

Autumn 2021

# LITTERAE POPULI

A news magazine presented by Hokkaido University





# Recent News from Hokkaido University



## Litterae Populi

Litterae Populi is a bi-annual magazine with the latest news about Hokkaido University. Its name is Latin for "letters of the poplar trees."

## Contents

- 03 Feature: **Connect**
  - 04 Hokkaido University Archives
  - 10 Global Center for Food, Land and Water Resources/  
Graduate School of Global Food Resources
  - 12 Front Office for Human Resource Education and Development  
Promotion Office of Research environment for Diversity
- 14 Interview with the president  
OMI Hideaki  
CEO and President, Co-op Sapporo
- 20 Refining: Physical Therapy  
SAMUKAWA Mina  
Associate Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences
- 22 Alumni Interview  
HINATA Yu  
Laboratory of Seeds Discovery and Development
- 24 Letters from Ambassadors and Partners
- 26 140 Years of Challenge
- 28 Topics
- 30 Campus Landscapes

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[pr@oia.hokudai.ac.jp](mailto:pr@oia.hokudai.ac.jp)  
<https://www.global.hokudai.ac.jp>

Edited by the Litterae Populi Planning and Editing Team  
Cover photo by Akihito Yamamoto (HARE-BARE SHA-SHINN)  
Photos by Hiromi Terashima (Kotoha-sha)  
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# Feature: **Connect**

Hokkaido University is poised to celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2026.

The University is steadily moving forward as an unparalleled institution by stepping up cooperation with the community and an array of organizations while keeping world affairs in mind.

This feature issue highlights the University's initiatives from the three perspectives of history, personnel development, and diversity under the theme of "connecting."





# A Treasure Trove of



## Hokkaido University Archives





# Historical Knowledge

An exhibition hall with an open atmosphere.

The Hokkaido University Archives stores vast amounts of resources accumulated over the long history of Hokkaido University, which was initially founded in 1876 as Sapporo Agricultural College. The Archives also exhibits these materials and allows public access to communicate the historical appeal of the University.





The member of the staff in the foreground of the photo is cleaning collected resources. The member of the staff in the background is cataloging resources. The resources preserved in the Archives can be searched on the Hokkaido University Archives website.

Head west in front of the Clark Memorial Student Center on the south side of the Sapporo Campus, and you will find a beautiful flowerbed. The building with the triangular roof across from the flowerbed is the Hokkaido University Archives. When the Archives was established, its materials were housed in the Central Library building of the University Library, but the Archives relocated in February 2016 to the current building, which had been previously used as the International Student Center. Entering the building, you will find a glass wall in front of you with a white bust of Dr. William S. Clark coming into sight across the well-lit Exhibition Hall.

The Archives was established 16 years ago. Discussions on its possible establishment began on campus when project members for the compilation of the 125-year chronicle of the University, which had continued until 2003, felt the need for an organization charged with preserving historical records of the University for future generations. The Archives was established in May 2005, thanks in part to changes made to the public records management system following the enforcement of laws and regulations related to the Information Disclosure Act (2001). The fact that

many time-honored national universities had begun to develop their archives also gave the University the push it needed. The Archives collects, organizes, preserves, and conducts research on official documents and other materials of historical significance pertaining to the University while holding exhibitions and allowing public access to the Archives for browsing and other utilization. In April 2017, the Official Documents Room and the Historical Resources Room, each staffed with experts, were established in the Archives.

### **A vast array of materials that portray the history of the University**

As an organization serving a function similar to the National Archives of Japan, the Official Documents Room has been designated by the Japanese government as part of the “National Archives of Japan, etc.” based on laws and regulations related to the Public Records and Archives Management Act. The Room is charged with preserving and allowing public access to official documents of historical significance. Under its management are huge



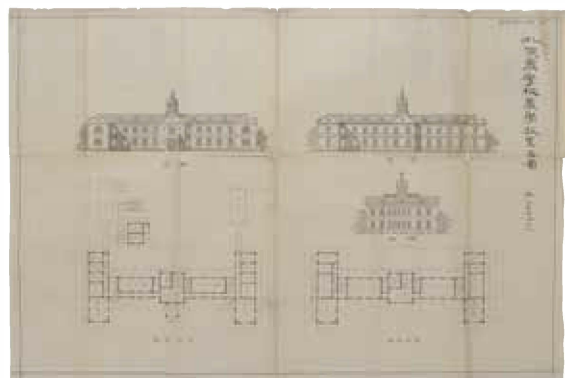
numbers of official documents, including those related to the management and operation of the University (e.g., conference records; the establishment, revision and abolition of organizations), accounting (e.g., budgets, account settlements), student affairs (e.g., syllabi, student handbooks, alumni lists), research (e.g., intellectual property, subsidized projects), facilities (e.g., architectural drawings), and international exchanges (e.g., inter-university exchange agreements). Executive and Vice-President Fumihiko Yamamoto, who serves as the director of the Archives, says, “The primary mission of the Hokkaido University Archives is to secure the preservation of various official documents in order to show the history of the University.”

