

Report on the Results of the Initiative to Realize a Diverse Research Environment (Advanced Type) Project for 2018

Gender Equality Office, Kobe University

1. Project Goals and Action Plans

By promoting this project, Kobe University's goal was to 1) achieve a recruitment rate for women researchers of 30% or more; 2) improve the percentage of women holding higher-ranking positions; 3) increase the number of next generation young researchers; and 4) enhance the internal diversity environment and expand it beyond the university, as shown in (A) through (F) below. Table 1 shows the relationships between goals and initiatives.

Table 1 The relationships between goals and initiatives

Objectives Initiatives	(1) Reach and maintain employment rate of over 30%	(2) Improve career progression/promotion rate	(3) Expand support for the next generation of early-career researchers	(4) Improve the environment for diversity and promote this outside the university
(A) Build new human resource governance system	* *	*		
(B) Implement PI training program for international collaborative research		* *		
(C) Implement international human resource exchange program			* *	
(D) Implement international collaborative early-career researcher training program			* *	
(E) Establish an internal Diversity Promotion Council				* *
(F) Establish a diversity fund and build a Network for Cooperative Diversity Promotion	*	*	*	* *

2. Achievement of Project Goals

1) Achieve a recruitment rate for women researchers of 30% or more

The following initiatives were implemented in 2018 to achieve this goal.

① Revision of the Faculty Human resources Committee system

To verify the recruitment rate of each department and increase the number of women researchers hired and promoted to senior positions, it was decided that, from the next academic year, the Executive Adviser to President for Diversity become a member of the Faculty Human resources Committee.

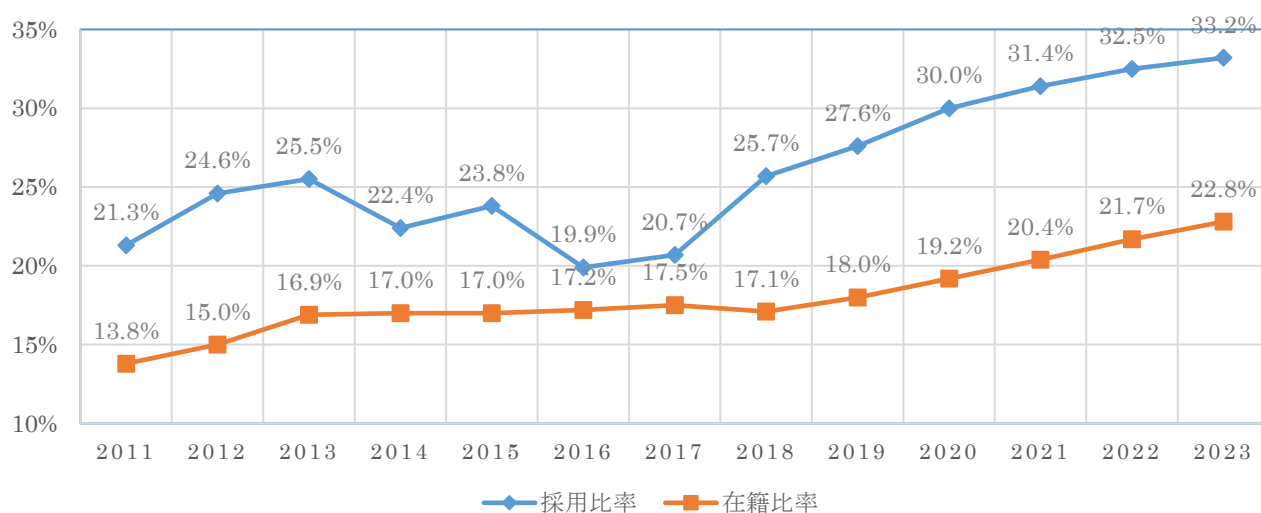
② Review of the New Human resources Governance system

To increase the number of women researchers hired and the number of senior women researchers, and to establish a highly transparent new human resources governance system, the form submitted by the departments to the Faculty Human resources Committee is to be reviewed, and the number and ratio of women faculty will be assessed twice a year.

