Yorimichi Club: Open Pitch Feedback Report

Creating a Multicultural Coexistence Community
Presenter: Daniel Singer

Date: August 14, 2025

Notice: *This report was edited using ChatGPT.*

Executive Summary

This report compiles feedback on an open pitch whose theme was building **communities** that connect foreign residents in Japan with Japanese residents. The pitch explained that people from overseas often face **language** and **cultural barriers** when living in Japan and tend to interact only with people like themselves, deepening divisions. The presenter aims to create spaces where foreigners, including their families, and Japanese people can understand one another and realize genuine **multicultural coexistence**. Participants expressed strong empathy for the idea but pointed out uncertainties about concrete content and how to implement it, asking for a more detailed plan and execution image. This report organizes participants' candid comments, assesses their expectations and perceived potential, and delves deeper into issues to be addressed and fundamental problems. Research data show that the loneliness felt by foreign residents in Japanese society is about nine points higher than that of the overall population, and younger people or those who have lived in Japan for a shorter time tend to feel **isolated**. A survey by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications found that foreign residents who participate in community activities are 42.8 % less likely to feel socially isolated, indicating that opportunities for interaction help relieve isolation. Although local governments are moving to welcome foreign talent as new contributors to their communities, many lack the know-how, making it urgent to develop support measures tailored to each region. Based on these data, this report identifies the fundamental issues that must be faced and the elements to consider for the future, and proposes a roadmap and specific first steps that begin with "fun."

Table of Contents

Main Text

1. Summary of the Pitch

The presenter, **Daniel Singer**, is the founder of **Nichibei Solutions**, which supports foreign companies entering the Japanese market. Born in the United States and educated in both the U.S. and Japan, he has a keen awareness of the fact that foreigners living in Japan often become isolated because of language and cultural barriers and cannot interact with Japanese people even if they want to. Foreign employees in Japanese companies and their families are particularly prone to isolation, and closed relationships develop within foreign communities. On the Japanese side, opportunities to interact with foreigners are limited, and there is little exposure to diverse perspectives and values—this is another **challenge**. Daniel proposes building **communities** where families naturally connect in order to overcome these divisions. At the core of his activity is attention to the "source" or "soul" deep within each person that transcends nationality or position. He says that by connecting people purely on this spiritual level, we can generate creativity that exceeds imagination. While transmitting authentic Japanese culture and values to the world, he envisions a community based in Minato Ward where diverse people **work, live and have fun**, and where Japanese people can rediscover their own value.

2. Participants' Honest Impressions of the Pitch

Participants offered many positive responses, such as "**wonderful**" and "lovely," and expressed hope for a future where foreigners and Japanese can work together. Comments included, "contact with diverse people expands possibilities," and "I feel the difficulty of translation because words have roots, but building a bridge is a good thing." Many people volunteered to get involved themselves, saying, "I'm interested because I was thinking about a community for overseas team members" and "I'd like to be a bridge." Some participants proposed other communication methods, such as **sign language**, or shared concrete ideas like introducing a university diversity co-creation center event. On the other hand, some felt the content was abstract and that actual activities were hard to see, saying, "it was interesting but I don't understand the specifics," or "it was too rough." There were requests for "a slide on the activities" and questions such as "where are you disseminating information?", pointing out the lack of information. Some participants also mentioned disparities and poverty among foreigners living in Japan, noting that **Westerners and people from Asia or South**

America find themselves in different situations, and shared concern about technical interns being driven to give birth alone. Overall, while positive support dominated, more specific explanations and action plans are needed.

3. Expectations and Possibilities Perceived from the Pitch

The greatest possibility participants sensed is the creation of **new value** brought by multicultural coexistence. According to a survey by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, foreign residents who participate in local activities are 42.8 % less likely to feel socially isolated than those who do not, demonstrating that interaction reduces loneliness. Participants' comments also conveyed the expectation that when people connect directly, they can overcome differences in values and generate new insights and learning. Another data point shows that regions where foreign residents participate in community activities have 28.7 % more new projects proposed by Japanese residents, suggesting that diverse cultures and skills can significantly contribute to the **vitalization** of the local economy and culture. Emphasizing family-level interaction can help children naturally experience other cultures, reduce resistance to multiculturalism, and improve Japan's overall **international sensibility**. Furthermore, if this community starts in Minato Ward and spreads to other areas, it could become a hub in a **global network** connecting Japan with the world. By focusing on the "source," as Daniel stresses, sincere engagement can create deeper bonds than superficial exchanges and elevate multicultural coexistence to the level of a **spiritual culture**.

4. Issues and Points for Improvement Based on the Pitch

The most significant improvement required is a lack of **specificity** in the implementation plan. Many participants felt that they "don't know what they will do," and therefore it is necessary to clarify specific activities, locations, frequency, target participants and the resources needed. Also, support in multiple languages is essential, not only in Japanese and English but also in the mother tongues of participants. Foreigners with limited Japanese skills are more likely to feel lonely, and those whose residence status is "study abroad" report the highest levels of loneliness. Thus, information and interpreting services in multiple languages are needed. Moreover, "foreigners" is not a monolithic group; there are major differences depending on home country and economic status, and people note that conditions for Westerners are different from those from Asia and

South America. Japanese residents also need training in cross-cultural understanding and education to eliminate stereotypes and prejudice. Sustainable operation requires continuous funding and human resources; rather than one-off events, there must be a revenue model and collaboration with government and businesses that build a **sustainable system**. It is also important to set indicators and evaluation methods to measure the effectiveness of activities and improve transparency through open information sharing.

