

2025 EASTICA: Country Report

“Great Transformation on Records Management: From Papyrus to AI Technology.”

DIGITAL INNOVATION FOR THE OPENING OF THE NEW NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF JAPAN

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Outline

■ Introduction

Japan's Public Records and Archives Management System / New NAJ building / New Vision "Center for Archives"

■ 1. Our Efforts Thus Far

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■ 2. Initiatives for a New NAJ

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■ Conclusion

The Potential for New Services / From Digitization to Digital Transformation

Japan's Public Records and Archives Management System

■ National Archives of Japan (NAJ)

Under the Cabinet Office,
Responsible for preserving and providing access to
historical public records and archives

■ Public Records and Archives Management Act (2009, effective in 2011)

Cabinet Office is responsible for the system;
Each administrative body manages its own records.
⇒ Historical public records are transferred
to NAJ or other archives (Diplomatic Archives, etc.)

■ New Building Under Construction in Key Area

Improving facilities and functions

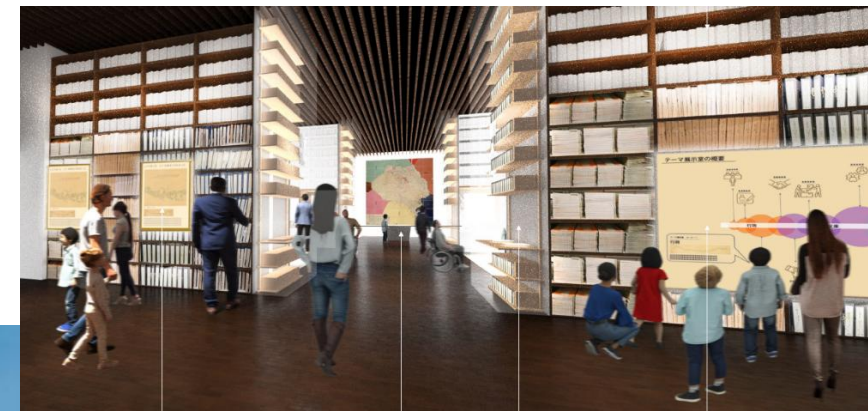


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New NAJ Building

- **Located in the Key Area, Diet Front Park,** where the legislature, executive and judiciary are concentrated
- **Groundbreaking in June 2025,** opening planned for **2030**
- 3 stories above ground, 4 stories below
- **Total floor area: 42,000 m²,** including the Parliamentary Museum
- **Plans for Effective Use of Digital Technology**



New NAJ Building

Parliamentary Museum

Image for illustration purposes
(Exhibition room)

(Front Exterior)

New Vision “Center for Archives”

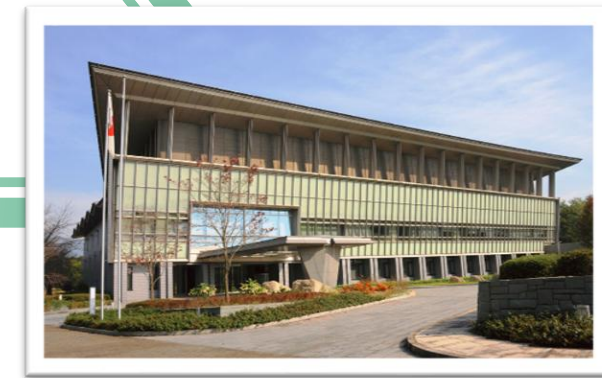
■ Opening of the New Building as a Turning Point

- Important role in Japan’s public records & archives management
- Operational reforms and service enhancement
- Strengthening connections with domestic and foreign archives

New Building



Current Main Building



Tsukuba Annex

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1. OUR EFFORTS THUS FAR

JACAR / NAJ Digital Archive
Transfer and Long-Term Preservation of Electronic Records

Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR)

- **Opened in 2001**, currently providing about **34 million Images**
- **Digitized Images of “Asian Historical Records”** held by national institutions* available online
* *National Archives of Japan, Diplomatic Archives (MOFA), National Institute for Defense Studies (MOD)*
- Coverage extended to post-WWII materials
- Website in **Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean**;
Database searchable in **Japanese and English**

<https://www.jacar.go.jp/>

The screenshot displays the JACAR website's search results page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'WHAT'S JACAR?', 'Search', 'JACAR Newsletter', 'Web Exhibitions', and 'JACAR Glossary'. Below this is a search bar and a section titled 'Time Travel from Your Desk' with a video player. A descriptive text states: 'Japan Center for Asian Historical Records (JACAR) is a digital archive of Asian historical records. JACAR has built and operates an online database for releasing Asian historical records, that are historical documents of Japan concerning to the modern Japanese relations with other countries, particularly those in...'. Below the text, there are search filters and a table of results.

