

November 26, 2013

Board of Directors

Tohoku University Code of Conduct for Fair Research Activities

1. The Purpose of the Code of Conduct

Tohoku University pursues the “Research First” tradition, “Open Door” policy, and “Practice Oriented Research and Education” spirit. By doing so, it has consistently kept its door open to the world as a research-centered university, and promoted the development of “an international center of intellectual creation and education” committed to diversity and underpinned by foresight and expertise. Through these efforts, Tohoku University tackles and strives to resolve the difficult problems confronting contemporary society, and works to fulfill its responsibility to the future of humanity and the Earth.

Research is a craft that creates knowledge and culture shared by humanity, and its fruits contribute to the progress and advancement of society. Individuals engaged in research activities at Tohoku University, including faculty, staff, and students, are required to satisfy the social mandate as experts, exercise their right to uncover the truth based on their own professional judgment, as well as conduct fair research activities, adhere to social norms, laws, and ordinances, and fulfill their social responsibility as researchers under academic freedom.

Researchers have a responsibility to ensure the quality of the expertise and the skills that they produce, and must endeavor to harness their expertise, skills, and experience to contribute to the uncovering of the truth, the health and welfare of humanity, the safety and tranquility of society, and the sustainability of the environment.

Bearing in mind the magnitude of the social role fulfilled by research activities, Tohoku University and researchers have a responsibility to conscientiously take part in forging and maintaining sound relationships between their respective research and society. As part of this duty, Tohoku University hereby sets out a code of conduct which researchers should adhere to.

2. The Principles of Fair Research Activities

Researchers are required to take the following actions for the fair execution of research activities:

- (1) Respect the achievements of preceding research, and perform research based on objective and sufficient grounds;
- (2) Show fairness in citing and giving credit for the work of others;
- (3) Respect the characters of individuals in research, education, and academic societies' activities, without discriminating based on race, gender, social class, ideology, religion, or any other personal characteristic;
- (4) Handle humans, animals, the environment, and the objects of study with respect and care;
- (5) Carry out research in each discipline in accordance with proper research procedures, and appropriately manage and use data;
- (6) When publishing results, establish authorship appropriately based on substantive research contribution;
- (7) If carrying out activities in partnership and in cooperation with organizations or companies outside of the university, take care to avoid conflict of interest with the public good or with the duties of the university;
- (8) Account for research funding sources, and adhere to the rules on the use of research funds; and
- (9) Adhere to research-related laws, ordinances, and guidelines established by relevant government agencies and other institutions, including those regarding the environment, safety, bioethics, and security trade control, as well as the regulations of academic societies to which the researcher belongs. In the case of international joint research, adhere to the rules of relevant countries and organizations.

3. Ban Against Misconduct and Improper Dealing in Research Activities, and Compliance with Laws and Ordinances

Researchers and the university must comply with the following for the fair execution of research activities:

- (1) Researchers and the university must not commit misconduct in research activities (fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism), and should there be any misconduct, must correct it.
- (2) Researchers and the university must not commit “improper dealings” in research activities. “Improper dealings” refer to, for example, breach of obligation related to conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality, failure to obtain the consent of research subjects, abuse of research subjects or materials, improper authorship which does not reflect research contribution, duplicate submission or duplicate publication, and fragmentary publication of research that can be published in a single paper. These improper dealings undermine trust in research. Proper methods shared among the academic community must be used for research procedures, data management, and the publication of research results.
- (3) In executing research activities, researchers and the university must not deviate from laws and ordinances as well as guidelines for the respective research field. Researchers and the university must not misuse research funds, such that their use is not in accordance with the rules.
- (4) Researchers and the university must neither attempt to conceal misconduct and improper dealings in research activities, nor retaliate against whistleblowers or take other such actions.
- (5) The university must prevent misconduct and improper dealings in research activities. If any doubts arise, the university must address them appropriately.

4. Maintenance and Enhancement of Research Ethics

Researchers and the university must make the following efforts to maintain and enhance research ethics:

- (1) Researchers must make efforts to maintain research ethics, and shall not neglect self-improvement and learning.
- (2) Those engaged in the mentoring of young researchers and students must fulfill their responsibilities to future generations by giving guidance on research ethics.
- (3) The university must conduct activities to promote and spread the adoption of research ethics.