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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: Starting specific reforms in the personnel governance system, the university successfully increased the hiring ratio of female researchers by 5% over 2017, reaching 25.7%. This achievement receives high marks. On the other hand, although the retention ratio goal was achieved, the ratio remains lower than the previous year, 17.1%. This result suggests the need to comprehensively and continuously improve the working environment for female researchers.

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

Remarks: The university’s program of sending its researchers to overseas research institutions for them to be more competitive as PIs of international joint research can serve effectively to assist them in getting promoted to senior posts. Our evaluation gives high marks to this program that sends the researchers from a wide variety of divisions, including the preliminary survey program, where researchers are sent on a short-term basis. However, the university needs to review and improve this program, for example, by considering whether the preliminary survey program period should be about 1 week.

Both the ratio of promotion to senior posts and the ratio of hiring professors exceeded the goals, which should receive high marks. The ratio of hiring female associate professors did not reach the goal. Associate professors play a core role in active research activities and serve as a key to expand senior positions. It is highly recommended that the university should make further efforts to promote hiring female associate professors. Candidates for associate professors could overlap with the age groups who engage in research activities while giving birth, raising their children, etc. at the same time. The university needs to make continuous efforts in establishing a performance evaluation system based on consideration for their diverse situations.

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

Remarks: (1) The university invited 24 female researchers as part of its International Human

Resource Exchange Program, where these overseas researchers demonstrated their performance in departments and fields with only a few female researchers. This attempt should receive high marks while being expected to produce a significant awareness-raising effect. This program is entitled “personnel exchange,” yet on a short-term basis. The current status of this program was unclear whether the program really lives up to the title or not, both in sending and accepting researchers. To clarify the achievements of this program, the university could collect more information regarding the identities (cross-appointment system) and actual activities from the participants.

(4) Enhance the diversity environment and expand it beyond the university

Remarks: (1) Diversity Co-creation Network has launched with five companies. Engaging in collaboration with various parties is doubly helpful, serving as a significant catalyst for recognizing the effect of diversity and raising awareness in the participants. With a good sense of promptness, the university is highly expected to make specific efforts in cooperation with each company. The completion of the collaboration framework built by the founding members can expand the network further on the early stage, creating a tremendous social impact along with the efforts made in more diverse fields.

(5) Initiatives particular to this project

Remarks: (1) We think it is beneficial that Kobe University organizes its support system for female researchers while taking advantage of various networks that the university has. However, using overseas offices, students’ associations, and reunion associations might be inadequate to produce achievements of practical support for female researchers that fit their needs (e.g., providing information and advice about childcare needs). The university should connect with proper local organizations and parties through these offices and associations.

(2) The university is currently making a highly motivated effort to consider and develop Diversity Education Program in an international perspective. Engaging in the development of such a program somehow will bring about useful feedback for actual use. The university is expected to follow a development process in coordination not only with Diversity Co-creation Network Partners but also with various parties of academic fields within the university.

(6) Issues to be addressed with respect to this project

Remarks: (1) The introduction of New Human Resource Governance System is an ambitious effort. The university should work on notifying each department of the whole concept of this

new system thoroughly to make a smooth start for operation. Therefore, the university needs to manage interviews with the representative directors and the head of the gender equality office, including the participation of the faculty personnel committee, so that these things function correctly. This can prevent program planning and review, and response to departments that have yet to achieve the goals from becoming a mere formality.

(2) Financing is a difficult challenge. It is necessary to analyze and visualize the program achievements and continue to expand a network of links with industries. Speaking from this perspective, the establishment of the Diversity Co-creation Partner Club (tentative title) is essential. It should be noted that relations and differences with the participation of the Diversity Co-creation Network Partners need to be adequately organized.

#### (7) Remarks regarding the overall project

Our evaluation appreciates that through this project, Kobe University not only targets what is visible, including the improvement of the actual ratio of hiring female researchers, but also try to work on the issue of awareness on how to eliminate underlying unconscious bias. Also, we give high marks to the university's enthusiastic attitude to work not only on gender issues but also on a wide range of issues related to diversity. Of course, this is not a theme that can be promoted by this project alone. We do hope that this project serves an opportunity for Kobe University to embody the philosophy of diversity in the activities of the university and its staff, including education and research, and social coordination.

More work is needed to evaluate the progress of this project. It is a good system that the external evaluation committee members can participate in evaluation online. To make the evaluation process more meaningful, real and practical information and resources are essential. In this case, it was difficult to evaluate the achievement status based only on the number of participants and ratios for each item described in the report. Further resources should be necessary to give specific examples of efforts being made. We also expect that the university will verify and analyze more in-depth the effects of the efforts made along with the challenges they face.