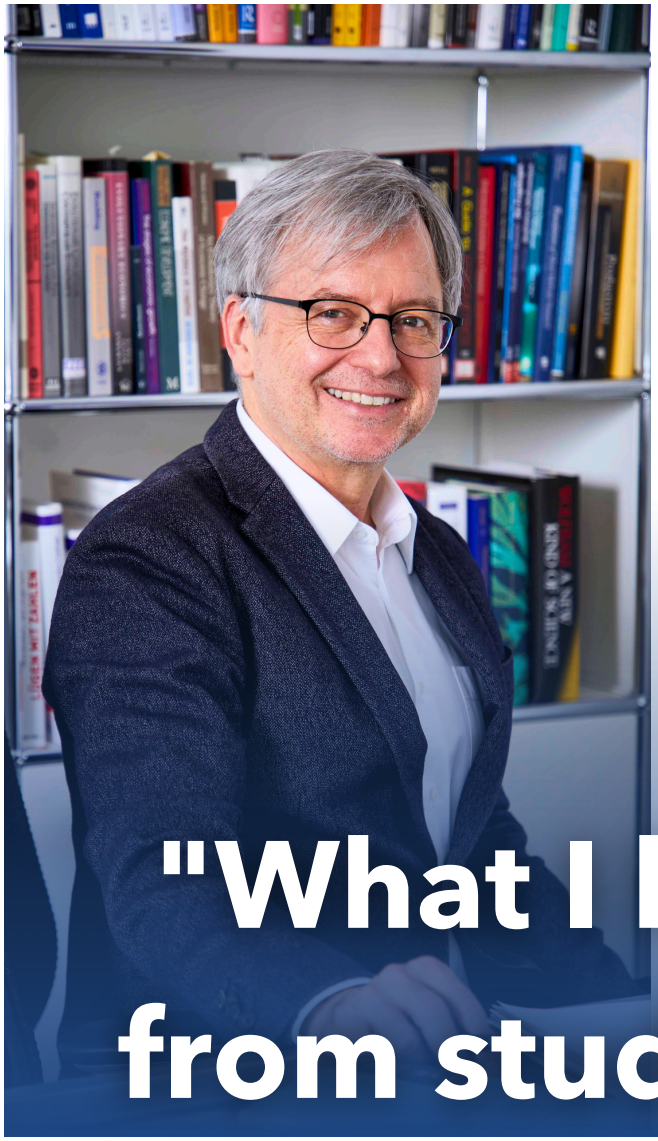
INVITATION

DEUTSCHES INSTITUT FÜR JAPANSTUDIEN



Thursday, 24 September 2026
Tokyo Garden Terrace Kioi Conference (access)

Franz Waldenberger
DIJ Farewell Lecture

"What I have learned from studying Japan"

Programme

17:30 Doors open
18:00 Welcome by Barbara Holthus, DIJ Deputy Director
18:10 Greetings by Petra Sigmund, German Ambassador to Japan
18:20 Greetings by Ute Frevert, President Max Weber Foundation
18:30 Lecture by Franz Waldenberger, DIJ Director
19:20 Concluding remarks by Sabine Frühstück, Chairperson DIJ advisory board
19:30 Buffet reception
20:45 Closing

Please register via this template. This event is onsite only!



DIJ Farewell Lecture

"What I have learned from studying Japan"

After 12 years, Franz Waldenberger's term as director of the DIJ comes to an end. With a doctorate in economics received from the University of Cologne in 1990, he first joined the institute in 1992 redirecting his academic career towards the study of the Japanese economy. In 1996, the University of Cologne granted him the Habilitation in economics for his work on Japan's postwar economic development. Leaving the DIJ in 1997, he took on a professorship for Japanese Economy at Munich's Ludwig-Maximilians University. After research stays as visiting professor at the University of Tokyo, Hitotsubashi University, Osaka City University and Tsukuba University, he re-joined the DIJ in 2014 as the institute's fourth director and the first in the field of economics.

During his term in office, he established multi-disciplinary research clusters on (1) *Sustainability* where projects on the future of Japan's local communities, the green transformation and social inclusion have been conducted, (2) *Digital Transformation* covering the digitalization of finance, startup ecosystems, the regulation of data and imaginaries of digital futures, and (3) *Japan in Transregional Perspective* with foci on East and Southeast Asia, including a collaboration between the DIJ and the National University of Singapore, which developed into a successful research partnership on Asian Infrastructures with the Asia Research Institute at NUS.

His own projects, many in collaboration with renowned Japanese and international scholars, resulted in well-cited peer-reviewed journal articles as well as widely read edited volumes. The open-access publications *Alterung und Pflege als kommunale Aufgabe. Deutsche und japanische Ansätze und Erfahrungen*, co-edited with Gerd Nägele, Hiroko Kudo, and Tomoo Matsuda (2022) and *The Future of Financial Systems in the Digital Age: Perspectives from Europe and Japan*, co-edited with Markus Heckel (2022), have to date achieved 170,000 and 104,000 downloads, respectively. The recently published monograph *Unleashing Innovation the East Asian Way. Startup Ecosystems in Japan, South Korea and China*, co-authored with Ying Cheng, Adam Cross, Martin Hemmert, Agata Kapturkiewicz, and Masahiro Kotosaka (2026) is presently at 21,000 downloads.

In his farewell lecture, Franz Waldenberger will give an account of his more than 30 years of research on Japan's economy. He will cover three themes: (1) institutional variety in capitalist economies, (2) the role of knowledge, and (3) the importance of demographics. The presentation will use non-technical language, so that also – or should one say especially? – non-economists will be able to enjoy the lecture and gain a fresh perspective on Japan's economy and other economies as well.