

For Immediate Release

**BXAI's Asian Future Leaders Scholarship Program (AFLSP)
Empowers Asia's Young People Through
Intercultural and Interdisciplinary Exposure**

(Tokyo, August 3, 2016) Echoing global concerns about motivating and mobilizing young people toward positive activism and good citizenship, Bai Xian Asia Institute (BXAI) officially kick-started its second BXAI Summer Program, a crucial element of the Asian Future Leaders Scholarship Program (AFLSP), which will be held in Tokyo at Waseda University from August 3-24 (Summer Program 2016). The three-week program aims to bring together AFLSP Scholars from across Asia for constructive dialogue, mutual understanding and lifelong friendships. It is uniquely designed to enrich academic discourse with experiential learning to inspire scholars into action. The Opening Ceremony was held at Waseda's International Conference Center from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Faced with unprecedented challenges in the dynamic and quickly evolving Big Data world, young future leaders need to sharpen not just their intellect but also their business acumen. Both are essential for them to reduce and filter information overload, drive concerted collaborative efforts across borders, devise new ideas and practical solutions, and solve the pressing issues in their lives. This year, BXAI will offer social entrepreneurship workshops to equip AFLSP Scholars with basic startup skills, and plant in them the seeds of an exploratory spirit.

BXAI's mission of *building bridges across cultures* matches Waseda's commitment to produce leaders by promoting peace and progress through intercultural and international education. Waseda is one of the six Anchor Universities of the AFLSP and has been BXAI's invaluable core partner since 2014. From its establishment in 1882, it has been Waseda's mission to produce leaders, counting among its alumni seven prime ministers and countless other politicians, business leaders, journalists, diplomats, scholars, scientists, actors, writers and artists, in Japan and across Asia.

More than 200 people from the Bai Xian Community, including BXAI's partner universities, corporates, philanthropic or non-profit organizations, governments and like-minded individuals, and over 130 students currently enrolled at our 13 partner universities in Greater China, Japan and Korea, are attending the Summer Program 2016. Students will interact with more than 50 renowned speakers in the arts, politics, academia and business, as they exchange thoughts about global topics related to East Asia. Students will also participate in stimulating team-building challenges, focus on personal development and group projects, and socialize through excursions, sports and appreciation of the arts.

Increasingly volatile economies, rapid technological advances, aging populations, environmental problems, and other complicated situations are perplexing leaders around the globe. BXAI strongly believes that the complexities of our

world in the 21st century demand a multifaceted approach to finding solutions. The BXAI Academic Committee comprises progressive educators, who treasure interdisciplinary and intercultural debates that serve to nurture an open mind, a global vision, and a compassionate heart. The five main themes of the Summer Program 2016 are: (1) Science and Sustainability; (2) Long-lasting Peace in East Asia; (3) Influence of Popular Culture in East Asia; (4) Poverty Issues in Asia and Globalization; and (5) Ageing Society and Women's Role in Asia. One particular topic that strikes a chord with the BXAI leadership team is reconstruction and recovery from wars and natural disasters. Waseda professors will lead two separate study trips, one to Hiroshima, another to Tohoku.

At the Closing of the Summer Program 2016 on August 24, BXAI will announce the launch of its Alumni Initiative Award, which will encourage AFLSP Scholars to take the lead in running research-based projects for social impact, in line with one of the five main themes. As AFLSP Scholars identify issues that appeal to them personally, BXAI hopes to see some of them, who have the vision, passion and energy, to work alongside their friends and mentors to develop real solutions for Asia's most pressing issues.

It was a great honor to BXAI to have Mr. Tadashi YANAI, Chairman, President & CEO, Fast Retailing Co. Ltd, a Waseda graduate, to give the keynote address at the Opening Ceremony. Mr. YANAI shared with us his own long-lasting friendship with Mr. Ronald CHAO, Honorary Chairman of BXAI. The 30-year strong bond between them clearly revealed the kindred entrepreneurial spirit that brought them closer and set them apart as two tremendously successful businessmen. Through his speech titled "Go Beyond Borders – To Make a Positive Difference in the World", Mr. YANAI made a passionate appeal to AFLSP Scholars to foster a considerate mindset, nurture a network of like-minded friends, and reach out to meet other people's needs.

"Young people, who are responsible for the future, need opportunities to learn deeply from one another, understand one another, and foster friendships. To that end, we need a program that combines the strengths of industry and academia to foster the leaders of the next generation.

"The world is deeply rooted in stereotypes, old-fashioned constraints, closed-minded customs, and vested interests, as well as the barriers in your own heart. You must overcome these borders. The world is heading in a positive direction. I hope you set out with high hopes, connect with the world, and build friendships, while questioning what positive differences you can make in society."

Another heavyweight speaker, Prof. Ezra VOGEL, Henry Ford II Professor of the Social Sciences Emeritus, Harvard University, held an intensive engagement with the Scholars on the "Long History between China and Japan". Prof. VOGEL frequently speaks and lectures about the cross-straits relationship in view of all the different political, social and economic aspects of Asia. With a career spanning many decades, Prof. VOGEL has written numerous important books and bestsellers, including "Japan As Number One" and "Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China".

At the Opening Ceremony, Prof. VOGEL shared his insights on the historical ties between China and Japan, highlighting three important periods during which the two countries learned from each other intently. Prof. VOGEL fielded diverse questions from AFLSP Scholars on history and modern world politics during an engaging question and answer session.

