



Hokkaido University Newsletter

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Photo by Makoto Odagiri
(Hokkaido University Photo Club)



Inaugural Address by the Executive and Vice President in Charge of International Affairs



▲ Dr. Takeo Hondoh
Executive and Vice President
(in charge of International Affairs)
Hokkaido University

International exchange activities at universities have evolved from what were once friendly cooperative or extracurricular activities to important enterprises that determine the future of universities. Now that the wave of globalization has begun to affect university education, regardless of whether we like it or not, universities lacking international competitiveness have no choice but to lose prestige. Although we must be aware of international standards when contemplating the future of our university, we must not slack in our efforts to fully utilize our unique characteristics. This bears resemblance to the assertion in deliberations about environmental problems and sustainability that it is essential to strike a balance between globalization and localization. For example, developing curricula and an achievement evaluation system in conformity with international standards is one of the prerequisites for the internationalization of university education. At the same time, however, it is true that we cannot create competitiveness

in the true sense of the term without valuing the characteristic research and curricula only our university can offer even if they are to be provided locally. Even now at a time when the dissemination of the Internet enables large quantities of information to instantaneously transcend national borders, it is imperative for us to have students to find it attractive to study and conduct research at our university. It is this attractiveness that must serve as the source of our international competitiveness. I firmly believe that my mission is to develop international exchanges that capitalize on the unique characteristics of our university.

Takeo Hondoh
Executive and Vice President (in charge of International Affairs)
Hokkaido University

Hokkaido University Has Launched a Campaign Toward the G8 Summit

Hokkaido University (HU) started a promotion campaign named, "Sustainability Research & Education Promotion Marathon" in September 2007 toward the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit. For the sustainability campaign, HU will host a succession of more than 25 global symposia and workshops in environmental fields. The G8 Summit will be held on 7-9 July, 2008 at the lakeside of Toyako which places in two-hour-drive southward from HU's Sapporo Campus. The main theme of the summit being "Environment," HU, with a good track record in research and education in the environmental fields, will offer an opportunity in the campaign for researchers, educators and citizens, including students around the globe to bring together knowledge and wisdom to address challenges for the realization of a sustainable society.



For more info, please visit a website of Hokudai Network for Global Sustainability at <http://www.sustain.hokudai.ac.jp>



The Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies, the Center for Experimental Research in Social Sciences and the Center for Language Learning Established

The Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies, the Center for Experimental Research in Social Sciences and the Center for Language Learning were established on April 1.

The Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies

The Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies was founded with the aim of conducting advanced interdisciplinary research and education concerning indigenous peoples and contributing to the development of diverse cultures in Japan. Amid the increased social awareness of indigenous peoples, Japan is also witnessing a drive toward the establishment of a multicultural society and the Ainu, who have their unique culture, are attracting considerable attention. The Center will promote research and education from multiple aspects, e.g. history, culture, law, politics and the environment, in cooperation with organizations on and off campus and with the active participation of the Ainu and indigenous peoples.

The Center for Experimental Research in Social Sciences

The Center for Experimental Research in Social Sciences was established to develop research and education based on various group-experimental studies in a new experimental laboratory across universities. The Center will disseminate research results at home and abroad on social sciences experiments and reinforce its collaboration with domestic and overseas research centers. The Center, which also aims to develop human resources, is expected to train not only world-class researchers but also professionals who will engage in important policy decisions and product development.



▲ Prof. Nakamura, President of HU as of April and Mr. Tsunemoto, Director of the Center for Ainu & Indigenous Studies

The Center for Language Learning

The Center for Language Learning aims to serve as the central organization for foreign language education to nurture internationally-minded personnel for the purpose of the cultivation of global perspectives, which is one of HU's founding principles, through the planning, coordination and execution of foreign language education. Spanish and Korean language courses for beginners were newly established in addition to the previously established courses for English, German, French, Russian and Chinese languages. Moreover, Italian, Polish, Latin, Finnish, Cantonese and other language lessons were also opened to expand the existing range of options.



◀ Prof. Nakamura, President of HU as of April and Mr. Eguchi, Director of the Center for Language Learning



Entrance Ceremony Held for the Intensive Japanese Language Course



The entrance ceremony for the Intensive Japanese Language Course was held on April 11, with 17 international students from 14 countries being admitted to the course.