Like the Official Documents Room, the Historical Resources Room has been designated as part of the “facilities holding materials of historical significance” based on laws and regulations related to the Public Records and Archives Management Act. The room is charged with collecting, organizing, preserving, and allowing public access to historical materials other than official documents. In fact, it collects all sorts of materials, whether belonging to individuals or to groups, including those related to campus life (e.g., publications by departments and student clubs, student diaries and lecture notes, Hokkaido University Festival pamphlets, teacher evaluation lists written by students) and those related to labs and alumni associations. The staff’s steadfast calls for cooperation with their resource collection via the Archives’ website and alumni newsletters have helped to unearth unexpected materials and interesting items.

The historical materials go beyond those related to well-known people such as Inazo Nitobe and Kingo Miyabe. They also include many valuable materials unrelated to famous figures—records, teaching materials, photos—that show what the University was like. Further, architectural drawings and other documents from the days of Sapporo Agricultural College have remained unchanged. Materials from immediate postwar years include the signboard from a stop on the streetcar route that once passed in front of the University and a memo about a cafeteria menu. These items, that nobody thought would ever bear historical significance, are also essential constituents of tracing the history of the University today.

### The mission of passing down the history of the University

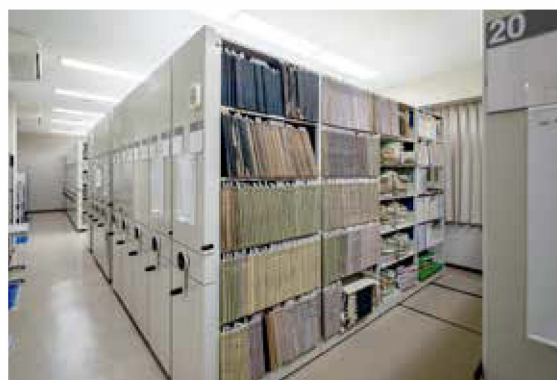
These materials can be browsed in the Archives. The permanent exhibition, on the theme of “Groups of Hokkaido University Alumni: Protagonists in the 150-year History of Hokkaido University,” showcases photos and other materials depicting students from different periods of time, including years following the establishment of Sapporo Agricultural College, prewar and postwar years, and the years of student protests. Further, exhibits featuring the history of Enyu Night School, which was established by Inazo Nitobe and his wife Mary for child day-laborers,



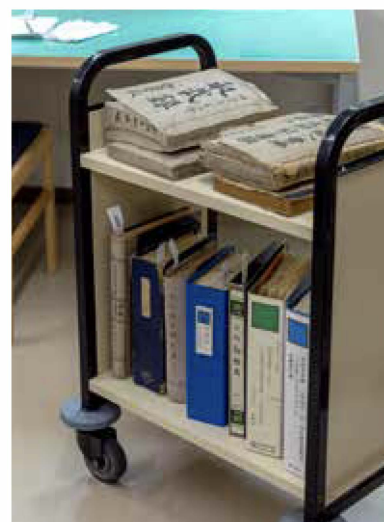
Architectural drawing for the Sapporo Agricultural College Lecture Hall for Agricultural Course.



Records about the Sapporo Agricultural College Keiteki-Ryo (student dorm). Menus of dishes served at the dorm are in the foreground of the photo.



Storeroom for official documents.



A portion of the official documents issued since the years of Sapporo Agricultural College. They are available for browsing in the reading room.





The special exhibition held in 2019 entitled “The Rocky Road from Female Self-Instruction to Coeducation at Hokkaido University: A look back 70 years after the University relaunch under the new system of education” was so popular that the Archives has decided to keep the exhibition on display until the next exhibition. (To visit the exhibition, reservations are required.)

include a letter addressed to such children by the couple prior to the school’s opening and materials left behind by the school’s alumni.