No.	レファレンスコード	概要
1	A01100106900	<p>📄 件名 春日艦朝鮮釜山浦へ航行該地景況磯辺艦長ヨリ開申二付届</p> <p>📁 国立公文書館 > 📁 太政官・内閣関係 > 📁 公文録 > 📄 公文録・明治八年・第五十三巻・明治八年九月～十月・海軍省伺（布達） [規模] 3</p> <p>📅 作成年月日 明治08年10月14日</p> <p>👤 作成者 河村海軍大輔</p> <p>🏢 組織歴 太政官／内閣</p>
2	A01100107400	<p>📄 件名 孟春艦釜山浦へ出帆届</p> <p>📁 国立公文書館 > 📁 太政官・内閣関係 > 📁 公文録 > 📄 公文録・明治八年・第五十三巻・明治八年九月～十月・海軍省伺（布達） [規模] 3</p>

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NAJ Digital Archive



- **Started Operation in 2005**
- Provides open access to **Catalog Information and Digitized Images**
“anytime, anywhere, by anyone, free and without any charges”
- **About 39 million Images** available
(approx. 470,000 volumes, 27% of holdings)
- **Cross-search Function** for catalogs of archives nationwide

<https://www.digital.archives.go.jp/>



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Transfer and Long-Term Preservation of Electronic Records

- **Electronic Records Archives of Japan (ERAJ) system**

Started operation in **2011**

Seamless transfer, preservation, and use of born-digital public records



- **Advancing Digitalization of Public Records**, amid national and social digitalization

Covering the entire lifecycle from creation to transfer or destruction

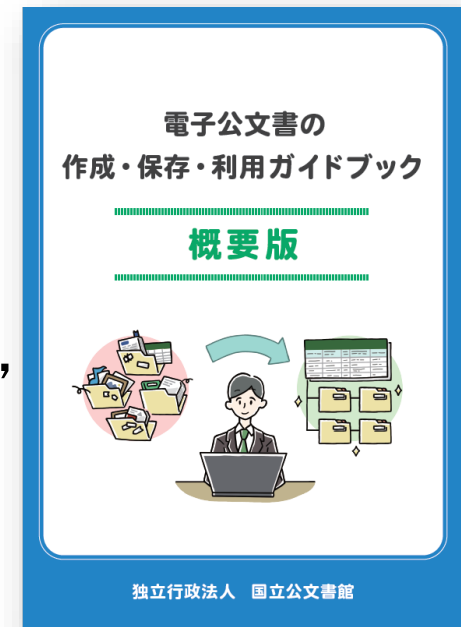
- **NAJ Initiatives:**

1. **“Sustainable Formats”** for long-term preservation, adopted as national rule

2. **“Guidebook for Creation, Preservation, and Use of Electronic Public Records”**

