

Frequently Asked Questions (April 2023)

Membership Criteria

1. What are the characteristics USJC seeks in new members?

- a. A demonstrated history of leadership (or leadership potential).
- b. Interest in and support of the U.S.-Japan relationship through education, professional engagement, community investment or personal interest.
- c. Americans with a personal connection to Japan – this includes heritage, extensive time spent in Japan such as living/studying/working in the country, marital connections, etc. (Other nationalities may also meet this description, such as Japanese Brazilians living in the United States.).
- d. Japanese with a personal connection to the United States – this includes heritage, extensive time spent living/studying/working in the States, marital connections, etc.
- e. Understanding and appreciation of the Japanese-American experience
- f. A contributor mindset and willingness to engage in support of USJC’s mission with time, talent and resources.

2. How do I become a member?

USJC has a nomination process that requires prospective members to be nominated. Nominations are approved by the Regional Council.

At least two USJC members in good standing (members who are current on their annual membership renewal and contribution) must agree to support a nomination. One member will need to complete the [nomination form](#). The second member will serve as a reference. Up to three references may support a nomination.

3. How can I learn more about USJC?

USJC’s Membership team hosts quarterly New Member Orientations for new and prospective members to learn about USJC. Please contact Lauren Matsumoto (lmatsumoto@usjapanCouncil.org) if you are interested in joining a New Member Orientation session. Upcoming New Member Orientation dates and times will be posted on our website [here](#). Dates and times will be announced a month in advance.

4. What is the process for Associates to become Council Leaders?

As with all new Council Leaders, Associates interested in becoming Council Leaders need to be nominated by a member and supported by a second member, both in good standing. The Associate's nomination to Council Leader will be presented to the Regional Council for review and approval. As Associates are already involved in the Council's network, they have the advantage of access to USJC members who can support their nomination.

You must be nominated as a Council Leader before your 40th birthday. Once approved for Council Leader status, contribution levels will follow standard Council Leader levels. USJC will send a reminder notice to Associates turning age 40 who are aging into Council Leadership.

5. Why don't Associates automatically become Council Leaders?

Some Associates are not actively engaged with the Council and may not be interested in continuing their membership as Council Leaders, or may not meet the criteria for membership. This underscores the need for a process for Associates to become Council Leaders, rather than simply allowing all Associates to automatically become Council Leaders when they turn 40.

Associates between the ages of 25 to 39 currently contribute \$100 annually. Associates between the ages of 18 to 24 currently contribute \$50 annually. When they become Council Leaders, they will contribute at the standard contribution levels consistent with Council Leaders. We want to ensure that Associates wish to continue being an active Council Leader and will fulfill the guidelines of membership.

6. What are the contribution rates for a Council Leader?

The standard contribution rate for Council Leaders is \$500 annually. Members who contribute \$1,000 are recognized as Contributing Benefactors in USJC's annual report. Council Leaders who work in the nonprofit, education and government sectors are offered a discounted rate of \$250. All contributions support the Council's operations and general programs.

Membership Contribution and Renewal

1. How do I renew my membership?

A renewal notice will be sent to you annually, approximately one month before your membership end date. To renew your membership, you may complete the [Annual](#)

[Membership Contribution form](#). You can also enroll in a biannual and annual membership contribution subscription to automatically renew your membership.

2. Why is my membership important to USJC?

Your membership allows USJC to be a vibrant and active organization. Your engagement and participation in our various programs is the core of USJC's work and mission. The member-led affinity groups are good examples of member leadership and innovation. Your annual contribution helps USJC continue to provide programs and events that support the U.S.- Japan relationship.

3. Is my annual contribution tax deductible?

Donations to the U.S.-Japan Council may be tax deductible as permitted by law under the 501(c)(3) U.S. tax code. The U.S.-Japan Council's tax identification number is 90-0447211. The U.S.-Japan Council is incorporated in Japan as a Public Interest Corporation (*koeki zaidan hojin*) and may be tax-deductible as permitted by law. The U.S.-Japan Council (Japan) Public Interest Corporation name is: *Koueki Zaidan Hojin Beinichi Kaunshiru-Japan*. Please consult with your financial advisor on taxes and contributions to USJC.

4. What does it mean to be a member in "good standing?"

"Good standing" means you are current on your membership renewal and contribution (dues).

5. If I'm an inactivated member, how can I be a current member again? Do I need to be renominated?

We are happy to welcome you again as a USJC member! If you are continuing at the same membership level, you do not need to be re-nominated. All you need to do to become current is renew your membership [here](#).

If you are an inactivated member who was previously an Associate (age 18-39) but have aged into the Council Leader level (age 40 or over), you will need to be nominated as a Council Leader.

Engagement in USJC

1. How can I become engaged in USJC?

There are several ways to become engaged in USJC.

- a. [Regional activities](#) - Attend and participate in regional activities. Our 12 regions and their respective regional leaders host numerous activities throughout the year. Once you join USJC, members are “tagged” in one or more of these regions and receive invitations to event. Upon request, members can be “tagged” in multiple regions (for frequent travel or multiple residences). If you would like to be tagged in multiple regions or be introduced to regional leaders, please contact a USJC staff (Lauren Matsumoto at lmatsumoto@usjapanconcil.org). Please visit the [Upcoming Events](#) page on our website to get up-to-date information.
- b. [USJC Newsletters](#) - Be sure to read our bi-weekly newsletter where current events are listed. The newsletter includes a message from USJC President & CEO Suzanne Basalla and stories and photos from recent events.
- c. [Affinity Groups](#) - Affinity groups are member-led initiatives and reserved for USJC members only. The groups are a great way to meet other members who share common interests.
- d. [Japanese American Storytelling Program](#) - Share your Japanese-American story to university students in Japan. This program is also reserved for USJC members only.
- e. *Attending the* [Annual Conference](#) - This signature program convenes over 700 attendees annually and is host to global leaders who address a myriad of issues in the Asia-Pacific region. The Annual Conference is a superb networking event.
- f. *Attending Member Forum* - USJC offers this additional program for members during the week of the Annual Conference. USJC leadership and member-led programs are highlighted during this program.
- g. Follow USJC on social media on [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) for information on events and programs, including signature leadership programs (Emerging Leaders Program and the Japanese American leadership delegation).

Signature Leadership Programs

1. How can I apply for the Emerging Leaders Program (ELP)?

Applications for the [Emerging Leaders Program](#) are generally open in early summer with selections made by September.

2. How can I apply to the Japanese American Leadership Delegation (JALD)?

Applications and selection for the [Japanese American Leadership Delegation](#) are generally open in late summer, with selections completed in November.