The Archives also holds special exhibitions periodically to promote exchanges with the community. Associate Professor Takaaki Inoue at the Archives stresses that not only is collecting materials a hallmark of the Archives, but so is actively advancing research. During their research, staff at times gain inspiration for specially themed exhibitions. An exhibition held in 2019 entitled “The Rocky Road from Female Self-Instruction to Coeducation at Hokkaido University: A look back 70 years after the University relaunch under a new system of education” showcased materials about Sechi Kato, who in 1918 became the first woman to study at the University (admitted not as a regular student, but as a special student entitled to take all courses and research guidance provided to regular students); materials featuring the determination of female students to further their studies when women’s university admission was still not formally acknowledged; and materials concerning twists and turns leading up to the establishment of a coed system after World War II. Going forward, the Archives plans to work with the Hokkaido University Museum to host an exhibition featuring the Miyazawa-Lane Case, a prewar case of false accusation in which the University’s response came under attack. “I’m fully aware that there are critical opinions about our university, but its mission is to convey to future generations the facts revealed by materials left behind,” says Director Yamamoto. The Archives also hosts guided exhibition tours on Open Campus days and University Festival days to raise public interest in the history of the University.

The Archives is a repository of the University’s history.



A special exhibition (in July 2019) entitled “An Exhibition on Shops around Hokkaido Imperial University as Advertised in the College Newspaper (1926 – 1945)” was held as part of a local cultural event known as Culture Night.



Associate Professor Inoue lectures on the history of the University to junior high school students on a school excursion (4th-floor auditorium, School of Agriculture; September 2019).



Visitors vary in age and purpose of visit and have included people looking into the history of Hokkaido, graduates of the University who came to peruse materials from the years they were in school, people who learned the University was their grandfather's alma mater and came to look at materials from the years of their grandfather's attendance, TV crews who came to verify facts for a quiz show, and junior high school students who came to study the history of the University in their social studies field class. Today, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, reservations are required to browse materials in the Archives. Prospective visitors are therefore kindly advised to check the latest information in advance on the website of the Archives.

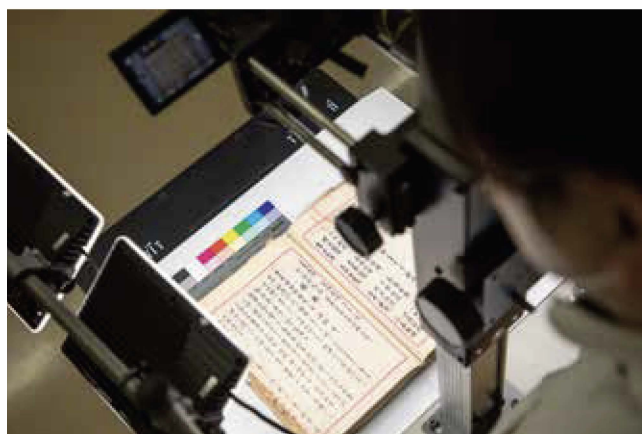
### Looking toward the compilation of a 150-year chronicle of the University, and beyond

The University is set to celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2026. Playing a vital role in compiling the chronicles of the University, the Archives established the Preparatory Office for the Compilation of a 150-Year Chronicle of Hokkaido University in the 2018 academic year. The office was renamed the Office for the Compilation of a 150-Year Chronicle of Hokkaido University in the 2021 academic year, stepping up efforts to shed light on the University's 150-year history by using various media, including records, documents, and research data.

For the success of the 150-Year Chronicle of Hokkaido University compilation project, it is essential to cooperate with the Hokkaido University Museum, the University Library, the Botanic Garden, and other organizations on campus. Such cooperation is nothing new, as the Archives co-hosted an exhibition featuring holdings of the Library dating from the years of Sapporo Agricultural College and historical materials in the Archives. The Archives has also worked with the Library and Botanic Garden to digitize old photographs on dry plates (glass plates for storing images akin to film photos on rolls of negatives). However, the Archives hopes to ramp up cooperation with organizations sharing the aim of contributing to the community.

With the holdings of the Archives increasing, the staff is torn between joy and distress. While they face myriad problems, including finite storage space, a shortage of personnel to organize materials, and diversifying user needs, Assistant Professor Inoue says, "I'd like the Archives to be a facility where visitors can learn all that there is to know about the history of the University." While significant decisions on the amounts of storage space and the workload will be necessary, preserving the ambiance of olden days—for example, in the quality of paper—is also important in feeling the history of the University.

Today, materials prepared at the University are also being digitized. In addition to the accelerating digitization



Photographing official documents of historical significance. Digitization to archive huge numbers of official documents and other materials is in the works.



Journals entitled *Natto* and published by Professor Jun Hanzawa (a Doctor of Agriculture) at Hokkaido Imperial University (from the inaugural issue, published in 1919, to the third issue, published in 1921). Professor Hanzawa contributed to the dissemination of a hygienic method for producing *natto* (fermented soybeans) and has been known as the foremost leader on bacterial research in Japan. The history of *natto* production has been handed down in today's Laboratory of Applied Mycology in the Research Faculty of Agriculture.

of course materials and notes due to the spread of online classes, communication in departments and student clubs increasingly take place online. Under these circumstances, determining what to leave behind for future generations and how to leave it behind is a difficult task.

