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Historical Background

Tohoku University, formerly known as Tohoku Imperial University, was founded in 1907. Unlike other imperial universities of that time, it initiated an "Open Door" policy, accepting graduates from both technical and regular high schools. In 1913, it went a step further and, despite opposition from the government, became Japan's first university to admit female students.

At the time of its founding, Tohoku University was able to attract young and brilliant researchers from around the world. A "Research First" principle was established, and scholars were encouraged to not only pursue highly productive research, but to also put their findings to work in their teaching. Over the years, Tohoku University developed a proud tradition of "Practice-oriented Research and Education," in which the results of cutting-edge research are put to use for the good of society and the improvement of living standards, through initiatives such as the establishment of university-based ventures and co-creation research institutes.

These tenets have been passed down from generation to generation since the university's founding, and after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, the entire university worked tirelessly to not only restore its own educational and research operations but also to provide expertise and support to help with the recovery and reconstruction of the affected communities. In 2024, Tohoku University was accredited as the first University for International Research Excellence. As such, everyone at the university is working to realize a better society through outstanding research, the development of talented individuals, and co-creation with a range of partners.