providing basic knowledge and principles

<https://www.archives.go.jp/thinktank/theme/digital/guidebook.html>



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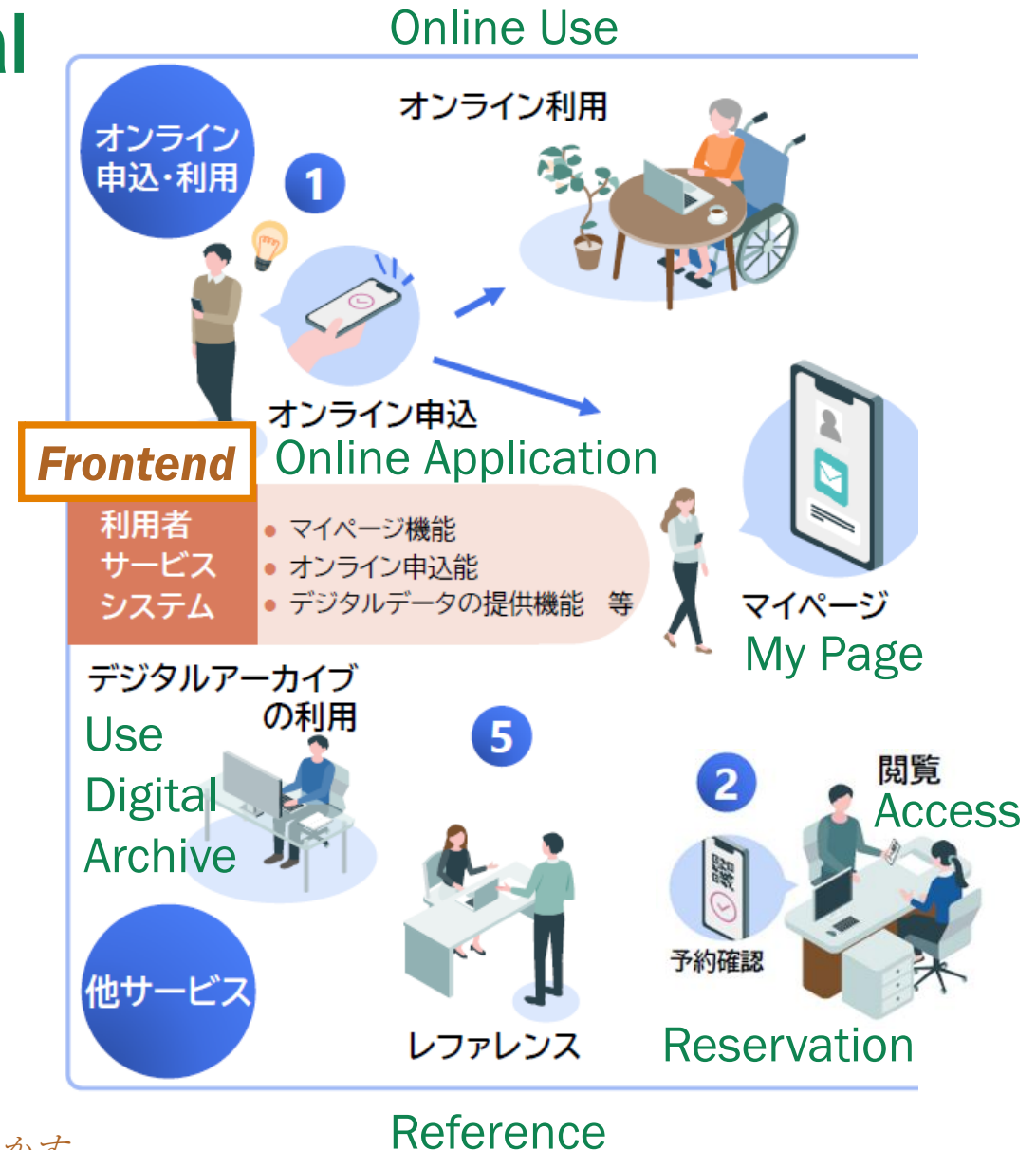
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2. INITIATIVES FOR A NEW NAJ

Online Access and Service Portal / Archival Materials Management
Digital Archive / Reference Service

Online Access and Service Portal

- **Improving User Convenience:**
From “In-person” To “Online”
- Examples of online procedures
 1. Personalized **“My Page” service** for each user
 2. **Online Request** for use
 3. **Provision of Data** from copied materials
- **Expanding Access** to more users, including those in remote locations or unable to visit onsite



Archival Materials Management

- **Integrated Management of All Processes**
 From accession, preservation, and restoration to daily retrieval and transportation
- **Assigning Unique ID** to materials for centralized status management
- **Seamless Information Sharing**
- **Improving Efficiency** of backend operations across multiple facilities



Digital Archive

- **Replacing NAJ Digital Archive and JACAR**
systems this fiscal year (available in spring 2026)
- **Further Improving Usability**
 - Better search performance and accessibility
- Strengthening support for diverse media and formats
(including born-digital, video, and audio records)
- **Continuing Cooperation with “Japan Search”**



