



IFAR CONFERENCE SPEAKERS 2024

Masayoshi Yoshida
Japan Racing Association
Conference Opener

Mr. Masayoshi Yoshida is the president and CEO of the Japan Racing Association (JRA). He joined the JRA in 1983 and oversaw its corporate planning for many years. He held several key positions at the JRA, including General Manager of the Chukyo Racecourse and Racing Department, before being appointed director of finance and facilities in 2016. He served as executive director beginning in 2021 and became the executive vice president in March 2023. He was appointed president and CEO in September 2023.



Michael Owen
Keynote Speaker

English football legend Michael Owen, who will deliver the keynote address via video, played for Liverpool, Real Madrid, Newcastle United, Manchester United, and Stoke City. He claimed the Premier League Golden Boot twice and is the last English player to win the Ballon d'Or. A passionate racehorse owner and breeder, Owen founded Manor House Stables in England, and he and his wife, Louise Bonsall, are vocal proponents of aftercare.





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Dr. Atsushi Kikuta **Japan Racing Association**

Dr. Atsushi Kikuta joined the Japan Racing Association (JRA) in 1988 as a veterinarian. He spent 20 years as a clinician specializing in surgery at JRA training facilities. From there, he moved onto stewardship and has contributed to the global harmonization of JRA Rules of Racing as a member of the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) International Harmonization of Racing Rules Committee. In 2022, he was appointed Director of Equine and Stewards Department, and he is chairman of the "Japanese Consultative Committee on Aftercare of Racehorses," which was founded in 2017 with the purpose to decide the direction and actions to be taken for retired racehorses in Japan.



Dr. Roly Owers **World Horse Welfare**

Dr. Roly Owers qualified as a veterinary surgeon from Cambridge University and has been Chief Executive of the charity World Horse Welfare since 2008. He also advises sport regulators including the International Equestrian Federation (FEI), the International Horse Sports Confederation (IHSC), and the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) on equine welfare. He is currently chair of the International Coalition for Animal Welfare, treasurer of World Federation for Animals, and a board member of the European Horse Network. His previous veterinary roles included the Blue Cross and Royal Army Veterinary Corps.





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Helena Flynn **Horse Welfare Board**

Helena Flynn was named programme director at Horse Welfare Board in 2021. She is an accomplished crises management professional with a proven track record of managing reputational issues globally. Having been passionate about horses and animal welfare since a child, Helena commenced the implementation of the industry's welfare strategy 'A Life Well Lived' alongside key stakeholders. Awards include PR Week Rugby World Cup & Olympics 2012; Asia Pacific award best campaign A380 launch with Gwyneth Paltrow; and Middle East PR Award Suicide Squad Activation with Margot Robbie.



Dr. Jane Williams **Hartpury University**

Dr. Jane Williams is a professor and Head of Research at Hartpury University. She is an experienced researcher, with a passion for enhancing equine performance and wellbeing through industry-informed, real-world research that generates change. Her main area of professional interest is generating evidence-informed approaches that can inform best practice approaches in the management of race and sport horse health, performance, training and welfare. She co-edited and authored 'Training for Equestrian Performance' to showcase how science and research can be applied practically to improve performance for horses and their riders.





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Sarah Coleman **Kentucky Horse Council**

Since 2020, Sarah Coleman has been the executive director of the Kentucky Horse Council, a nonprofit based in Lexington that focuses on the protection of equines and the development of the equine community. Previously, she worked for New Vocations Racehorse Adoption Program, where she oversaw construction of its flagship Lexington facility and launched the charity's all-Thoroughbred charity show. Additionally, she co-owns a boutique marketing firm that specializes in equine and agricultural topics. She serves on a number of committees and also owns and shows an OTTB named Chisholm.



Natasha Rose **Hong Kong Jockey Club**

Natasha Rose's career and interest in the Thoroughbred aftercare industry was sparked off by a weekend stable job at the Thoroughbred Rehabilitation Centre during her undergraduate university years. She has been working for the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) for over seven years, and her current role is Executive Manager, Equestrian Affairs Projects. Prior to that, she was a graduate trainee at the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) and went on to be the Head of Operations for the Horserace Betting Levy Board in the UK. She holds a Thoroughbred Horseracing Industries MBA with Liverpool University, and her final year thesis was titled "How does the equestrian industry view the suitability and versatility of retired Thoroughbred racehorses in a second career."

