



# Rural Leaders Training Program

*The Asian Rural Institute is a training center for rural community leaders, set on a 6-hectare farm in Northern Japan.*

Each year, from April to December, we carry out our Rural Leaders Training Program which focuses on servant leadership, community building, and sustainable agriculture. The aim of the program is to nurture and train grassroots leaders to be more effective in their communities as they work to serve the poor, the hungry, and the marginalized.

The training is community-based, and hands-on learning is emphasized in all areas. Each year we invite about 30 women and men from a wide variety of countries, cultures, and faiths. Working together, we produce and share our own food.

At the heart of the program is 'Foodlife'—our basic philosophy to value and work with the deep connections that exist between food and life. Since our foundation in 1973, ARI has trained more than 1,400 rural leaders - dedicated servants committed to working side by side with their people toward more sustainable, healthy, self-reliant communities.

## **ARI MISSION STATEMENT**

*The mission of the Asian Rural Institute is to build an environmentally, healthy, just and peaceful world in which each person can live to his or her fullest potential.*

*This mission is rooted in the love of Jesus Christ.*

*To carry out this mission,  
we nurture and train rural leaders for a life of sharing.*

*Leaders, both women and men, who live and work in grassroots rural communities primarily in Asia, Africa and the Pacific, form a community of learning each year together with staff and other residents.*

*Through community-based learning, we study the best ways for rural people to share and enhance local resources and abilities for the common good.*

*We present a challenge to ourselves and to the whole world in our approach to food and life.*

## Training Rural Leaders

ARI is looking for **grassroots rural leaders**, who are living and working with marginalized groups in their rural communities. We are seeking local leaders who have demonstrated through their actions a commitment to serve their people and act as catalysts for positive change within their own communities. In a world that is rapidly changing, our curriculum focuses on core principles that are relevant in a variety of contexts. Adaptation and resilience, key factors in creating strong rural communities, are only possible with a deep understanding of the needs of one's own community.

The Asian Rural Institute is a training institute duly registered with the Japanese Government. Our training methods, however, are quite different from what you might find at a traditional school, college, or university. We do not provide an academic degree, nor do we promote industrialized agricultural technology, such as chemical fertilizers and pesticides or large scale monocultures. Much of the learning takes place through the simple acts of living in community, working on an organic farm, and sharing food. Upon completion of the program, participants are issued a "Certificate of Graduation."

**The ARI curriculum** can roughly be divided into four categories: hands on training/field study, field management, classroom lectures, and off campus observation trips. Perhaps the greatest strength of our program is its practical orientation — learning by doing.

ARI graduate Peter Chandi (Kenya, 1990) said it best:  
***"When you learn by doing, you get the skill right inside you."***

### The "three pillars" of the ARI curriculum:

#### Servant Leadership

ARI is a place where every person can learn about himself or herself through new experiences and ideas, so we may come to a deeper understanding of what it means to be a leader who serves people.

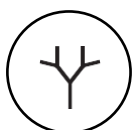
#### Foodlife

ARI is a place that values the soil—including the farmers and rural communities that work the soil—and finds dignity and satisfaction in producing food with our own hands.

### That We May Live Together

#### Community of Learning

ARI is a place where we can learn through sharing—sharing foods and sharing life. We come as people of different cultures, ethnicities and faiths, choosing to live and grow together through our differences and difficulties. In our life together, we work toward the goal of becoming effective servant-leaders, learning with and from one another.



## Daily Schedule

Every day at ARI is full of activities. During the daytime, Participants focus on their training while the staff and volunteers work in their respective sections.

Weekends are usually free, but there are many activities offered, such as recreation, special workshops, and worship services.

6:30	Exercise, prayer and cleaning
7:00	Foodlife Work
8:15	Breakfast & Break
9:30	Morning Gathering
10:20	Class Session / Farmwork / Other Activities
12:30	Lunch & Break
13:30	Class Session / Farmwork / Other Activities
15:30	Reflection & Independent Study Hour
17:00	Evening Foodlife work
18:30	Dinner & Free time

## Time frame

The annual nine-month program runs from April to December, which coincides with one full agricultural cycle from spring planting to autumn harvest.

