

Entries sought from foreigners for essay contest on Soseki

日本語エッセー募集
「漱石とわたし」

On the 100th anniversary of the death of Natsume Soseki (1867-1916), The Asahi Shimbun Co. and three other organizations will jointly hold an international essay contest on the influential Japanese author.

The Soseki International Essay Contest is inviting entries on the continuing appeal of his works among foreigners.

Soseki, one of Japan's most famed and popular authors, lived in the period of transition to the modern society. His works have been translated overseas and his representative work, "Kokoro" (Heart), has been translated into more than 20 languages.

Soseki's works had a major influence on Haruki Murakami, who is a representative author of contemporary Japan.

The nation's modernization has brought such problems as intensified competition, a loss of foundation for people's daily lives, and deeper isolation in society and to individuals.

The problems are also universal and are challenges for contemporary society, which is facing drastic changes from globalization.

In the essay contest, entries will be accepted from foreigners whose native language is not Japanese, including international students studying in Japan. Participants are required to write essays in Japanese about Soseki's appeal, which remains strong even today. Those entries must not be academic theses.

Theme: "Soseki and I." The essay must include the circumstances about when the participant read Soseki's work for the first time (Title of the work, when, where, in what language and why).

Qualifications for participation: People living overseas or in Japan whose native language is not Japanese. For those residing in Japan, their stay in the country must be less than two years. International students studying in Japan are also eligible to participate.

Rules for participation: The number of Japanese characters must be 2,000 or less. It is recommended that essays be written on a personal computer and sent as a file attached to an e-mail. But submissions through conventional mail or through faxes will also be accepted. When writing essays by hand, please use manuscript paper. In any of those instances, please attach the application form (http://www.asahi.com/special/soseki/download/Soseki_International_Essay_Contest_Application_Form.pdf) to the essays.

Destination:

For e-mail submissions: soseki@soseki.biz

For conventional mail: "Soseki International Essay Contest" Jimukyoku (secretariat), 1141-10 Kamitome, Miyoshimachi, Irumagun, Saitamaken 354-0045

For faxes: 049-274-7815

Deadline: Aug. 10, 2016

Three winners (including highest and second highest award) will be invited to attend a symposium on Natsume Soseki which will be held at the Yurakucho Asahi Hall in Tokyo on 10th December 2016. For all winners will be awarded Special set of Soseki books .

Judges (In random order, honorifics omitted): Kang Sang-jung, director of Kumamoto Prefectural Theater; Kunihiro Nakajima, professor emeritus at Waseda University; Robert Campbell, professor at the University of Tokyo; Hiroyasu Ando, president of the Japan Foundation; Atsushi Okamoto, president of Iwanami Shoten Publishers; Yoshihide Suzuki, chancellor of Ferris Jogakuin; Yoichi Nishimura, managing director in charge of the editorial office at The Asahi Shimbun Co.

Prizes: One "saiyushusho" (highest award); two "yushusho" (second highest award); and about five "kasaku" (third highest award)

Announcement of winners: In The Asahi Shimbun and The Asahi Shimbun Digital in autumn 2016

Organizers: The Asahi Shimbun Co., Japan Foundation, Iwanami Shoten Publishers and Ferris University

For more information, visit (<http://www.asahi.com/shimbun/sosekiessay.html>) (Japanese only).

