

Friday, May 26, 2023

External Evaluation Report for the FY2022 Project Results

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This document reports the results of an external evaluation of the FY2022 project results based on the attached Report on the Results of the Initiative for Realizing Diversity in the Research Environment (Advanced Type) Project for FY2022.

1) Achieve a recruitment rate of over 30% women researchers

Remarks: The recruitment rate of women researchers for FY2022 did not meet the target; rather, it is highly regrettable that the gap between the target and the reality seems to be expanding. Everyone involved in the hiring of researchers needs to recognize the achievement of this target as a personal matter, clarify and become aware of the various barriers, and put measures into real action. For this reason, I hope that the disclosure and sharing of information are carried out in detail based on the new rules, and that this will facilitate the recognition of this issue as a personal matter. In terms of the positive action hiring activities in FY2020–2021, in which priority to women was listed within recruitment guidelines, it is necessary to confirm the reality of priority given to women in actual hiring decisions. In addition, I hope that the distribution of incentives to departments that have achieved results is carried out with effectiveness.

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

Remarks: It is unfortunate that the appointment rate of higher-ranking positions (promotion rate) in FY2022 did not reach the target, and that the downward trend since FY2020–2021 is continuing. New implementation of the PI Training Program for International Collaborative Research Overseas for FY2021 had three participants, but this dropped to only one in FY2022. I had understood this program as the core of the Initiative for Realizing Diversity in the Research Environment, so this track record gives rise to uncertainty about the future of the project. I was hoping for an expansion of results by utilizing the benefits of online implementation to the fullest extent, but perhaps the disadvantages outweighed this. As the COVID-19 pandemic is brought under control and the environment for overseas dispatch will recover in FY2023, I would like to see the program return to its previous level of liveliness.

3) Increase the base of next-generation young researchers

Remarks: It is unfortunate that there was only one participant in the International Collaborative Early-career Researcher Training Program for FY2022, and the same for the PI Training Program. Being the main initiatives of the project, these results are highly disappointing. I hope that the programs will be revived as the pandemic is brought under control. From the number of participants in the role model exchange meeting, it appears to have been conducted effectively. I would like to see these events held continuously and creatively in the future, such as inviting role models from outside the university.

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

Remarks: The creation, publication and content of the Basic Policy and Guidelines on Diverse Sexualities and Genders at Kobe University is highly commendable. Moving forward, dissemination to all related parties and implementation of the guidelines is essential, and I look forward to the results of awareness campaigns and training activities using the educational materials created by the Gender Equality Office. In addition, I highly commend the successful holding of the Diversity Forum in FY2022. It was very meaningful to have proposals from various perspectives shared by the LGBTQ community, and candid appeals from students had also a sense of realism.

5) Overall remarks (Please add comments regarding the “Report on the Actions Taken in Response to the Findings of the FY2020 and FY2021 External Evaluations” here.)

Remarks:

This project includes initiatives that will likely bring concrete results with time. To measure the effect of such initiatives, how about publishing the results of awareness surveys?

I am interested in the unconscious bias survey that is planned for the university. I would like to have the results shared with us.

Regarding the operation of the PI Training Program and the Early-career Researcher Training Program, although there are concerns of the dispatch objective becoming unclear, I hope to see the program return to its previous vibrancy through the expansion of participants.