## Accommodations

Dormitories are provided for participants and volunteers. Rooms are double occupancy, so you will be asked to share your room with a person from another country and perhaps another religion. Dormitory life is an integral part of the learning in ARI and provides many opportunities to put our motto into practice — **"That We May Live Together"**.

## Financial Information

The costs of the training program is **US\$ 17,840**. This includes tuition fees, room, board, study tours, health insurance, and a small monthly stipend. Additionally, there is the expense of the round trip airfare, which varies depending on the country of origin. We also require an additional **US\$ 100** registration fee upon acceptance of the candidate.

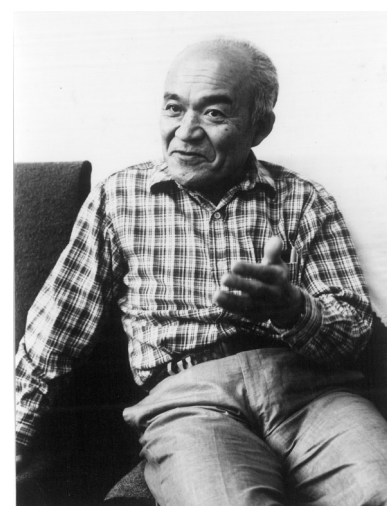
As ARI actively seeks to serve some of the poorest and most marginalized people, we are very much aware that many Sending Bodies (SBs) cannot cover these costs. Because we do not wish to discriminate against any candidate due to financial capability, we work hard to assist Sending Bodies that need funding by connecting them with potential supporters.

***We ask for the fullest cooperation of SBs and applicants, to work with us to secure funding.***

ARI was founded by Rev. Dr. Toshihiro Takami in 1973. He strongly believed in the capacity of rural leaders to change themselves and their communities, in order for ALL living beings to enjoy a full life. Afterall, it is they who have the power to support their communities by growing the food that nurtures life. He considered it essential to invest in such grassroots leaders who are willing to dedicate their whole lives to sustain life for the future. For this, he emphasizes, we must all be willing to learn from each other and participate in such a community that is constantly learning.

His hope for us is simple:

*"Let us create a world in which life  
and the food that sustains life have the highest value"*



# Apply to the Rural Leaders Training Program

## Two-step Admissions Process

1. Approval of the organization as a Sending Body
2. Submission of the individual's application

### I. Approval of the organization as a Sending Body

Anyone interested in taking part in the ARI Rural Leaders Training Program must be employed, or actively involved, in an organization that will serve as her/his Sending Body (SB). The organization may be an international, national or local NGO, religious organization, or other organization based in a rural area. The organization must have a clear history of working for **at least 3 years** with marginalized people in the local community, and a commitment toward self-sustainability.

Single church organizations should apply through their regional association or Diocesan authority. Government offices or departments are normally not considered as SBs. Exceptions are made for countries without NGOs or church organizations. ARI does NOT promote church-planting evangelism, large-scale agriculture, and industrial development, and will not consider organizations with these goals.



*Director of the Asian Rural Institute and other staff visiting graduates and their Sending Bodies*

### **Sending Body: the bridge between the Individual applicant and ARI.**

ARI views Sending Bodies (SBs) as partners in a common mission. In order to form a productive relationship, it is essential to begin with a mutual understanding of each other's work and mission. To maintain this relationship, SBs must select a "SB representative" - this is typically the head of the organization—who ARI maintains contact with throughout the application process, the training, and continues communication even after the graduate's return to their community.

The Individual applicant (candidate) must be nominated by the SB- a specific organization within which she/he is carrying out her/his work as staff or as volunteer. We strongly encourage the SB to select qualified women leaders to apply for this training program. The applicant, together with the SB, must be able to provide a clear objective or plan for the use of the ARI training. Additionally, both the applicant and SB must pledge to collaborate after the completion of the training. The applicant, as a new graduate, has the responsibility to bring back his/her learning from ARI to the SB, and the SB must reintegrate the new graduate into the organization.