During the entrance ceremony, Takeo Hondoh, Director of the International Student Center, delivered a speech, in which he emphasized it will be educational and rewarding to mix together and to pass on each other's culture and language both for International students and for Japanese students. And then each student introduced him or herself and stated their aspirations in Japan.

The entrance ceremony was followed by an orientation session by the International Student Center, where campus life

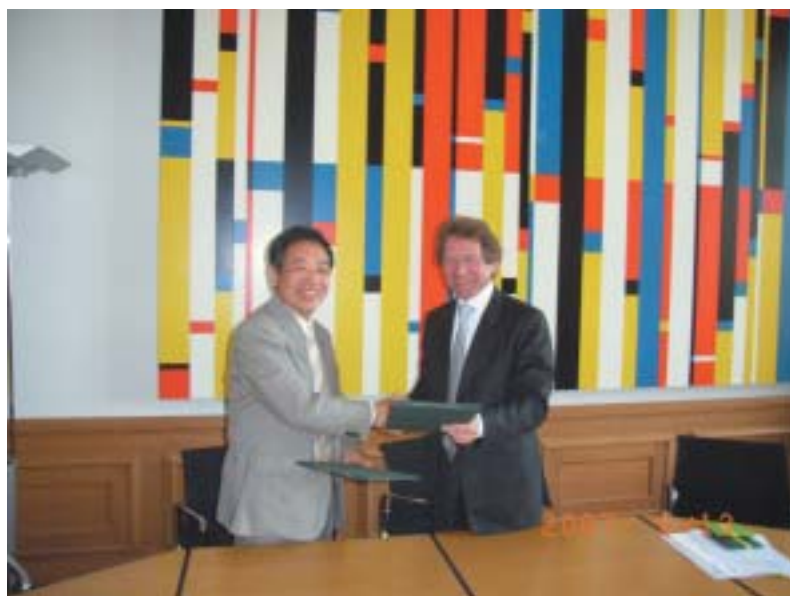
was explained to ensure that the students are able to easily adapt themselves to their new environment.

In addition, a campus tour was held with the cooperation of volunteer students on April 27, during which time the newly admitted students visited the Hokkaido University Library, the Health Administration Center, the Hokkaido University Museum, etc. and received explanations about how to use those facilities among other things.



▲Entrance Ceremony attendees

Conclusion of Inter-University Agreements with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich and the Institute for Political Studies in Paris



▲Dr. Takeo Hondoh, HU Vice President, and Dr. Konrad Osterwalder (ETH Zurich)

Hokkaido University (HU) has concluded Inter-University Agreements with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH Zurich) and the Institute for Political Studies in Paris (Sciences Po).

Agreement with ETH Zurich

Founded in 1855, ETH Zurich has produced 21 Nobel laureates thus far, and is one of the most prestigious universities in the world. The Faculty of Environmental Earth Science, and the Institute of Low Temperature Science have mainly promoted inter-university exchanges.

On July 13, Dr. Takeo Hondoh, Vice President in charge of international affairs, taking with him a written Agreement signed by President Saeki, and Dr. Konrad Osterwalder, President of ETH Zurich, signed the Agreement at ETH Zurich.

Most lessons given in English at ETH Zurich, it is expected that four HU students per year (eight students per semester) will be dispatched. In addition, ETH Zurich has expressed its willingness to dispatch students to HU graduate schools (masters' courses), thus further enhancement of HU's preparedness for accepting international students is anticipated.

Agreement with Sciences Po

Sciences Po was established in 1872 with École Libre des Sciences Politiques as its predecessor. With successive presidents – Francois Maurice Mitterrand, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and Jacques Chirac – having graduated from the school, it is a prestigious social science institute renowned for its elite education. The Faculty of Public Policy has played a central role in promoting inter-university exchanges.

As for the conclusion of the Agreement with Sciences Po, Sciences Po signed the Agreement on May 18 and it was given to Dr. Hondoh when he visited the school. Sciences Po is also increasing the number of lessons conducted in English, and it is expected that two HU students per year (four students per semester) will be dispatched and student exchanges will become stronger.



