On August 27, 2021, Prof. Dr. med. Wolfgang Sauerwein, specialist in radiology with a research focus on neutron therapy, was honored with the "Order of the Rising Sun on Neck Ribbon, Golden Rays" by the Japanese government.

Consul General Iwama personally presented him with the high honor during a ceremony at his residence in Erkrath (East of Düsseldorf) in front of 31 invited guests.

In his welcoming address, the Consul General emphasized the great and tireless commitment Prof. Sauerwein contributed to deepening the traditional German-Japanese relations in the field of medicine. Professor Sauerwein substantially developed the regional exchange into a "fruitful and future-oriented relationship". Following his words of welcome, he delivered a video message from the acting mayor of Koriyama, Masato Shinagawa.

After the ceremonial presentation of the order and the certificate, Prof. Dr. Evamarie Hey-Hawkins held the laudatory speech. She found very personal words for the honored person: "When Wolfgang Sauerwein talks about his many projects, cooperations and activities in Japan with rousing enthusiasm, one understands why the University of Duisburg-Essen appointed him as Japan representative in 2014 and why he, as ambassador, has initiated numerous fruitful cooperations through his scientific competence, but also especially through his intercultural understanding and sensitivity, on the basis of which many projects are still developing today."

Following the laudation, Prof. Sauerwein expressed his sincere gratitude for the honors bestowed upon him: "I see this high award, which I accept with gratitude and humility, as an appreciation of the support I have received from many people in the professional, friendly and family environment in Germany and Japan during the 30 years of my exchange with Japan. [I would especially like to mention the contribution of the members of the medical faculty of the University of Duisburg-Essen, as well as the encouragement I have received from the Ministries of Economics and Science of North Rhine-Westphalia, and especially from the City of Essen]. At the same time, this honor represents a call to seek new ways for cooperation between Japan and Germany."

After a musical performance by the Essen musician couple Shiori Doi-Nuss and Benyamin Nuss, Mr. Thomas Kufen, Lord Mayor of the City of Essen, addressed Professor Sauerwein in a greeting: "On behalf of the City of Essen, I congratulate Prof. Dr. Sauerwein on his high Japanese award. Prof. Sauerwein has significantly supported German-Japanese exchange in science, medicine and business for many years. Thanks to his tireless commitment, important cooperations between the Essen University Hospital and EWG - Essener Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft mbH with Japanese companies have come about. As a result, medical progress has been advanced and the international relations of Essen as a business location have been significantly strengthened."