

Message from the President

Introduction

Since its founding in 1907, Tohoku University has nurtured generations of leaders, and supported them with innovative technology that the world's best research teams can produce. And we've achieved this by never wavering from the three tenets that have defined our university for over a century - a "Research First" tradition, an "Open Doors" policy and working in the spirit of "Practice-oriented Research and Education."

Always a trailblazer, Tohoku University was the first university in Japan to admit female students in 1913, and also one of the first to welcome international students. Currently, 10 percent of our approximately 18,000 students are international, spread across 10 faculties, 15 graduate schools and six research institutes.

We are also well-known for our lifestyle-changing innovations, such as the split-anode magnetron used in microwave ovens and the steel-wire recorder. We made our first foray into the wireless world with the Yagi-Uda antenna, and continue to be at the forefront of digital transformation (DX) technology today.

Our research achievements and social contributions, coupled with our wide network of collaborative partners, led to us being one of the first three institutions to be conferred the status of a Designated National University by the Japanese government in June 2017.

And in 2021, for the second year in a row, we are ranked Number One on Times Higher Education's annual list of Japanese universities.



A Year Changed by COVID-19: Education and Student Life

We have just had our first full academic year living with the COVID-19 pandemic, and every member of Tohoku University has played a part in getting us through it. When COVID-19 first hit, we immediately moved all our classes online to protect our students and staff. It wasn't easy, but everyone worked together and adapted quickly. By leveraging our strengths in information technology and by utilizing the benefits of digital connections and resources, we were able to complete the academic year without significant disruption.

As we go forward, we will adjust our activities accordingly, to incorporate a safe combination of real and virtual interactions. Hybrid and HyFlex classes will likely be the norm over the next few semesters. And the Be Global Project - which offers international joint academic courses and co-curricular cultural programmes online - will continue until it is once again safe to travel.

Student support packages - such as financial aid, peer support and counselling services - will also continue for as long as they are needed. And we've been happy to see the success of our "100 Yen Breakfast Deals," which has also gained support and sponsorship from members of our Alumni Association.

A Year Changed by COVID-19: Research and Community Outreach

In research, Tohoku University has been all-in in the fight against COVID-19. Our Clinical Skills Lab has been providing ECMO simulation training to medical personnel from around the region, to help them treat COVID-19 patients. And research projects that are underway cover a range of topics, from medicine, testing and public health, to the various technologies that support the search for treatments and a cure. International research collaborations have also been stepped up.

In May, Tohoku University joined Miyagi Prefecture and Sendai City in setting up a large-scale coronavirus vaccination centre. Doctors, pharmacists and other medical staff from Tohoku University Hospital were on hand to help vaccinate some 2,000 local residents each day. It was the first time that a national university in Japan had provided full support to a vaccination centre.

Our students, faculty and staff were also given the option to be vaccinated, and a university-wide vaccination rollout began in June.

From the Great East Japan Earthquake...

March 2021 marked 10 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Over the past decade, Tohoku University has been involved in some 30 projects under the category of "research with social impact," that have contributed to the recovery and reconstruction of Japan's devastated Northeast region. There is now a sense that we can, and should, do more to address resilience and sustainability on a global scale.

We have therefore introduced a Green Goals Initiative, which is a commitment to further develop green technology, contribute to recovery and resilience, and promote social Innovation and inclusion. We will, of course, continue to contribute to the reconstruction of the Tohoku region, but exactly for this reason, there will be a wider, more global, focus on disaster risk reduction, the fight against diseases, climate change and the realization of a green society.

... to a Green Goals Initiative

Under this initiative, Tohoku University will engage in joint green research with top institutes and companies from around the world, as well as promote industry-academia-government collaboration and social co-creation.

The Tohoku University Green Future Research Organisation will also serve as a clearing house for the university's various research projects related to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), disseminating information and facilitating connections and collaborations.

On campus, we will work towards carbon neutrality by 2040. Our first goal is that by 2030, we reduce greenhouse gas emissions on our campuses by 50 percent compared to 2013. And by improving operational efficiency through our digital transformation, our ultimate goal is to achieve zero emissions by 2040.

Conclusion

Within this Fact Book you will find detailed information about Tohoku University. But I also encourage you to visit our official website (<http://www.tohoku.ac.jp/en/>) to get the latest news about our education and research activities.

We are always grateful for the strong relationship we have with our community, our partner institutions, the local and national governments and of course, our Tohoku University alumni around the world.

These are challenging times, but I believe that as long as we invest in innovative research, embrace diversity and progressive education, and continue to support one another, we will always prevail and come out stronger.

Hideo Ohno
President, Tohoku University
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