New Staff at Beijing Office: Ms. Wu Hongyan



▲Ms. Wu at Beijing Office

Ms. Wu Hongyan has joined as a staff at HU Beijing Office. She will welcome you at the office.

Message from Ms. Wu Hongyan

My name is Wu Hongyan, and I am very pleased to be assuming my duties as Assistant to the Director of the Hokkaido University Beijing Office.

I enrolled in the Hokkaido University School of Law in the spring of 2001 as a postgraduate student. After completing the master's course, I proceeded to the doctoral course, through which I obtained the necessary units and then left the course in March of this year. Since April, I have been a visiting foreign researcher at the Advanced Institute for Law and Politics, which is affiliated with the Hokkaido University School of Law. I was at Hokkaido University for a total of six years, including my postgraduate years.

While studying at Hokkaido University, I felt most fortunate when I spent time on the vast campus filled with greenery and cherry blossoms in the central lawn in spring, lotuses and ducks in Ono Pond in summer and Ginkgo Avenue in autumn. I also experienced my first Genghis Khan party at Hokkaido University. I grilled lamb on the beautiful lawn together with many of my friends. We also drank beer and sang songs, and I was excited about the uplifting feeling and atmosphere. I believe that a scene like this is unique to Hokkaido University in Japan.

I majored in comparisons of civil procedure laws in Japan and China. What astounded me was that it was easier to obtain Chinese materials at Hokkaido University than it was in China. Moreover, I was impressed by the commitment of Japanese legal scholars to prepare accurate and detailed materials. At Hokkaido University, I not only acquired knowledge, but also learned a mental attitude befitting a researcher, research methods and even ways of thinking. These were very helpful to me as I proceeded with my research.

Various episodes I experienced at Hokkaido University will stay with me for the rest of my life as unforgettable memories. I am therefore truly pleased to have this opportunity to work for the Beijing Office. In this workplace, I would like to convey what I learned from the years I spent studying at Hokkaido University as well as my satisfaction with studying at Hokkaido University to many Chinese students and researchers. I would also like to contribute, albeit humbly, to promote exchanges between Hokkaido University and its Chinese counterparts, businesses and universities in both countries. I would like to kindly ask for your cooperation in this regard. Thank you very much.

Joint Briefing Session for Prospective International Students to Japan Held in Chongqing, China



▲Prof. Suzuki, answering the questions from students

A joint briefing session for prospective international students to Japan (sponsors: Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) Beijing Office and Chongqing Consulate-General of Japan) was held in Chongqing, China, on May 10. Ken Suzuki, Director of Hokkaido University (HU) Beijing Office, and Wu Hongyan, assistant to the director, participated in the session and found the venue filled with approximately 80 students and instructors. Mr. Genichiro Takahashi, Consul in charge of education at the Chongqing Consulate-General (and a graduate of the HU Faculty of Letters) gave a broad presentation on studying in Japan which was followed by Mr. Suzuki's presentation on the overview of HU.

After the presentations, students individually received information at respective booths. HU's booth attracted students majoring in the Japanese language, graduate students in science and technology, etc. They enthusiastically asked questions about the procedures necessary to study in Japan among other things. As a result of the session, we expect an increase in the number of international students from Chongqing.

Participation in a Joint Explanatory Meeting for Chinese Students Aspiring to Study at Japanese Graduate Schools Held at the Dalian University of Technology in China

Hokkaido University's Beijing Office participated in a joint explanatory meeting for Chinese students and researchers held at the Dalian University of Technology in China on June 7.

The meeting was held under the auspices of the RIKEN China Office and the Dalian Branch Office of the Consulate-General of Japan in Shenyang, and six academic institutions in Japan, including HU, Tohoku University, the University of Tokyo, the Tokyo Institute of Technology and Hiroshima University, participated.

The venue was crowded with approximately 150 Chinese students and staff members, with several people left having to stand. During the meeting, Wu Hongyan, Assistant to the Director of the Beijing Office, gave a Power Point presentation summarizing HU.

After the presentation made by each university, Wu Hongyan and Mami Yamada, a staff member of the International Affairs Division, provided information to students in person at a booth. Aside from the Dalian University of Technology, a great number of students from the Dalian University of Foreign Language and Dalian Jiaotong University visited the HU booth, thus demonstrating a high interest in HU.