Prototype Homepage – subject to change



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<https://jpsearch.go.jp/>

Reference Service

- Digital technology for effective reference services

- **Introducing Scenario-based AI Chatbot**

Supports multiple languages

- **Building a Knowledge Database**

Assists in generating answers to user inquiries

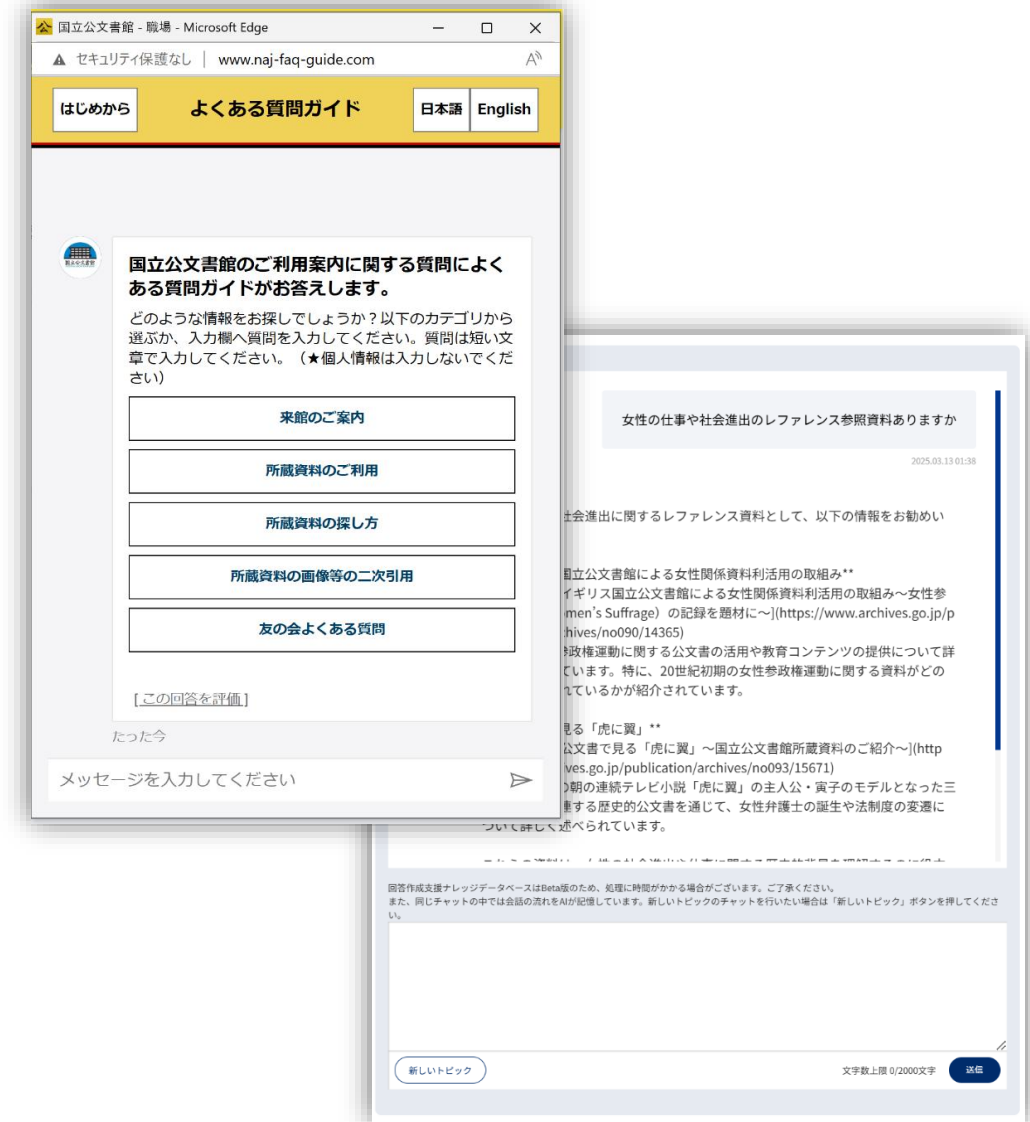


Image for illustration purposes

Conclusion

■ Need to Enhance User Services for the Digital Age

Accurately identifying the latest technologies (AI)

to explore new possibilities for service innovation

■ If holdings could be provided as machine-readable data ...

More closely matched search results to user intent and context

■ From Digitalization of Individual Services To Comprehensive DX

■ Reorganization toward the Opening of the New NAJ Building as the “Center for Archives”



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Prepared by the Cabinet Office



Thank you