

Report on the Results of the Program "Initiative for Realizing Diversity in the Research Environment
(Advanced type)" for the FYs 2020–2021

Gender Equality Office, Kobe University

1. Project Goals and Action Plan

By advancing this project, Kobe University aims to 1) achieve a recruitment rate of 30% or more for women researchers, 2) improve the percentage of women holding higher ranking positions, 3) increase the base of next-generation young researchers, and 4) enhance the diversity environment and expand it beyond the university. Table 1 below shows the relationship between these goals and the specific initiatives (A) through (F) undertaken to meet them.

Table 1: The relationship between the goals and the initiatives

Goals \ Initiatives	1) Achieve and maintain a recruitment rate of 30% or more	2) Improve the percentage of women holding higher ranking positions	3) Increase the base of next-generation young researchers	4) Enhance the diversity environment and expand it beyond the university
(A) Build a new human resources governance system	**	*		
(B) Implement the PI Training Program for International Collaborative Research		**		
(C) Implement the International Human Resource Exchange Program			**	
(D) Implement the International Collaborative Early-career Researcher Training Program			**	
(E) Establish the Diversity Promotion Council ^a				
(F) Establish the diversity fund and build the Diversity Co-creation Network	*	*	*	**

a Regarding the initiative “(E) Establish the Diversity Promotion Council,” the council will be reorganized effective April 1, 2022 to form the Inclusive Campus & Healthcare Center to promote collaboration among the existing university organizations (i.e., Gender Equality Office, Medical Center for Student Health, and the Campus Life Support Center) that worked independently from one another in the past and to ensure they provide coordinated support under a single supervisory organization.

2. Achievement Levels of Each Goal

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

The following projects were undertaken in FY 2020 and FY 2021 to attain this goal.

i. Implement the revised Faculty Human Resources Committee system

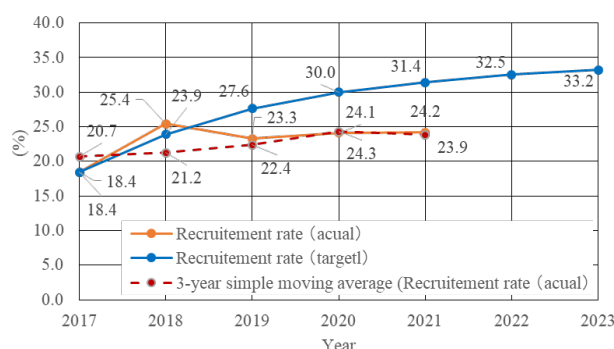
To help increase the hiring and promotion of women teachers, the Director of Gender Equality Office, in her capacity as an advisor to the President, attended the Faculty Human Resources Committee to check women's recruitment and promotion rates provided on paper and consistently advocated for improvement in these rates.

ii. Build a new human resources governance system

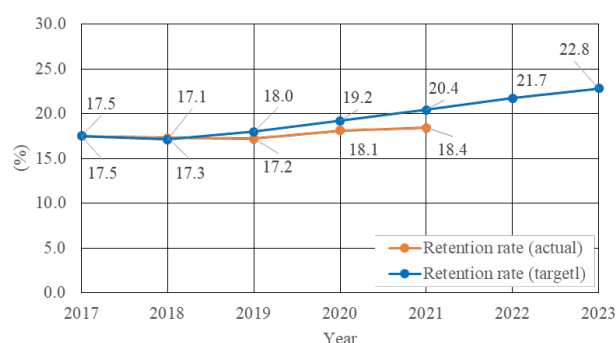
The Gender Equality Office distributed handouts containing information on unconscious bias to the entire university and called for active recruitment and employment of women researchers, and highlighted the university-wide commitment to further strengthen the efforts to increase the hiring of women researchers in department head meetings. Furthermore, it was agreed to add the following sentence to the recruitment guideline: "When candidates' achievements and qualifications are deemed equal, preference shall be given to women."

iii. Visualize the recruitment, promotion, and retention rates of women faculty (Publishing of numerical data)

To promote the visualization of the employment and promotion of women faculty, the Gender Equality Office publishes on the university website the recruitment, promotion, and retention rates of women by academic area.