▲Ms. Wu Hongyan, assistant to the director, presenting the outline of Hokkaido University



“Team Someday” HU, as Japan’s Representative for Imagine Cup 2007 World Wide Finals



▲Team Someday members with the Japan Finals’ trophy

On March 25, 2007, the Software Design Japan Finals of the Imagine Cup 2007, an information technology (IT) contest for students worldwide sponsored by Microsoft Corporation, were held in Osaka, and “Team Someday,” comprised of students from the Hokkaido University Graduate School of Information Science and Technology, won the first prize.

All four members of “Team Someday” belong to the Division of Synergetic Information Science of the Hokkaido University Graduate School of Information Science and Technology: Mr. Osamu Shimoda (Real Software Development Engineering Research Group, leader), Mr. Jun Owada (Laboratory of Autonomous Systems Engineering), Ms. Kana

Maruyama (Laboratory of Harmonious Systems Engineering) and Mr. Hironori Sakamoto (Laboratory of Harmonious Systems Engineering). They launched their activities in September of last year and produced the digital notebook system “LinQ” by meeting between lectures and research activities.

The digital notebook system “LinQ” refers to a system that enables users to share “memos” digitized using an electronic pen and notebook and come up with something by consolidating and visualizing key points and questions according to certain standards. For example, when taking lessons at school, students will be able to come up with questions they had not thought of on their own by checking other students’ questions, and if students know the answers to these questions, they will be able to deepen their understanding by teaching them to others. Furthermore, teachers will be able to easily recognize what students consider to be important and what questions they have by referring to this system.

The members of “Team Someday” cited the following as factors that contributed to their victory: knowledge and experience obtained through lectures and exercises about real software development offered by expert groups from IT companies, which were held by the Real Software Development Engineering Chair and Open System Engineering Chair, both of which were endowed chairs established in the Division of Synergetic Information Science up until last year; and enthusiastic instructions during daily research activities and presentations at the laboratories to which the team members belong.

Representing Japan, the Team Someday members participated in the Imagine Cup 2007 World Finals held in Korea from August 5 through 11. Unfortunately, they failed to place highly in the Finals. However, there is no doubt that it was the most rewarding experience they have ever had. It is expected that they will have great successes in the future.

Imagine Cup website; <http://imaginecup.com>



COE Program Series 8 Sustainable Metabolic System of Water and Waste for Area-based Society



▲Dr. Yoshimasa Watanabe,
Project leader

The 21st Century COE Program “Sustainable Metabolic System of Water and Waste for Area-based Society” has three sub-themes: “Water Metabolic System for Area-based Society,” “Waste Metabolic System for Area-based Society” and “System for Sustainable Infrastructure,” which supports the establishment and operation of the preceding two systems.



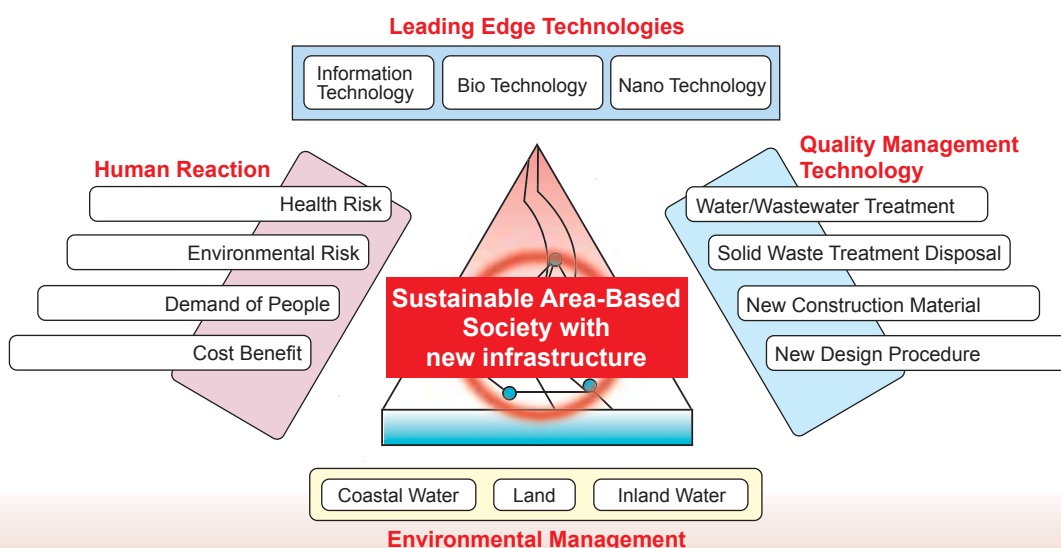
▲COE Plenary Meeting '06
(March 8, 2006)

