cultural heritage to be proud of on the world stage. The walled cities of China (Ming and Qing dynasties) and the capital cities of Korea (Joseon dynasty), built during the same period, are also subjects of heritage conservation and joint research with a view to World Heritage inscription, attracting international attention supported by public participation. Consequently, ICOFORT has planned the publication of a glossary of fortification terminology—a common manual for Japan, China and Korea—and work on this is currently proceeding vigorously.

To take this opportunity to open up Japan's fortified cities to the world and promote exchange between experts and citizens on a global scale, it has been decided to hold the ICOFORT International Conference in Matsue this coming November. With the strong support of the three cities (Matsue, Inuyama and Matsumoto) that are home to National Treasure castle *tenshus*, we plan to exchange a wide range of views on issues relating to castles and fortifications from ancient times to the present day through a commemorative symposium and an academic conference, thereby deepening international exchange in this field. We also hope that participants will enjoy the Japanese castle heritage and landscapes distributed from Izumo to Shinano and Owari through the excursions. We look forward to welcoming many of you.

Riichi Miyake, chairman
ICOFORT International Conferenc 2026 in Matsue Executive Committee



Matsue Castle, Bird's eye View



Matsue Castle, *Tenshu*

[Date]

International Conference : 8 November (Sun) - 11 November (Wed), 2026

Post-Conference Excursion: 12 November (Thu) - 14 November (Sat), 2026

Visits to Izumo, Matsumoto and Inuyama areas

[Venue]

Matsue Terra

478-18 Asahi-machi, Matsue-shi, 690-0003 Japan (in front of JR Matsue Station)

[Organisation]

Organised by 'ICOFORT International Conference 2026 in Matsue' Executive Committee

Co-organised by ICOFORT / ICOMOS Japan / Matsue City / Inuyama City / Preparation Working

Group for the Promotion of the 'Early-Modern Japanese Castles' for the World Heritage Inscription

/ ARCHI-DEPOT CORPORATION

[Theme of the Conference]

Castle, Fortification and *Tenshu* - Defensive System or Symbols?

[Schedule]

date	main event	accompanying Event	remark
7 Nov (Sat)	Arrival of Participants at Matsue		
8 Nov (Sun)	AM: Registration (at Matsue Terra) PM: Opening Addresses + Keynote Speeches Symposium "The Age of Exploration and Fortified Cities" (tentative)	18:00 Welcome Reception (Hotel Hakucho)	Opening event held in Matsue Terra in the afternoon
9 Nov (Mon)	AM: Academic Session (Parallel Session) PM: Academic Session (Parallel Session)		Venue: Matsue Terra
10 Nov (Tue)	AM: Academic Session (Parallel Session) PM: Academic Session (Parallel Session)		Venue: Matsue Terra
11 Nov (Wed)	AM: Visit to Matsue Castle and History Museum etc. PM: Cruising around Castle (option), Break-up		Participants of the Post-Conference Excursion are to be transferred to Izumo by bus in the afternoon
12 Nov (Thu)	Post-Conference Excursion Visit within Izumo Region		Izumo Shrine, Tatara Furnace Workshop, Medieval Fortress etc.
13 Nov (Fri)	Post-Conference Excursion Visit to Matsumoto City and Castle		AM: transfer from Izumo to Matsumoto by air PM: Matsumoto Castle, Municipal Museum etc
14 Nov (Sat)	Post-Conference Excursion Visit within Inuyama City Break-up at Nagoya in the late afternoon		AM: Matsumoto to Inuyama PM: Inuyama Castle and Shiro to Machil Museum, etc. Accommodation in Nagoya eventually (option)

[Expense]

Participants are expected to pay the following expenses:

- Registration Fee 200 US\$
- Travel expense to/from Matsue
- Accommodation and meals during the Conference except the reception
November in Matsue is the busient period of the year so that the organiser is ready to arrange or intermediate the accommodation
- Post Conference Excursion (eventually, the detail will be informed at the beginning of June)

[Submission of Paper]

Those who are willing to make presentation in the Conference have to submit the full paper. The author has to pass the screening processes when he/she submit the abstract. Once he/she is accepted, full paper has to be submitted in a due time. The languages of the Proceedings are English or Japanese, but for the Japanese, English abstracts should be added.

Accordingly, the Proceedings will be edited and published based on the following schedule.

Submission of Abstract: deadline 1 June (Mon), 2026

Acceptance of Abstract: 22 June (Mon), 2026

Submission of Full Paper: deadline 5 October (Mon), 2026

Completion of Final List of Presentation: 19 October (Mon), 2026

Abstract should be written in English or Japanese and sent to the secretariat by e-mail in the form of PDF and Word. The e-mail address will be announced in the Second Circular of 13 April.

[Thematic Area]

The theme of ICOFORT International Conference 2026 in Matsue is "Castle, Fortification and Tenshu - Defensive System or Symbols". The presentations will be allocated into the issue-based interdisciplinary sessions. The applicants are expected to assume the following areas for their presentation.