③ Visualization of the recruitment and retention status of women faculty

A website dedicated to the Initiative to Realize a Diverse Research Environment (Advanced Type) was launched, and the recruitment and retention rates of women faculty were made public.

The resulting recruitment and retention rates for women researchers at Kobe University and numerical targets during the project period are shown in Figure 1 below.



[Recruitment rate; Retention rate]

Figure 1 Changes in recruitment and retention rates (Results up through AY 2018; numerical targets after AY 2019)

The target retention rate for women staff of 17.1% in AY 2018 was achieved with an actual rate

of 17.1%, as was the recruitment rate, which had a target of 23.9%, with an actual rate of 25.7% achieved.

2) Improve the rate at which women hold higher-ranking positions

To achieve this goal, the following initiatives were implemented in AY 2018.

① Implementation of an international joint research PI training program

The University dispatched top-caliber women researchers to overseas research institutions (three researchers; one each to Thailand, Australia, and Germany) to promote women researchers at the level of associate professor and below to higher positions. Acting as research representatives, these researchers organized international joint research, conducting joint research in their host countries. The researchers were provided with funding in preparation for their research. In AY 2018, the University also conducted an abbreviated, preliminary study program for international joint research PI training, and dispatched eight individuals to participate.

Table 2 International Joint Research PI Training – Program Results

Affiliate	Job classification	Dispatch period	Destination Country
Inland Sea Region Research Center	Associate professor	12 months	Thailand
Graduate School of System Informatics	Associate professor	12 months	Australia
Graduate School of Intercultural Studies	Associate professor	6 months	Germany

Table 3 International Joint Research PI Training – Pre-Survey Program Results

Affiliate	Job classification	Deployment period	Destination Country
Graduate School of Engineering	Assistant professor	1 week	UK
Graduate School of Economics	Instructor	2 weeks	Netherlands
Graduate School of Health Sciences	Associate professor	1 week	Thailand
Graduate School of Maritime Science	Associate professor	1 week	Sweden
Graduate School of Human Development and Environment	Associate professor	1 week	US
Bio-signal Research Center	Assistant professor	1 month	US
Graduate School of Agriculture	Assistant professor	1 week	US
Graduate School of Agriculture	Assistant professor	1 week	US

In AY2018, the promotion rate for women was 22.0% (11 women out of a staff of 50) , achieving the goal of 20.0% or more. Regarding senior positions, there were 66 (women Associate Professors out of 436 (15.1%), against the goal of 70 out of 453 (15.5%), and the number of women professors actually exceeded the goal, with 63 out of 615 (10.2%) professorships held by women, compared to the goal of 57 out of 597 (9.5%). Regarding women research directors and similar positions, the Gender Equality Office Director and Career Center Director were given positions as Executive Advisers to the President. The target of two such professionals was exceeded with three actually in place.

3) Increase the number of young researchers

To increase the number of young researchers, the following initiatives were implemented in AY 2018.

① Implementation of an international human resources exchange program

To recruit more women faculty and cast aside unconscious bias within the university, four women researchers were dispatched overseas in research exchanges, and 24 women researchers from overseas were invited to the University to conduct seminars in a variety of departments. The dispatched researchers applied through open recruitment available to all women researchers in the university. Full funding was provided to those selected.

Table 4 International Human resources Exchange Program – Results

Affiliate	Job classification	Dispatch period	Destination Country
Graduate School of Human Development and Environment	Assistant professor	1 month	Indonesia
Graduate School of Human Development and Environment	Professor	2 months	UK
Graduate School of Health Sciences	Professor	1 month	UK
Graduate School of Engineering	Assistant professor	1 month	US

② Implementation of an international joint research training program for young researchers

To expand the field of talented young women researchers playing an active international role, five young women researchers (45 years of age or under) were dispatched to overseas research institutions. These researchers conducted research at the host organizations as members of international joint research projects. The dispatched researchers were provided with research funds and the employment of temporary academic staff to fill in during their absence.