Aiming to restore the environment and create urban water, physical and energy circulation systems as well as maintain and create natural circulation and symbiotic systems in an area-based society, we are also working on the following technological developments: leading-edge water and wastewater treatment systems using membrane filtration, resource recovery technology from waste material, appropriate final disposal system for solid waste, construction materials with long life cycles, and an infrastructure repairing method to maintain these long life cycles. We are also tackling the development of new management procedures for infrastructure that take into consideration the reduction of environmental/health risks, consumption of resources/energy and demand of the people.

This COE project is closely related to two of the three concepts stipulated in the 2nd Science and Technology Basic Plan (FY2001-FY2005), i.e. (1) a nation securing safety and quality of life; (2) a nation with international competitiveness and the ability to develop sustainably, and is a program for fostering researchers and engineers capable of creating a social infrastructure system based on the holonic path concept (striving for the harmony of the whole while respecting the autonomy of the individual) for the planning, building and operation of an autonomous and distributed transport and quality improvement system for water and waste in a watershed on an appropriate temporal

and spatial scale. To this end, this project seeks to establish a new socio-environmental engineering system as shown in the figure that combines hardware technologies for quality utilization and improvement with state-of-the-art software technologies to accommodate human responses and environmental management.

Concept of New Socio-Environmental Engineering





Graduate School Introduction Series 8 Graduate School of Law and School of Law



▲Graduate School of Law and School of Law

Outline of the Organization

The School of Law was originally inaugurated in 1947 under the name of the Faculty of Law and Literature and was renamed the Faculty of Law and Economics in 1950. It was separated from the Faculty of Economics into the Faculty of Law in 1953, when the Graduate School of Law (master course) was also established. This was followed by the inauguration of the doctoral course in 1955. In 1992, the Graduate Course (master's program) was established ahead of other universities in the nation with the aim of opening the door of graduate education to people other than prospective researchers and cultivating outstanding

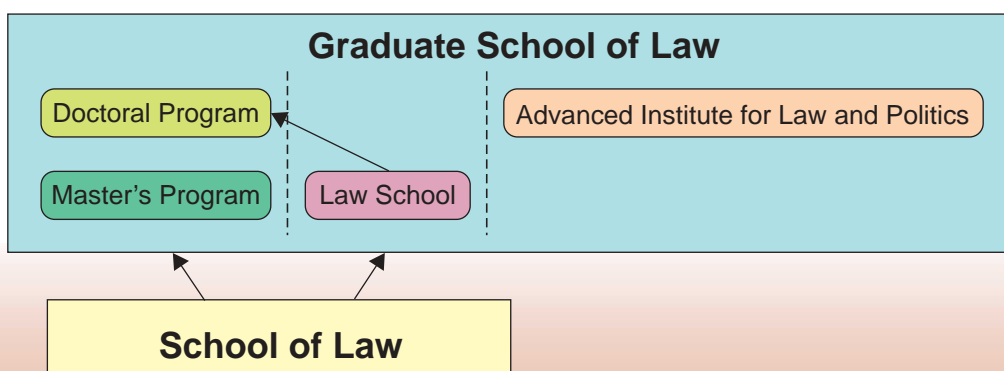
professionals with the ultimate goal of meeting the ever-diversifying and increasingly sophisticated demands of society, which was favorably accepted by society. Based on these developments, greater emphasis was placed on graduate education and the Institute for Advanced Education and Research on Law and Politics was inaugurated in 2000, thus supporting research activities by faculty members and providing a place for practical business as well as a forum for interactions with civil society.