Graph 1: Comparison of target and actual recruitment rates
(The 3 year simple moving average graph uses data from FY 2015 onwards.)



Graph 2: Comparison of target and actual retention rates

The FY 2020 and FY 2021 recruitment and retention rates of women researchers are shown in graphs 1 and 2 above. The FY 2020 retention and recruitment rates of 18.1% and 24.1% (3- year simple moving average: 24.3%), respectively, were an improvement over FY 2019 but fell short of the target rates. The FY 2021 as of March 1, 2022 recruitment and retention rates of women researchers are 18.4% and 24.2% (3- year simple moving average: 23.9%), respectively, were also an improvement over FY 2019 but fell short of the target rates.

2) Improve the percentage of women holding higher ranking positions

The following projects were undertaken in FY 2020 and FY 2021 to attain a 20% promotion rate.

i. Implement the PI Training Program for International Collaborative Research

Under this program, women faculty members are dispatched to overseas research institutions for a period of six

months or longer in principle with the aim of helping them get promoted to higher positions.

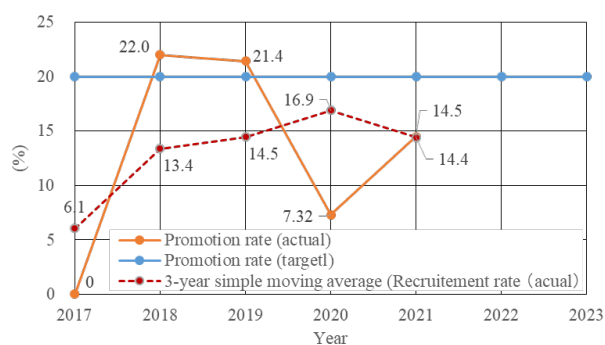
In FY 2020, two researchers were selected to be dispatched abroad under the program but were forced to cancel due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the two researchers participated in an online international collaborative research project instead. One researcher was dispatched during the period from FY 2019 to FY 2020. In FY 2021, three researchers participated in online international collaborative research. Table 2 summarizes the participation of our researchers in the FY 2020 and FY 2021 PI Training Program for International Collaborative Research.

Table 2: Results of the PI Training Program for International Collaborative Research

FY	Affiliation	Job Classification	Dispatch Period	Destination Country
2020	Biosignal Research Center	Assistant Professor	April 25, 2020 to March 25, 2021	U.S.A. (online)
	Graduate School of Health Sciences	Assistant Professor	February 20, 2020 to January 11, 2021	U.S.A.
FY	Affiliation	Job Classification	Collaborative research period	Destination Country
2021	Graduate School of Science	Associate Professor	FYs 2021–2022	Germany (online)
	Graduate School of Medicine	Project Assistant Professor	FYs 2021–2022	U.S.A. (online)
	Center for Interdisciplinary Programs	Project Assistant Professor	FY 2021	Italy (online)

Graph 3 shows the rates of women researchers promoted to higher ranks in FY 2020 and FY 2021. In FY 2020, the promotion rate fell short of the target rate of 20.0% or higher with three out of 41 researchers, or 7.3% being raised to a higher position (3-year simple moving average: 16.9%). In FY 2021 as of March 1, 2022, the promotion rate also fell short of the target rate of 20.0% or higher with eight out of 55 researchers, or 14.5% being raised to a higher position (3-year simple moving average: 14.4%).

Note that there were five women researchers in senior management roles in FY 2020 including the Director of the Gender Equality Office in her capacity as an advisor to the President, already exceeding the target set for the final year (FY 2023) of the "Initiative for Realizing Diversity in the Research Environment" program, which is four.



Graph 3: Comparison of the target and actual promotion rates
(The 3-year simple moving average graph uses data from FY 2016 onwards.)