- ✓ Defensive System and Techinque for Cities and Settlements
- ✓ Military Landscape and Symbolism
- ✓ Castle / Fortification and Water System
- ✓ Naval Affairs and Port
- ✓ Modern Military Facilities and Sites
- ✓ Documentation, Conservation and Management of Military Heritage

[Time Line]

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 13 April (Mon): | 2 nd Circular, Call for Paper accompanied by detailed information, to be announced through Web-Site |
| 1 June (Mon): | Deadline for receipt of Abstract
3 rd Circular (detail of Post-Conference Excursion) |
| 22 June (Mon): | Announcement on acceptance of Abstract |
| 6 July (Mon): | Closing of Registration |
| 20 July (Mon): | 4 th Circular, Detailed information about the conference and post-conference tour |
| 5 October (Mon): | Deadline of submission of Full Paper |

[Language]

For the conference, 2 languages are to be used as working languages: Japanese and English.

[Visa]

The organizer will support visa application formalities for those who are required to apply for Japanese visa.

[Accommodation]

Actually, the organiser has booked tentatively the following hotels from 7 to 11 November (4 nights). Those who wish to book the hotel, please take contact with the organiser.

1. Matue Excel Hotel Tokyu
2. Hotel Rout Inn Matsue
3. Matsue Plaza Hotel
4. Toyoko Inn Matsue Ekimae

[Post-Conference Excursion]

The excursion is programmed as follows:

11 Nov (Wed)

Evening, accommodation in Izumo (Dormy Inn Izumo)

Hotels in Matsue on this date is nearly fully booked due to a big conference, so that the organiser has booked another hotel in Izumo City. After the cruising around the castle (opetion) of personal sightseeing in the afternoon, excursion participants are transferred to Izumo by bus in the afternoon.

12 Nov (Thu)

Visits to Izumo Great Shrine, Tataru Furnave Workshop and the site of a medieval fort. Accommodation in Izumo.

13 Nov (Fri)

In the early morning, flight from Izumo Airport to Itami Airport, then transfer to Matsumoto by bus. In the afternoon, visits to Matsumoto Castle and Historical Museum and so on. Accommodation in Matsumoto.

14 Nov (Sat)

In the morning, transfer from Matsumoto to Inuyama by bus. Visit to Inyuyama Castle and Siro-to-Machi Museum, eventually Uraku-en Tea House Garden. In the late afternoon transfer to Nagoya, then break-up. Eventually accommodation in Nagoya

15 Nov (Sun)

Technical visit to the Resoration Site of Nagoya Castle (optional)



Izumo Great Shrine



Performance of Tataru Furnace in Oku-Izumo



Izumo Kagura



Site of Mitoya Fortress



Matsumoto Castle



Kaichi School (Matsumoto)



Inuyama Castle



Joan Tea House in Uraku-en Garden (Inuyama)

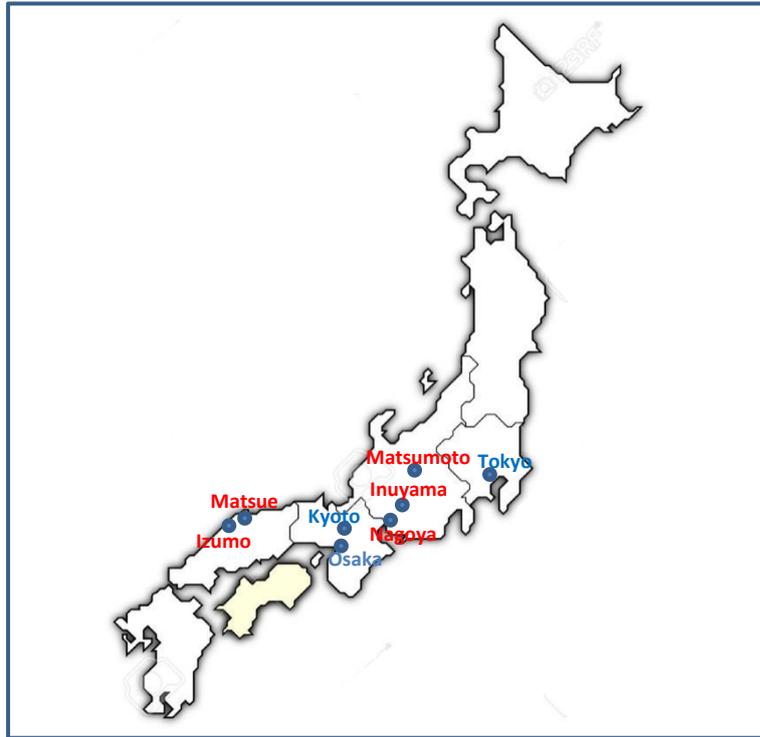


South-western Tower of Nagoya Castle



Interior of Honmaru Palace in Nagoya Castle

The detail of the post-conference excursion will be announced by the 3rd Circular on 1 June. Those who want to participate in the excursion will be requested to register and pay the travel expense before the middle of August.



Related Cities in Japan

[Contact]

For the detail of the conference, please refer to the web-site to be announced by the middle of April (English and Japanese).

For inquiries, please contact the secretariat:

Secretariat of the Executive Committee for ICOFORT International Conference in Hikone

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c/o Japan ICOMOS National Committee

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