Director Yamamoto says, "We hope to create many opportunities not only for visitors, but also for current students and teaching and administrative staff to learn the history of the University. I'd be more than happy if they learned about the history of the University, that was initially founded as Sapporo Agricultural College and thrived as one of the very first degree-granting institutions of higher education in Japan, so that they'll deepen their fondness for the school to which they belong."

Archival materials conjure up memories in many people. As visitors learn the past through historical materials, the Hokkaido University Archives plays a crucial role in passing the thoughts of our predecessors on to the future.





Students studying overseas fieldwork.



Feature:  
**Connect**

## Global Center for Food, Land and Water Resources/Graduate School of Global Food Resources

# Challenge to the problems of food, land and water resources expanding on a global scale

The Global Center for Food, Land and Water Resources (GCF), the Research Faculty of Agriculture invites top researchers from around the world to work on joint research projects. The GCF also fosters future global leaders by using the fruits of these research projects in graduate education.

The world population is forecast to exceed nine billion by 2050 due to the unprecedented population explosion. In addition, world food production is on the verge of collapse due to climate change that is intensifying on a global scale. Solving the problems related to food resources is so important that the UN adopted “Zero Hunger” as the second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG2).

In April 2020, the Global Center for Food, Land and Water Resources (GCF) was established in the Research Faculty of Agriculture. The GCF is a research organization that tackles problems involving food, land, and water resources around the world, as it has carried over the functions of the Global Station for Food, Land and Water Resources established in 2015 in Hokkaido University’s Global Institution for Collaborative Research and Education (GI-CoRE)\*1. The GCF also cultivates human resources by using the fruits of its research projects in the programs of the Graduate School of Global Food Resources, established in 2017.

### A global center for advanced collaborative research

Professor Masashi Takahashi, the director of the GCF and the dean of the Graduate School of Global Food Resources,

describes the GCF as an organization that has developed as a center of international joint research to comprehensively address diverse food-related problems. “Our goal is to develop the next generation of leading human resources through our multifaceted research approach and educational programs that integrate the humanities and the sciences,” says Director Takahashi. The Center aims to develop “glocal” (coined word covering “global” and “local”) leaders who grasp food issues from various viewpoints — including those of production, environment, management, and economy — and who contribute to local communities by taking global perspectives. Hokkaido University ranked first in Japan for two consecutive years (2021-2021) in the Times Higher Education (THE) University Impact Rankings\*2, which assess each university’s contribution to society using the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The University ranked particularly high for SDG2, to which the GCF’s efforts have made a significant contribution.

The GCF focuses on problems involving land and marine food resources pertaining primarily to agriculture, animal husbandry, and fisheries. Here, intensive studies and collaborations are under way on the topics including factors affecting crop yields, measures against the depletion



of fisheries resources caused by overfishing, and marine resource management. As an example, cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the GCF will soon launch a project to increase food production by combining agriculture with animal husbandry. Furthermore, the GCF covers a wide array of research areas, including environmental assessments involving bioenergy utilization, nitrogen cycle in soil, and marine bioplastic pollution. Not only do the GCF research projects involve food production (technology), processing, preservation, and distribution, but they are also related to national policies concerning food safety, environmental problems, health problems of producers and consumers, economic conditions, and national food security. To tackle these problems, researchers need to know cover not geographical characteristics, but also political, economic, ethnic, cultural, historical, ideological, and other aspects. For this reason, the GCF promotes joint research with overseas researchers while stepping up interdisciplinary education that integrates the humanities and sciences with the cooperation of relevant departments on campus. This means students can study sciences (e.g., the sciences of agriculture, engineering, fisheries, environment, and health and hygiene) and the humanities (e.g., political science, economics, and pedagogy) simultaneously. The GCF faculty consists of 10 Hokkaido University faculty members and 15 overseas instructors. International faculty members from various countries are engaged in research in their areas of specialization, and all faculty members at the GCF teach in the Graduate School of Global Food Resources.

### A graduate school offering practical education programs

The Graduate School of Global Food Resources advocates the development of T-shaped skills to help students broaden and deepen their expertise. All lectures are driven in English. “Some undergrads who think about entering the school hesitate when they learn about the lectures being given in English, but they will increase their English ability once enrolled so they don’t need to worry about it,” says Professor Takashi Inoue, the previous director of the GCF. He states that the number of applicants has consistently exceeded the quota since the school’s establishment, and they feel sorry that they have been unable to accept all of them. Director Takahashi emphasizes the advantages of learning firsthand about leading edge research overseas. “We welcome the students who aspire to help solve food problems,” he says. He hopes such students will broaden their perspectives by learning that there are many ways of contributing to solutions to food resource problems.

