

Japan SITE chapter in the works

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The Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE) is scheduled to have a Japan chapter by the end of 2020, according to local SITE members involved in its set-up.

Lucky Morimoto, chairman of Tokyo-based Event Services, is among members leading the efforts. With the increase in international incentive travel to Japan in recent years and local membership now at 20 (the minimum required for a chapter), Japan has momentum for a SITE chapter, he told *TTGmice*.

“When I joined SITE as the first Japan member 32 years ago, the concept of incentives was not well known in Japan. Now that’s totally different,” he explains, adding that Japan is now clued-up and hungry to keep offering better incentives.

The new chapter will offer members opportunities for education, training, networking and business development. Members will be encouraged to utilise online resources, in-person events and certification schemes for professional development.

Morimoto also hopes to bring together a cross-section of the incentive industry, from cruise companies and hotels to corporate buyers.

Long-term, setting up the chapter is intended to boost membership of SITE in Japan and increase awareness of the potential of Japan for incentive travel.

“The chapter will provide a way for incentive buyers to contact SITE members in Japan and help promote Japan as an attractive incentive travel destination,” he said.

Within five years of formation, SITE Japan plans to propose that the country hosts SITE’s annual conference to further raise the country’s profile. As hosting such a large and

important event would bring key buyers to Japan, members say it would stimulate the growth and development of the fledgeling Japan chapter.

SITE Japan's president-elect is Seiwa Yoshihashi, general sales manager at JTB Global Marketing & Travel, one of Japan's largest tour and travel management companies. Yoshihashi boasts more than 20 years of experience in the business meetings sector.