3) Increase the base of next-generation young researchers

The following projects were undertaken in FY 2020 and FY 2021 to achieve this goal.

i. Implement the International Collaborative Early-career Researcher Training Program

Under this program, women researchers aged 45 or younger are dispatched to overseas research institutions for a period of six months or longer in principle with the aim of increasing the base of talented young female researchers who can succeed internationally.

In FY 2020, one researcher was dispatched as shown in Table 3. In FY 2021, the program invited applications but did not receive any.

Table 3: Result of International Collaborative Early-career Researcher Training Program (Implemented only in FY 2020)

Affiliation	Job Classification	Dispatch Period	Destination Country
Graduate School of System Informatics	Assistant Professor	October 19, 2020 to March 20, 2021	France

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

The following projects were undertaken in FY 2020 and FY 2021 to achieve this goal.

i. Develop the Diversity Education Program

In FY 2020, an alpha-phase online Diversity Education Program developed in FY 2019, which includes training to overcome unconscious bias, was reviewed and upgraded to the final beta version based on survey feedback.

In FY 2021, the following on and off-campus events were held for online viewing to help achieve inclusive society by promoting and spreading diversity.

- i) June 2, 2021 Cooperative faculty meeting (20 participants)
- ii) July 15, 2021 Training for managers
- iii) July 29, 2021 Diversity Co-creation Network meeting (4 companies)
- iv) August 3, 2021 Diversity Co-creation Network meeting (1 company)
- v) January 19, 2022 Graduate School of Health Sciences FD Training (67 participants)

ii. Build the Diversity Co-creation Network and collaborate with companies

In FY 2020, we organized the Diversity Co-creation Network meetings to discuss the Diversity Education Program's target participants and program content. We also visited some companies in the hope of expanding the Network's membership. The FY 2021 activities included hosting the Diversity Co-creation Network meetings (iii and iv above) at which the participants watched the Diversity Education Program's beta version and exchanged opinions on the program. We also made the Diversity Education Program available for viewing for all Network members. Furthermore, we discussed the content of a diversity lecture program.

iii. Operate the Diversity Fund (donations)

The Diversity Fund was established last fiscal year to secure the university's independent revenue source required to continuously and constantly implement the projects designed to support women researchers in getting promoted to higher positions through overseas dispatch and other programs. Thanks to the university newsletter,

website advertisements, and solicitations of company donations, the Fund received four donations amounting to 370,000 yen in FY 2020 and three donations amounting to 140,000 yen in FY 2021 as of March 1, 2022.

The Gender Equality Office developed a process whereby the Office formulates the spending plan and reports to the Gender Equality Promotion Committee for a review, but since the Diversity Fund received donations but plans were yet to be made to use them, no reports or reviews were made.

iv. Diversity Forum

In FY 2020, we hosted an online Diversity Forum (Zoom Webinar) with the theme: “Promotion of Women to Higher Positions and Work Style Reform—Aiming to Create a Workplace where Everyone Can Work with Enthusiasm.” The first half of the webinar featured a presentation of the outcomes of the Initiative for Realizing Diversity in the Research Environment (including such information as the changes in the retention, hiring, and promotion rates of women researchers over the years, the results of overseas dispatch programs, and education program content), as well as the results of evaluation by the International Advisory Committee. The second half featured a presentation on corporate diversity management efforts, with a specific focus on initiatives to promote the advancement of women researchers to higher roles and some examples of work style reform initiatives, which offered useful guidance for our future activities. (The webinar was watched by 105 viewers.)

Our FY 2021 online Diversity Forum (Zoom Webinar) was organized with the theme: “Work-Life Balance as Seen from Men’s Childcare Leave). The webinar featured a lecture on the revisions of the Child Care and Family Care Leave Act, a keynote speech on the right ways to understand and use the concept of work-life balance, and a presentation on a personal experience of taking childcare leave at Kobe University. The lectures and presentations were followed by a question-and-answer session and a discussion among the speakers, which helped educate the audience on these topics, especially the people in management positions who play an important role in creating a vibrant workplace for all in light of the recent revision of the Child Care and Family Care Act. (The webinar was watched by 112 viewers.)