In the curriculum, the overseas fieldwork courses *Wandervogel Study in Global Food Resources I* and *II* are of particular interest among students. They provide



Lecture at the Graduate School of Global Food Resources.

students with an opportunity for a tour of observations and practical trainings for about two weeks. *Wandervogel Study I* focuses on agriculture, environment, and communities in Denmark, whereas *Wandervogel Study II* focuses on community development in Myanmar. Students observe actual work, conditions of farm management, mechanization, irrigation, and other onsite observation points, and make presentations of the result. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has suspended the overseas fieldwork for the past two years, Director Takahashi confidently says, “Overseas fieldwork enables students to visit countries experiencing food resources problems and to recognize and understand such problems onsite. This practical education is what sets our graduate school apart from other schools.”

Since the Graduate School of Global Food Resources (master course) was founded in 2017, and doctoral course has been newly opened in 2019, students who have entered to the doctoral course will soon earn PhD degree.

It is envisaged that administrative officials and alike in developing countries could also receive doctorates from the school so that they would play active roles in their countries. In addition to going into civil service, graduates of the school have found employment in a wide range of industries, including at food-related businesses, water resource-related companies, consultancies, and trading companies. “I hope our graduates will build an international career and demonstrate their abilities,” says Director Takahashi. Expectations are high for personnel with cosmopolitan points of view and abilities.

Activities of talented personnel cultivated jointly by the GCF and the Graduate School of Global Food Resources will lead to the resolution of global food problems.

\*1 The Global Institution for Collaborative Research and Education (GI-CoRE) is a faculty organization under the direct control of the University President that brings together world-class teachers from around the world and within the University. It aims to promote international collaborative research and education that leverage the University’s strengths and distinctive features, and to provide support for international collaborative research and education being furthered independently by faculties and schools.

\*2 The University Impact Rankings have been released annually since 2019 by Times Higher Education (THE), a UK-based magazine that reports on news and issues related to higher education. In 2020, Hokkaido University took sole possession of the number one spot in Japan and ranked 76th globally. In 2021, the University shared the number one slot with other institutions in Japan and ranked between 101st and 200th globally. In the rankings by SDGs, the University ranked 15th globally in SDG2 (2021).

The GCF holds international symposiums disseminates research results to the world. Once the COVID-19 pandemic clouds become clear, the global green recovery of food resources is expected. Last year’s symposium, entitled “From COVID-19,” centered on themes of social science, such as food policy and hunger.

These symposiums are also open to students at the Graduate School of Global Food Resources. Prizes are awarded to students who make outstanding presentations in a student competition, an opportunity where they can demonstrate the skills they have honed in class.



Keynote lecture  
(International Symposium, 2019)



Presentation by a student  
(International Symposium, 2018)



# Front Office for Human Resource Education and Development

## Promotion office of Research environment for Diversity

# Striving to create a research environment where diverse personnel can thrive

In April 2020, the Support Office for Female Researchers in the Front Office for Human Resource Education and Development (FOHRED) was renamed the Promotion office of Research environment for Diversity (Ree-D), marking a fresh start. Now that great importance is attached to diversity, as exemplified by the central premise of “Leave no one behind” under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Ree-D provides various forms of support that meet the needs of researchers, so that diverse personnel can devote themselves to their research in a better environment.

Feature:  
**Connect**

Diversity and inclusion are required in order for universities to fulfill their various missions, such as, producing talented individuals who will lead society in the future, contributing to the SDGs, and developing innovation. It is essential to bring diverse personnel together and make the most of their abilities and individuality.

Hokkaido University has stepped up its efforts to increase the number of female researchers since it established the Support Office for Female Researchers in July 2006, and has achieved tangible results. For instance, the number of female teachers increased from 210 in 2009 to 337 in 2019.

In April 2020, the office was renamed the Promotion office of Research environment for Diversity (Ree-D).

Professor Rika Yano, director of Ree-D, shares her aspirations: “Young researchers and expatriate academics play a critical role in furthering the development of the University. I intend to improve the research environment to support diverse personnel, all while continuing to provide support for female researchers.” Ree-D is run by a staff of eight: Director Yano, a specially appointed professor, a specially appointed assistant professor, a research fellow, three administrative assistants and a temporary employee.

### Implementing various programs from the researcher's perspective

Ree-D promotes various activities based on three pillars.



A Ree-D staff meeting. A staff with diverse experience runs Ree-D, keeping one another fully up to speed on what's happening.