Foundation of the Law School

The most recent and most significant event for the Graduate School of Law and the School of Law was the foundation of the Law School in 2004. The Government of Japan decided to establish a law school system as the core of its efforts to reform its system for nurturing the legal profession, one of the main pillars of juridical system reform, and a law school was also inaugurated at Hokkaido University as one of the 68 schools established during the first stage of this reform. (The aforementioned Graduate Course was dissolved accordingly.) At the time, the Law School was the only one of its kind in Hokkaido and has since then provided outstanding education and instruction thanks in particular to the organizational cooperation rendered by the Sapporo Bar Association since before its establishment, not to mention the cooperation of the courts and Ministry of Justice. The first group of graduates, who completed their study in March 2006, achieved the nation's fourth highest pass rate for the first new bar examination over their counterparts from Kyoto University and prestigious private universities in the Tokyo Metropolitan Area. Since many of them will commence lawyer-related activities in Hokkaido, it can be said that we have been achieving significant results in our efforts to contribute to local communities.

We have also been rigorously promoting partnerships and cooperation for the Public Policy School, which was inaugurated in 2005.

Current Organization Structure





Characteristic Research Activities

On the other hand, since entering the 21st century, communities have become more and more closely related to global society in every aspect of our lives. Although there is no end in sight to research projects on jurisprudence and political science, our research performance has been improving more than ever before. While we do not have any space here to introduce the results of research activities by our individual staff members and postgraduates, please allow us to cite an example of a joint research project based on external funds acquired by our faculty members. The Laws and Policies of Intellectual Property: Building a New Global Framework, one of the 21st Century COE Programs commenced in 2003, is currently in its final stages as this fiscal year falls on the last year of the project. Comparative Research into Changes in Governance in an Age of Globalization, which was one of the Creative Scientific Research projects funded by the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), was continued for five years from FY2002. It had gained immense popularity in and outside of Japan until its completion in March 2007, and further research is currently being developed. Moreover, Hokkaido University has obtained one of the nation's highest grants from the MEXT Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research in the field of social science, thus attesting to the eminent reputation of our graduate schools. In addition, all projects have enjoyed active exchanges with overseas researchers, primarily those from North America, France, Germany and East Asia.

The Graduate School of Law is also actively involved in disseminating information and presenting opinions to civil society. Among other institutions, the aforementioned Institute for Advanced Education and Research on Law and Politics has often hosted open lectures by its staff members or invited distinguished advocates. We study and analyze various challenges confronting Hokkaido, Japan and the world from academic perspectives, and a great number of citizens join the lectures as auditing students.



▲Basic courses of Civil Law (Law School)



▲Open lectures

Challenges Today

The challenge we must address is that of training of future researchers. The number of outstanding students aspiring to become researchers has been decreasing nationwide due to the economic recovery and above-mentioned development of law schools. In an effort to address this problem, we developed research projects mainly comprising graduate students as part of the Initiatives for Attractive Education in Graduate Schools in FY2005 under the auspices of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. We are currently considering how to pass on traditional research styles that have long contributed to Japanese society while extensively reading about the state of affairs in other countries.



Global COE Program: Three Projects by HU adopted (June 15)

The Global Center of Excellence (COE) Program newly commenced in FY2007 with the support of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT).

Aimed at further enriching and reinforcing the education and research of Japanese graduate schools, as well as developing creative human resources who can lead the world from the world's most elite research infrastructure, it is expected that the creation of internationally competitive universities will be promoted through the formation of education and research centers of global excellence.

For FY2007, 63 projects of 28 universities were selected out of 281 applications from 111 universities. MEXT will provide selected projects with funding support of 15.8 billion Yen (equivalent to 13.5 million US dollars) in total for FY2007.

The following three projects proposed by HU have been adopted:

Global COE Program in HU (FY2007)

	Field	Project	Leader	Amounts (Yen)	Period
1	Chemistry, Material Sciences	Catalysis as the Basis for Innovation in Materials Science	Dr. MIYAURA Norio	151,580,000	2007 - 2011
2	Humanities	Center for Society of Mind	Dr. YAMAGISHI Toshio	72,670,000	2007 - 2011
3	Information Sciences, Electrical and Electronic Sciences	Center for Next-Generation Information Technology based on Knowledge Discovery and Knowledge Federation	Dr. ARIMURA Hiroki	335,920,000	2007 - 2011

We would be grateful to hear your candid views and impressions, as we are hoping to improve its content. Please contact us in the event that you have changed your e-mail address or wish to unsubscribe.

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