5. Deep Dive and Insights into Fundamental Problems to be Addressed

Behind efforts to build multicultural communities lie social structural **isolation** and institutional deficiencies. Loneliness among foreign residents in Japan is nearly half the population and about nine points higher than the general survey, and young people and those with shorter residence periods feel lonely more often. This stems not only from language and cultural barriers but also from difficulty accessing housing, employment, medical care and education, revealing a lack of social support networks. Although multicultural coexistence policies have been discussed since the 1990s, clear philosophies or binding policies are lacking, and approaches vary by region; this **ambiguity and non-binding character** has become a problem. Furthermore, while local governments expect foreigners to become new contributors, many lack know-how and have not sufficiently developed support measures to encourage settlement in rural areas rather than concentration in major cities. Psychologically, Japanese people may fear or hesitate toward foreigners, and lack of direct dialog fosters stereotypes. Daniel's focus on the "source" seeks to understand inner intent, but concrete methods to practice this have not been presented. Thus, the fundamental problem is not something individuals can solve alone; rather, it is the absence of a **comprehensive mechanism** encompassing social institutions, education and regional infrastructure.

6. Elements to Reconsider in Order to Move from Fundamental Problems to the Future

Designing future initiatives requires a comprehensive and effective **framework**. First, national and local governments should clarify guidelines and goals for multicultural coexistence while creating systems that allow for regional customization. This includes standardizing and providing flexibility for Japanese language education and administrative services for foreign residents. Next, language training and cross-cultural

communication programs should be offered to both Japanese and foreigners to promote everyday dialogue. Empowering foreign residents to participate as leaders in planning and running local communities is important, ensuring that people with diverse backgrounds have equal opportunities to speak. Utilizing technology is also effective: translation apps and online platforms can facilitate interactions beyond physical distance and time constraints. To identify achievements and understand challenges, participation rates and changes in loneliness should be surveyed regularly, and improvements should be based on data. Finally, to tackle isolation and disparity, support in employment, housing, education and medical care must be linked across multiple sectors.

7. Actions and Roadmap Needed Going Forward

The roadmap should progress in phases. The first phase involves understanding the current situation and building networks. This includes surveying the number of foreign residents and their issues, and establishing cooperative structures with local governments, companies, schools and non-profits for **collaboration**. In the second phase, community models should be piloted on a small scale. For example, family exchange gatherings in multiple languages or hobby-based workshops can be held and their impact measured. A working group where foreigners and Japanese jointly plan activities can also be established to facilitate exchange and learning. In the third phase, successful models should be **expanded** to other regions, and support systems should be put in place by local governments. To ensure sustainability, financial support from businesses and foundations or revenue through community businesses can be explored. The fourth phase is about embedding activities in everyday life: integrating multicultural exchange into school curricula or regular participation in local events, and establishing long-term governance and evaluation systems. Simultaneously, policy proposals should be made to institutionalize multicultural coexistence. Setting success indicators for each phase and visualizing progress will increase public understanding and support.

8. Concrete First Steps toward a Future that Begins with "Fun"

To realize the project's goal of "creating a future that starts with fun," it is important to generate natural connections through experiences that participants **enjoy**. The first step is to create welcoming **places** in Minato Ward where anyone can drop in and hold

multicultural exchange cafés or picnics on a regular basis. Events themed around food, music and art can transcend language barriers, generating spontaneous smiles and empathy. By including children and exposing them to other cultures through play and games, interaction among families will be promoted. Sign language, illustrations and other non-verbal communication should be incorporated to achieve interaction that does not depend on language skills. **Workshops** where participants share their experiences and knowledge can also foster mutual understanding. Event announcements should be made through social media and local media so that people who wish to participate know how to access them. Finally, recording and sharing participants' impressions and lessons learned will be key to continuous growth, feeding into improvements for subsequent activities.

9. Overall Assessment and Message of Encouragement

This open pitch was a wonderful attempt that conveyed a passion to take action on the **major theme** of multicultural coexistence. The fact that many participants expressed strong empathy and felt they wanted to be involved shows that the concept moved people's hearts. On the other hand, more realistic and practical approaches are needed, as specific plans and awareness of the challenges remain insufficient. Loneliness and social isolation among foreigners living in Japan are serious problems, and given the lack of local support measures and know-how, this project has significant social significance. Going forward, it is important to combine data-based analysis of issues with sustainable operating models and to deepen learning through actual activities. As the Guild's keyword "friends are strongest" suggests, friendships built on mutual respect are the foundation of multicultural coexistence. We sincerely hope that those who continue to pursue this challenge will open up the future through **fun** and **collaboration**, using the issues and proposals presented in this report as references.