The first pillar is personnel development. It offers training through job shadowing, for female researchers aspiring to senior positions, and through support programs for the promotion of international joint research and interdisciplinary collaboration. The second is improving the research environment. Ree-D helps researchers balance their research activities and life events, such as childbirth, childcare, and elderly care, by subsidizing the hiring of research assistants. The third is to nurture the next generation of female researchers. Ree-D encourages female researchers to enroll in doctoral programs, creates a community of female students enrolled in science programs, and holds hands-on events for elementary, junior high and senior high school students.

Further, Hokkaido University was selected for the Initiative for Realizing Diversity in the Research Environment (Traction Type) under the FY 2019 MEXT Grant Program for the Development of Human Resources in Science and Technology, and Ree-D has assumed a central role in promoting diversity in Hokkaido. With Muroran Institute of Technology, Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine, Kitami Institute of Technology, Amino Up Co., Ltd., and Nitto Denko Corporation as collaborating organizations, Ree-D is working to develop a research environment that takes work-life balance into consideration, in order to nurture female researchers and technicians who are leaders and to help the next generation of female researchers build career paths, among other activities.

The Ree-D program that currently has the highest demand is the one that provides human resource support to help researchers balance life events and research activities. It supports researchers who have to suspend or slow their studies due to life events such as pregnancy, childbirth, childcare or elderly care by helping them to hire assistants.

Each call for applications for this six-month human resources support receives more than 20 applications, and male applicants have been increasing. Specially Appointed Professor Noriko Nagahori says, "This support has been welcome, as it enables researchers to write a thesis, prepare an application for external funds, or do other work as effectively as usual." Other Ree-D programs include one introduced in response to requests from University teaching and administrative staffers for short-term preschool daycare on weekends when they have to proctor unified entrance exams. In this way, Ree-D is working each and every day to create an environment where teaching and administrative staff can concentrate on their work.

### Building a key network

Networking is crucial for promoting the research environment for diversity. To provide a forum for casual discussions among researchers, Ree-D has been hosting online "KNIT a Network! Role Model Round-table Talks" at lunchtime once or twice a month since July 2020. The aim is to highlight the diverse lifestyles of people engaged in research and university administration. "Casual conversations,



"KNIT" is a nickname for the Initiative for Realizing Diversity in the Research Environment (Traction Type), which is being advanced through the collaboration of six institutions in Hokkaido. The logo, above, which is based on the concept of diversity, represents various people and things of various colors and shapes firmly supporting one another, with the feel of warm knitwear, befitting Hokkaido.



"KNIT a Network! Role Model Round-table Talks" held in September 2020.



On March 3 and 4, 2020, the KNIT Research Exchange Meeting "Super-interdisciplinary meetup" was held. Festooned with 151 posters describing research work, the venue was designed to spur lively exchanges despite the difficulty of face-to-face conversations amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. From November 30 to December 4, 2020, the Interdisciplinary meetup week 2020 was held online.

such as those about the know-how and pains endured to balance parenting and research, sometimes provide new insights or hints for one's own research activities," remarks Specially Appointed Professor Nagahori. Director Yano concurs: "I'm also among those who began joint research thanks to a similar network. I will continue to push for networking like this, because new ideas may emerge when researchers of different fields get together." Ree-D's meetups to promote interdisciplinary exchanges and various other initiatives have borne fruit: 27 joint research projects led by female researchers have been launched over the past two years.

Everyone has unconscious biases and preconceptions. Becoming aware of any of them will expand the possibility of one's research and lead to the development of one's organization, Director Yano notes. She shared some future prospects by saying, "We will provide support that contributes to knowledge creation at the University with a view to offering training on unconscious biases."

Based on the "KNIT a network" initiative, the Promotion office of Research environment for Diversity (Ree-D) is steadfastly moving toward realizing a research environment for diversity.









## Interview with the president

Guest

# OMI Hideaki

CEO and President, Co-op Sapporo

Founded in 1965, Co-op Sapporo runs more than 100 stores across Hokkaido. It has worked to address regional problems as it plays a part in Hokkaido's food infrastructure. With "Connection" as its catchword, Co-op Sapporo runs various businesses to safeguard the daily lives of local residents, including store, home delivery, and energy businesses. Dr. Kiyohiro Houkin, who will soon celebrate the first anniversary of his inauguration as President of Hokkaido University, asked Mr. Hideaki Omi, CEO and president of Co-op Sapporo and a Hokkaido University alumnus, about the philosophy and ethos of the company and his expectations for the University, among other topics.

Striving to help create  
an affluent future society  
through local contributions  
with a global mindset



## Student days of trial and error

**Houkin:** Please tell us about yourself, from your boyhood days to your entrance into Hokkaido University.

**Omi:** I was born in Anjo City, Aichi Prefecture. My father worked for Toyota Motor Corporation, and my mother for an agricultural cooperative. When I was in my second year at Kariya Senior High School, I had the opportunity to attend a lecture by Mr. Shigehiko Toyama, an alumnus of the school who is known for his book *Shiko no Seirigaku* (Organizing of Thoughts). The book, originally printed in 1983, has been perennially popular. In fact, it caused a buzz in the 2000s for being a favorite of students at the prestigious Tokyo University and Kyoto University.

