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External Evaluation Report for the 2018 Project

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This document reports the results of external evaluations for each item from (1) through (6) under the section, "2. Achievement Status of Project Goals," described in Exhibit, the Report of Initiative for Realizing Diversity in the Research Environment (Advanced Type).

(1) Achieve a recruitment rate for women researchers of 30% or more
Remarks:
(1-1) New personnel governance
* The establishment of new highly transparent personnel governance should receive high marks, especially implementing inspections twice a year and the attempt of visualization on the website.
* The website clearly shows the project goals based on the causal analysis, which can also achieve high praise.

(1-2) The Goal of 30%
* A good point is that the university achieved both goals of the retention rate and the hiring rate of female researchers.
* The charts on the website consist only of numbers, which makes it difficult to understand changes and to forecast the future. Graphical charts, such as those in report documents, should be better.
* Hiring is the easiest area to achieve numerical results (to reflect efforts made). The university realized this area which had remained on a plateau and successfully increased the numbers at a stroke in 2018. This effort deserves high marks. We can expect that this area will make steady and consistent growth.
* On the other hand, the goal of achieving 30% has the following problems. Setting a goal of achieving 30% across the university might easily make it difficult (1) to differentiate fixed-term employment and full-time employment (the ratio of fixed-term employment is generally high), (2) to differentiate employment by job rank (employment in lower job ranks is generally high regardless of whether in humanities or sciences), and (3) to visualize the difference in the ratio of hiring female researchers by area (the ratio of hiring science professors tends to stay low). The university is expected to verify this data to deploy their efforts carefully.

(1-3) Website

* The university could make additional efforts, for instance, by arranging a button or banner on the top page to drive awareness of the diversity website. Currently, the website has a triple-layer structure (the top page of the university website > Gender Equality > Diversity), which makes it difficult for the outside of the university to know what efforts have been made.

(2) Improve the percentage of women holding higher-ranking positions

Remarks:

(2-1) Generally, it is easy to improve the ratio of hiring female employees. However, it is not the case with improving that of female employees' getting promoted. From this perspective, the university's setting the goal in the promotion ratio gains significantly high marks. The university successfully exceeds the goal set. This is also a good point.

(2-2) The numerical targets vary depending on the job rank. The higher the job rank becomes, the lower the target reaches. These numerical targets, which seem to be realistic within the reasonable range, have the following two issues.

First, setting reachable goals in the light of the current situation is highly effective in sharing a sense of accomplishment within the university. However, these are not step-by-step goals based on long-term goals set. There remains a feeling of setting "ad-hoc" goals.

Second, the ratio of hiring female professors (10.2%) is lower than the average ratio of national universities (the ratio of hiring female professors in national universities is 10.3%, as of May 1, 2018). This means that the goal set (9.5%) is too low.

(2-3) We can put an extremely high value on the PI Training Program for International Collaborative Research. The promotion ratio of PIs (see the website) is also high, which shows that the program is tailored to the purpose. More empowerment of such younger middle-ranking female researchers is desired.

(2-4) The university needs to promote female researchers actively. Currently, male researchers completely occupy the posts of president and directors within the university. This fact would be in direct conflict with the basic principles of achieving gender equality and diversity. A set of goals is also necessary for executives.

(3) Increase the number of next generation early career researchers

Remarks:

(3-1) Our evaluation appreciates that both the International Human Resource Exchange Program and the International Collaborative Early-career Researcher Training Program effectively function. Whereas the number of program participants seems to be small when compared to the size of the university, there is the right balance in those who are selected and sent between their job ranks and study fields. It is highly desired to increase the number of participants. Also, the university should follow-up the participants sent after the program while sharing information that includes the publication of promotion results and research achievements.

(3-2) The university invites many overseas female researchers, which must receive high marks. This fact raises expectations for serving as an essential opportunity to promote personnel exchange and empowerment of female researchers. The university can maximize educational effects by introducing some specific exchange achievements on the university website to share information with the students and graduate students. In that sense, this program is evolving and developmental.

(3-3) Another point that receives recognition is the university's open recruitment based on consideration for providing research budgets and hiring.

(4) Enhance the diversity environment and expand it beyond the university
Remarks:
(4-1) Our evaluation gives high marks for the university's Diversity Co-creation Network built with companies.
However, the website seems to fail to make this effort known to the public. Does the website have any specific page or portion for this effort?

(4-2) We appreciate the university's efforts to hold forums and make an official statement for diversity promotion, entitled "Kobe University Diversity Statement." Through this Diversity Statement, the university clearly states its goal of eradicating SOGI discrimination and by which it will create an environment for individuals where each person is treated with respect and can express their individuality and talents "regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, background, age, educational background, physical or mental characteristics and/or other affiliation and/or identity." This must receive high marks. In this statement in Japanese, however, there is a question that "gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity" are cited as a set here. In English, each term is delimited with a comma. These terms in Japanese should follow the English version by using commas.

(4-3) Visualization of repercussions toward the outside of the university needs more work.

(5) Initiatives particular to this project
Remarks:
(5-1) The university's support system for sending female researchers overseas deserves high marks. Through this effort that practically matches with the needs of female researchers, the university offers specific and immediate support, while reassuring them.

(5-2) The Diversity Education Program assumes an issue of how to dispel unconscious bias, which deserves high marks. The university's efforts related to international cooperation should also receive a high evaluation. This has been pending as a plan so far, though, and the future progress is very much expected.

(5-3) In terms of education, the university seems to provide a course of classes as part of the efforts made by the gender equality office (no classes specified after 2017). It is really desired to clarify the continuity and cooperative relationship with this course.

(6) Issues to be addressed with respect to this project
Remarks:
(6-1) Overall, our evaluation confirms that the university has diligently been working on this project while setting specific issues.

(6-2) Major issues that should be worked on were already mentioned above, while the following shows a summary.
* Set a goal ratio for hiring female teaching staff and analyze the current condition more finely in detail.
* Set a goal ratio for hiring female professors, which at least exceeds the average of the ratios of national universities to a certain degree. It is desirable to calculate backward from this goal to set the goal for each of the ratios of hiring and promotion. Here, a more persuasive approach is to position the goal for each year by setting long-term goals on a decade basis.
* Improvement of the ratio of promoting female researchers is desirable to be incorporated in the foundation of all the efforts made.
* International efforts made by the university certainly produce steady and specific achievement. Future progress is expected. When compared to the size of Kobe University, however, the number of project participants should be more increased. Funding should be welcomed. If the number of participants needs to be limited, to gain the ripple effects, it is recommended to actively visualize

each individual's achievements while sending out such information inside and outside the university by using the website or other similar ways.

(6-3) The following two issues remain as the issues which the university can immediately work on.
(1) Effective use of the designated website
   * Though the university launched the designated website, the website contains too little information.
   * The designated website is nondescript. More efforts should be made to make this website known and recognized.
(2) Coordination with the efforts made by the gender equality office
   * The university needs to more actively show that it coordinates with the gender equality office.

(7) Remarks regarding the overall project
(7-1) Overall, our evaluation confirms that the university has diligently been working on this project while setting specific issues. The university has consistently achieved numerical goals, which deserves a high evaluation.

(7-2) The university applies international exchange to support female researchers, which should be extremely well-received. The support system also receives high marks for its concreteness which can serve as a model for other universities.

(7-3) The issues mentioned above to be worked on do not indicate that the university's efforts for this project are inferior in quality. Instead, the comments made show the expectations for future development. In other words, the university has conducted classes to a certain degree to clarify the issues to be worked on, while raising our expectations for the future efforts made.

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