In response to one AFLSP Scholar's question about how we can learn from history, he emphasized that there were many sources of information beyond textbooks and propaganda. With access to the Internet and affordable world travel, we can learn by seeing things first hand and examining evidence carefully ourselves to make our own judgments. Prof. VOGEL, himself a product of years of intercultural immersion, encouraged students to take up the important role of ambassadors to help improve relations between nations at a personal level.

“There are many similarities between how Japan and China have developed over time. This has led, and can still lead, to cooperative relations.”

“China needs stability. There is the desire to keep the peace and order. You cannot keep stability through hegemony in the new world. Co-operation preserves stability.”

“Nationalism gets you enough integration to set rules for citizens within their own country. Balance needs to be maintained to keep emotions under control. Now in 2016, you see a very strong Chinese Communist Party. In the long run, China will be more open. It is inevitable. China needs to develop and strengthen its higher-level courts to handle corruption at the provincial level. In time, there will be more democracy within the party, but only on its own terms.”

Ms. Ronna CHAO, CEO of Bai Xian Asia Institute, described how she herself had benefited from an international education and shared how her father's experience as a young student, and the friendships he built in Japan, influenced her life. Ms. CHAO also shared her vision for BXAI, emphasizing BXAI's commitment to providing students with opportunities for intercultural education and exchange, and discussing efforts to expand its network to encompass a broader range of stakeholders.

“Bai Xian Asia Institute and its Asian Future Leaders Scholarship Program provide intercultural exchange opportunities for Asian students. We want to leave legacies and platforms for future generations to bring cultures closer together. The Institute and the Scholarship Program of course focus on students, but there is the added benefit of linking professors, organizations, and companies through the process. BXAI is a young organization. While our philosophy and desired outcomes are clear, there is flexibility in our execution. We welcome all levels of partnership to maximize the impact of our initiatives.”

BXAI believes that young people who explore uncharted territory and build strong bonds with others along the way will leave behind a legacy of pillars on which future generations will continue to **build bridges across cultures**.

About BXAI

BXAI is a wholly independent, non-profit organization established in January 2014 with funding from Bai Xian Education Foundation, Mr. Ronald CHAO's private family foundation. Its establishment is grounded in the belief that education is the most effective catalyst to promote and achieve a prosperous, sustainable and conflict-free modern Asia.

Through the development and implementation of the AFLSP, BXAI provides and develops the pre-eminent intercultural and interdisciplinary educational platform in East Asia through its commitment to building a vibrant and collaborative

community of scholars, alumni, academics, universities, corporates, funders, sponsors, government agencies, philanthropic and non-profit organizations, and individuals, who share BXAI's core values, mission and vision.

In determining a robust strategic direction now and into the future, BXAI benefits greatly from the collective expertise and experience of the Bai Xian Community. It is BXAI's vision that the Bai Xian Community will flourish and continue to inspire and be inspired, sharing their knowledge, support and connections.

About Waseda University

Waseda University is an original Anchor University of the AFLSP, and continues to support it by hosting the BXAI Summer Program 2016 in Japan. BXAI's mission matches Waseda's commitment to promoting peace and progress through international education, along with double degree programs with eight prominent Asian universities and exchange agreements with over 700 institutions in 86 countries worldwide.

Waseda University is a leading institution based in central Tokyo with over 50,000 students in 13 undergraduate and 21 graduate schools.

From its establishment in 1882, Waseda's mission has been to produce leaders, and continues to do so, counting among its alumni seven prime ministers and countless other politicians, business leaders, journalists, diplomats, scholars, scientists, actors, writers and artists, in Japan and across Asia.

International education is a core part of Waseda's heritage, having welcomed its first international students in 1884. This tradition continues today as Waseda is number one in Japan for study abroad with over 5,000 international students enrolled.

About Asian Future Leaders Scholarship Program (AFLSP)

The **AFLSP** is a pan-Asian initiative that enables young Asian scholars to study abroad in another Asian country, take part in an intercultural and interdisciplinary Enrichment Program, and connect with like-minded peers and leaders from across all sectors (together, the “Bai Xian Community”). By way of granting up to 105 scholarships per year to elite students enrolled at 16 leading universities across 9 cities in Greater China, Japan, and Korea, the AFLSP supports their tuition and living expenses for undergraduate, MBA, or other Master’s/Doctoral degree studies. The AFLSP aims at developing future leaders to embrace cultural diversity in Asia.

AFLSP encourages inter-regional student mobility, intercultural and interdisciplinary learning initiatives, and partnerships between Asian university campuses. All AFLSP Scholars will receive either a 12- or 24-month scholarship for an undergraduate, MBA or Master’s/MPhil degree at one of our 16 partner universities (6 Anchor Universities and 10 Participating Universities):

<u>6 Anchor Universities</u>	<u>10 Participating Universities</u>
Hitotsubashi University	Fudan University
Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	Keio University
Kyoto University	Kyushu University
Peking University	National Taiwan University
Waseda University	Seoul National University
Zhejiang University	Shanghai Jiao Tong University
	The Chinese University of Hong Kong
	The University of Hong Kong
	The University of Tokyo
	Tsinghua

The first cohort of AFLSP Scholars graduated in 2016 and AFLSP envisions the growth of a vibrant and connected network of alumni who collaborate on projects and initiatives not bound by borders.