**Houkin:** It's a famous book. I guess nearly three million copies have been published.

**Omi:** Exactly. The lecture took place before Toyota launched its business in the United States. Naturally, the lecture included topics about Japanese companies, and to my amazement, he said, "You should get out of Mikawa, a rural backwater. If you stay in the Tokai region, you'll never be able to develop a sense of globalism and broaden your knowledge. So, forget about going to Nagoya University."

**Houkin:** Nagoya University attracts many students from three prefectures in the Tokai region, doesn't it?

**Omi:** That's right. But after attending his lecture, I decided to go to Hokkaido University, a national university particularly far from the Tokai region. I made the decision inspired by his lecture, but in hindsight it was too simple a motive.

**Houkin:** What was your major at Hokkaido University?

**Omi:** Since I loved physics and math, I took the entrance exam in the science category and enrolled. I initially aspired to become an architect, but my grades were a little short of what was required to proceed to the relevant faculty, so I entered the Department of Forest Products in the Faculty of Agriculture, only to find myself uninterested in that major. I have no idea why I did this, but I transferred to the Faculty of Education.

**Houkin:** Was that possible? That was a complete U-turn.

**Omi:** Yes, it was possible. At that time, there were eight times as many applicants as the transfer slots, but I was able to pass the exam and I pursued my studies at the Faculty of Education. I conveyed my desire to remain within the academia to the head professor



of the department where I was at that time, but he said I should enter business instead of remaining at the university. By then, however, all the recruitment exams in the private sector had been closed, and as it happened, my participation in a Hokkaido University Co-op activity led to my landing a job at Co-op Sapporo.

## A collective that caters to the needs of society

**Houkin:** The professor must have had excellent foresight.



That professor must have had  
excellent foresight.

– Dr. Houkin

Could you tell us about Co-op Sapporo today, including its businesses?

**Omi:** Today, we do about 300 billion yen in retail business: about 200 billion yen in store business and about 100 billion yen in home delivery business.

**Houkin:** Is the home delivery business truly worth 100 billion yen by itself?

**Omi:** Yes, it is. I expect home delivery to be among our core businesses going forward. We also operate an energy business. In fact, the Co-op Sapporo Group consists of 21 affiliates, including a travel agency and Co-op Foods, a company that produces and sells ready-to-eat dishes. All these affiliates have been profitable over the past five years or so. Because food and energy are related business areas, we've given precedence to serving as the food infrastructure of



Hokkaido.

The fact is that the Consumer Cooperatives Act stipulates that co-ops can sell only to their members. The Act prevents us from accepting business offers we receive from various places. We have our affiliates launch businesses so as not to violate the law.

**Houkin:** Your home delivery business, in particular, has achieved huge growth.

**Omi:** Today, over 420,000 households across Hokkaido are using our delivery service. That's one in every



The head of the department told me  
that I should enter business.

– Mr. Omi

seven households. Our goal is to increase our users to over 500,000 households in three years. Our strength lies in our ability to help those living in “food deserts,” because their numbers are rising in today’s aging society.

**Houkin:** Do you use outsourcing for deliveries? When did you begin your delivery service to individual homes?

**Omi:** We deliver on our own. The Todok Station where we are now (home delivery Todok Nishioka Center) has more than 30 trucks, with each truck delivering to about 80 households per day.

Co-op Sapporo launched delivery service to individual homes in 2007. Before that, the group purchasing system was the mainstream—a system where groups of three families, for example, jointly purchase products and pick up their respective

orders after all the orders for the group are delivered to one of the families. When a co-op in Tokyo scrapped this system, we followed in their footsteps and switched to an individual delivery service, because no further growth was expected if the situation remained unchanged.

**Houkin:** Did you ever have difficulty promoting the idea of a service that delivers to individual homes?

**Omi:** We put a great deal of effort into the branding in order to make it the most recognizable individual home delivery brand in Japan. To convey a clear, precise message about our service of delivering to individual homes, we used a major advertising company for the branding. The company came up with the name “Todok” for the service. We chose a polar bear as the mascot, because in the summer of that year Asahiyama Zoo in Asahikawa City attracted more visitors than any other zoo in Japan owing to their highly popular Polar Bear Aquatic Park.

**Houkin:** Co-op Sapporo has great public relations strategies, not to mention its business ideas. A homophone of the Japanese word todok (to deliver), Todok is now synonymous with your home delivery service. This shows the level of enthusiasm and dedication your staff have had for the service.

