

March 26, 2025
Board of Directors

Code of Conduct for Research at Tohoku University

The founding principles of Tohoku University are the tradition of ‘Research First’, the philosophy of ‘Open Doors’ and the spirit of ‘Practice-Oriented Research and Education’, which form the foundation upon which the university strives to conduct research and provide education at the highest global standards. The university is also committed to applying its research achievements to tackle societal challenges and developing a workforce of leaders to help contribute to a peaceful and just human society.

Tohoku University seeks to advance basic science in pursuit of the truth through the promotion of open science and aims to become a global platform for innovation. The university also strives to generate knowledge, foster the next generation of talent and create social value through co-creation with society. This aims to contribute to the realization of a sustainable future by tackling the various challenges faced by modern society.

It is expected that the university’s faculty, staff, students and other members engaged in research activities have the right to pursue the truth under academic freedom. Tohoku University also demands these members to continuously strive to improve their expert knowledge and research capabilities. In conjunction with these expectations, researchers are also responsible for treating others with respect, conducting research responsibly and fairly in line with their conscience as researchers and adhering to social norms and regulations.

Researchers at Tohoku University are responsible for serving as a bridge and maintaining a proper relationship between academia and the general public as members of a University for International Research Excellence, and in recognition of the significant societal role that research activities play. Therefore, the university established the *Code of Conduct for Research at Tohoku University* as one of the responsibilities that researchers must adhere to.

1. Integrity in Research Activities

1.1) Maintaining a focus on integrity in the conduct of research activities

Researchers will conduct research based on mutual understanding and trust while maintaining integrity and honesty, as well as respecting the rights and intellectual freedom of others. Therefore, researchers are expected to:

- Based on the perspectives of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and in accordance with the Tohoku University Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Promotion Declaration, we do not discriminate against individuals, and we respect their dignity.
- Conduct ethical research activities with responsibility and with considerations for human subjects, animals, the environment and other relevant research variables.

The university recognizes the importance of research integrity and is committed to promoting this principle.

1.2) Ensuring and enhancing research integrity

Researchers are expected to continually strive to ensure and enhance the integrity of their research. Therefore, researchers are required to:

- Respect preceding research findings and conduct research based on objective evidence and sufficient data.
- Refrain from any form of misconduct, such as harassment, in research activities.
- Responsibly educate and mentor the next generation of researchers on research integrity.
- Publish research findings in accordance with the '*Guidelines for Appropriate Publication of Research Results at Tohoku University* (approved by the General Manager of Research Ethics Promotion and enacted on December 22, 2017)'.
- Prohibit research misconduct, including fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or any other unethical practices.
- Commit to continuous learning and self-improvement to uphold research integrity.

Tohoku University recognizes the importance of ensuring and enhancing research integrity and is committed to promoting related initiatives. Additionally, the university will take appropriate actions towards any concerns that may arise regarding research activities.

1.3) Transparency and accountability in research

Tohoku University must strive to ensure research integrity and security while developing a research environment that is internationally trusted, in response to the renewed risks associated with advancing open science and the internationalization of research. Furthermore, researchers must ensure transparency in their research activities and carry out their accountability by continuously striving to maintain and enhance research integrity and security.

1.4) Management of research aimed at military applications

Tohoku University and its researchers will not conduct research intended for direct military use, with respect to the university's mission to contribute to the realization of a peaceful and just human society.

2. Proper Management of Research Data and Results

2.1) Proper Management and Use of Research Data and Intellectual Property

Tohoku University and its researchers must comply with '*Tohoku University's Policy on Research Data Management and Sharing* (Approved by the President of Tohoku University and enacted December 9, 2021)', the '*Intellectual Property Policy*', and other relevant policies for the proper management and use of research data and intellectual property.

2.2) Intellectual property management, and proper handling/ protection of personal information

Tohoku University and its researchers must properly handle and protect all personal information in compliance with the Act on the Protection of Personal Information (Act No. 57 of 2003) and other related regulations and guidelines, as well as the '*Regulations on Protection of Personal Information at National University Corporation Tohoku University* (Rule No.11 of 2005)'.

3. Compliance with Laws and Regulations in Research Activities

In addition to the requirements outlined in Section 1 and Section 2, researchers must comply with Japanese laws, relevant guidelines and the regulations of countries and organizations involved in international collaborative activity and joint research.

Researchers must also follow appropriate procedures in accordance with various legal and university regulations concerning safety and health management, the proper use of research funds, conflicts of interest, security export trade, medical and biological research involving human subjects, animal experiments and genetic modification experiments. This includes ensuring the fair and equitable access and benefits sharing in the utilization of biological and genetic resources. Furthermore, researchers must respect and adhere to the rules and standards set by the relevant research communities and academic societies.

4. Cooperation in Consultation, Reporting, Whistleblowing, and Investigations

Tohoku University will establish a dedicated consultation service to facilitate consultations, reports, or whistleblowing on violations, potential issues and concerns related to the university's Code of Conduct for Research. Additionally, the university will protect the rights of individuals who, in good faith, seek advice, report misconduct, or raise concerns and will ensure that these individuals do not face any negative consequences.

Regarding potential violations, issues, or concerns related to the university's Code of Conduct for Research, researchers must conduct consultations, report and whistleblowing with honesty and in an appropriate manner. Furthermore, researchers are expected to cooperate in good faith with any investigation or related inquiry when requested.

Afterword:

This amends the '*Tohoku University Code of Conduct for Fair Research Activities*' established by the Board of Directors on November 26, 2013.