Table 4 International Joint Research Training Program for Young Researchers – Results

Affiliate	Job classification	Dispatch period	Destination Country
Graduate School of Intercultural Studies	Researcher	2 months	Mexico
Bio-signal Research Center	Assistant professor	2 months	US
Graduate School of System Informatics	Assistant professor	12 months	UK
Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies	Assistant professor	3 months	US
International Education Center	Instructor	6 months	South Korea/US

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

To enhance the diversity environment and expand it beyond the University, the following initiatives were implemented in AY 2018.

① Construction of a co-creation network for diversity

To develop an economic foundation for working with individuals and companies on this project, and to advance diversity projects on an ongoing basis and encourage joint research between private enterprises and women researchers and personnel exchanges with companies, the University joined with Daicel, Sojitz, Kobe Shimbun Newspaper, Ikeda Senshu Bank, and Bando Chemical as founding members of a co-creation partnership promoting diversity to establish a co-creation network for diversity, holding a “Diversity Co-creation Network Conference” to examine how the network should work and how it should be expanded.

② Holding a Diversity Forum

To deepen the understanding of this project amongst Kobe University members (particularly the Director and Secretary) and co-creation network partners and, thus, promote the recruitment and promotion of women researchers in various departments, the University held a forum on March 27th at the ANA Crowne Plaza Hotel Kobe that consisted of 1) an overview of the project, and 2) lectures covering the status of gender equality in Japan and overseas, policies, and corporate measures.

③ Diversity Statement

On December 13, 2018, the University announced its Diversity Statement aiming to overcome unconscious gender bias and promote greater diversity at Kobe University.

<http://www.office.kobe-u.ac.jp/opge-kyodo-sankaku/en/about/promotionofgenderequality.html>

5) Initiatives particular to this project

① Examining support systems for women researchers dispatched overseas

We began establishing a system for supporting the work-life balance of women conducting research overseas. This support is to consist of overseas offices, student associations, and alumni associations providing information related to everyday life in the host country, such as opening bank accounts, housing, medical care, education, etc. Also, if the dispatched researcher so desires, members of the various organizations would, in the role of coordinators, respond to inquiries regarding work-life balance by email or face-to-face. Concerned individuals, including project managers (directors in charge) and the Director and Vice-Director of the Gender Equality Office visited the overseas offices in Brussels, the Students' Association offices in San Francisco and New York, and the Alumni Association offices in Germany and the UK, and requested support on behalf of the women researchers mentioned.

② Research and development of diversity education programs

To overcome unconscious bias and increase the recruitment and promotion of women in research fields, the University worked with its diversity co-creation partners on diversity education programs to be implemented for members at the Co-Creation Network for Diversity Conference. In developing this educational program, university representatives visited the Los Angeles LGBT Center (Los Angeles, USA), Columbia University (New York, USA), and UNESCO (Paris, France), learning about diversity programs at each organization and exchanging opinions. We asked our diversity promotion co-creation partners what they expect of diversity education programs and compiled their replies in a report.

6) Issues to be addressed with respect to this project

① Introduction of a new human resources governance system (operational revisions)

The University has yet to complete the PDCA cycle below for the human resources governance system, which previously only consisted of “Do” and “Check.” A highly transparent new HR governance system promoting the recruitment and promotion of women faculty will be implemented.

(Plan) The departments submit their plans for recruiting and promoting women researchers to the Faculty Human resources Committee.

(Do) The departments submit their recruitment, promotion, and retention numbers for researchers to the Faculty Human resources Committee for approval with each occurrence of an HR-related issue.

(Check) The departments meet with the trustees and the Director of the Gender Equality Office to confirm recruitment and promotion results of the previous

academic year and recruitment and promotion plans for the current academic year.

(Action) The departments submit their recruitment/promotion results and recruitment/promotion plans at the annual meeting and departments that have not achieved their objectives review their plans and obtain approval from the university administration.

② Funding for voluntary operations after AY 2021

Because the project must be financially self-sustaining for three years after AY2021, the question of how to fund the voluntary operating expenses of the Diversity Fund and other programs poses a major dilemma. Accordingly, the University is seeking contributions from companies for the Diversity Fund and is planning to establish a Diversity Co-Creation Partner Club (tentative name) with an annual membership fee system.