

The **IGLTA (International LGBTQ+ Travel Association)** is a global travel organization dedicated to promoting LGBTQ+ tourism. It comprises industry professionals from over 80 countries, including travel agencies, media, hotels, and more. In 2024, the IGLTA Global Convention was held in Osaka—the first time it took place in Asia—drawing 575 participants from approximately 50 countries. As LGBTQ+ travelers tend to be enthusiastic about travel and show a high level of travel-related spending, their economic impact is significant. At the same time, in response to growing societal calls for diversity and inclusion, the travel industry as a whole is expected to deepen its understanding of how to accommodate and support LGBTQ+ travelers appropriately.

To support this goal, the **IGLTA Fukuoka Satellite Event** was held on Thursday, October 31, 2024, at the Daimyo Conference venue. The event aimed to foster correct understanding of LGBTQ+ tourism and was attended by approximately 100 participants, including supporting members of the association. The program followed an international conference format, similar to that of the Global Convention, and welcomed 10 overseas participants from the IGLTA Headquarters, travel agencies, and media outlets who had also attended the Osaka event. All 10 international guests identified as LGBTQ+ individuals themselves. Their keynote speeches and panel discussions, delivered from the dual perspectives of LGBTQ+ and the travel industry, were insightful and highly persuasive.

One of the key points made during the presentations was that the proportion of LGBTQ+ individuals in the population is roughly the same as that of left-handed people or those with AB blood type. This emphasized that LGBTQ+ tourism should not be about offering special services for a special few, but rather about shifting assumptions—for instance, recognizing that couples are not always male and female. The sessions included numerous real-life examples from hotels, restaurants, and shops, illustrating both positive practices and areas for improvement.

We also received feedback from **Ms. Maki Nishimura**, Senior Manager of the Accommodation Division at Hotel Okura Fukuoka, who attended the event:

“What I felt most strongly at this event is that ‘a smile brightens the people around you.’ At our hotel, we welcomed guests with rainbow-colored decorations in the lobby to express our spirit of hospitality. We are committed to ensuring that this is not just a one-time gesture, but a continuous effort to greet all visitors to Fukuoka with a smile and provide them with a satisfying experience.”

To ensure Fukuoka continues to be a warm, welcoming, and preferred destination for all visitors, we will continue to work together with our supporting members to pursue global standards and create further opportunities for learning and inclusion.



▲ Keynote Speech 1



▲ Keynote Speech 2



▲ Panel discussion session

Students from Fukuoka Global MICE School Participate in IGLTA Fukuoka Satellite Event

Eight students from the Fukuoka Global MICE School, who have been studying MICE operations and event planning since June 2024, participated in the IGLTA Fukuoka Satellite Event.

The students gave a presentation in English to ten overseas IGLTA members on the theme: Attracting the IGLTA Global Convention to Fukuoka. To prepare for this presentation, they spent approximately three months working together—holding multiple in-person and online meetings, and collaboratively developing a proposal as a team.

Through this workshop, the students learned valuable ideas and strategies to help ensure that LGBTQ+ travelers from around the world can feel welcome and safe when visiting Fukuoka.

After hearing the presentation, the IGLTA members praised the students’ teamwork and commented,

“We truly believe an IGLTA Global Convention in Fukuoka will become a reality one day!”