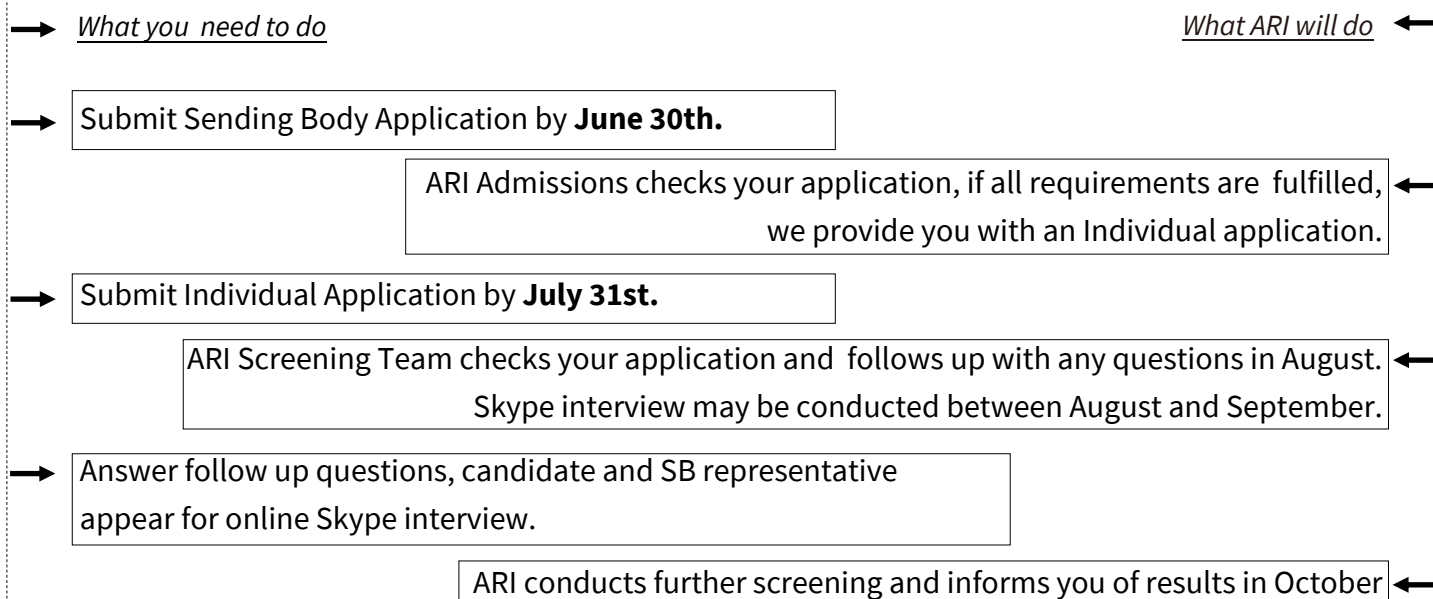


ARI will carefully review the materials sent by the organization. If the information received is not sufficient, we may ask you some additional questions. The process may take a few weeks or even longer. **Upon approval of your organization as a Sending Body**, we will send you an official ARI Application Form for the individual candidate. **One SB may recommend up to 2 people for the training.**

## 2. Individual Application

- The SB candidate (applicant) should be a woman or man dedicated **to serving people at the grassroots level in rural areas**. The candidate must have **at least 3 years of experience** as a leader in her/his rural community.
- In our selection of participants, preference is placed on **field staff** who are working directly with the people. Those working primarily in administration or in the directorship will not be considered. ARI places high priority on the **training of women**, that they may participate more fully and equally in all aspects of society. We welcome people of all faiths, as well as those without any religion.
- **ARI accepts overseas candidates between the ages of 25 and 45**. The candidate must be prepared to live a **simple and demanding life**. Daily manual labor on the farm and campus is required of all community members. The candidate must be physically and mentally fit.
- **English** is used for all program activities and also in daily life. The candidate should have sufficient ability to communicate in English.

### Flow of Application Process:



The submission deadline for SB documents is **June 30th** of each year.

You may send completed application materials to ARI via email to: **recruitment@ari-edu.org**

If you have no internet, please send by fax: **+81-287-37-5833**

or post: **Asian Rural Institute | 442-1 Tsukinokizawa, Nasushiobara | Tochigi 329-2703 | JAPAN**



**That We May Live Together**