I think home delivery is also in demand among families with small children. What do you think?

**Omi:** Exactly. In fact, we also have a special program for child-rearing families. I believe early childhood education is pivotal to eliminating poverty. Thinking that picture books are the first educational tool used by parents, we annually provide four picture books free of charge to our members with children of one or two years old. This initiative has continued for about 10 years.

We’ve also worked with the Finnish government. Finland and Hokkaido share several similarities, including population. When I visited the country, I learned about their baby box (maternity package) program. The government sends a complimentary kit of newborn necessities worth 30,000 yen to new mothers. Wondering if Co-op Sapporo could do something similar for our members, we decided to launch our own baby box program based on the advice from the local Finnish consulate. All the clothes used for our baby boxes are made in Finland, whereas all the consumables are provided by Japanese companies.





**Houkin:** As a community-based collective, Co-op Sapporo has been engaged in various initiatives from a global perspective.

**Omi:** These initiatives are well-known in society, and half of households with children have become members. This makes me optimistic about passing our businesses on to future generations despite a shrinking population caused by a declining birthrate.

Todok Stations provide space for members to let their children play as they like, take part in events that provide useful information for daily life, or just drop by. We have 20 such stations across Hokkaido, they include communication spaces for parents.

### Looking ahead to the next generation

**Houkin:** Co-op Sapporo has also been working diligently on the SDGs.

**Omi:** Consumers, who are members of the community, must come up with ideas on how to improve their community and must implement those ideas. Otherwise, the co-op business would never work. In other words, every daily activity of a co-op is related to an SDG. We always take the next generation into consideration.

**Houkin:** I regret to say that some companies engage with the SDGs simply because they're fashionable. In contrast, the idea of Co-op Sapporo itself represents the SDGs.

**Omi:** That's right. For instance, most of the picture books and toys at this Todok station were donated by our members. None of them were bought using business expenses. We also allow members to exchange items

I'll give another thought to the  
internationalization of Hokkaido  
University.

– Dr. Houkin

### HOUKIN Kiyohiro

President, Hokkaido University

Born in Hokkaido in 1954. Graduated from Hokkaido University School of Medicine. Doctor (medicine) (Hokkaido University). Worked for Hokkaido University Hospital and other facilities since 1979. After working as a visiting researcher at the University of California, Davis, became an assistant professor at the Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine in 2000, professor of Sapporo Medical University School of Medicine in 2001 and professor of the Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine in 2010. After becoming the director of Hokkaido University Hospital/vice executive of Hokkaido University in 2013 and the director of Hokkaido University Hospital/vice president of Hokkaido University in 2017, assumed the present position in October 2020.







for a token fee. These fees are saved to buy wooden toys and other necessities at the Todok stations. We also promote resource recycles. By recovering resources during delivery, we don't consume extra energy. When we incorporate business in our life structure with the cooperation of our members, we can produce results that benefit all our members. This is what the slogan "One for all, and all for one" is all about.

**Houkin:** Is there anything that you feel has changed significantly since the pandemic began?

**Omi:** I don't think that all daily activities of people have been reset, but 20 to 30 percent of those activities have been, and I think that different behavioral patterns will emerge in the post-COVID-19 era. Staying home reduces CO2 emissions. Experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic is also related to the SDGs.

In terms of business, I feel that our home delivery business has grown at an accelerated pace in the past year and a half. The pandemic, which has forced people to stay home and shop online or by catalog, is probably the main driver of the accelerated growth.

**Houkin:** Finally, what message would you like to leave to our students?

**Omi:** I'd like students to have a global perspective. I hope they'll visit the front line of various fields and stay inspired.

**Houkin:** That's a very important message. I think I'll give another serious thought to the internationalization of Hokkaido University based on my experience of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for sharing your valuable time today.

I'd like students to have a global perspective.

– Mr. Omi

## OMI Hideaki

CEO and President, Co-op Sapporo

Born in Aichi Prefecture in 1958, Hideaki Omi received a bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Education, Hokkaido University. Since joining the Consumers' Cooperative Co-op Sapporo (the present-day Co-op Sapporo) in 1982, he has held positions including the general manager of the Renewal Headquarters, director of the Fisheries Department, and general manager of the Product Headquarters. In 2006, he became a managing director. He has been CEO and president since 2007.



# Refining: Physical Therapy



## Sports physical therapy science —the pursuit of safe, efficient exercise

### SAMUKAWA Mina

Associate Professor, Faculty of Health Sciences

A doctor of physical therapy, Mina Samukawa specializes in sports physical therapy science and exercise therapy science. After graduating from the School of Allied Health Professions, Sapporo Medical College, she worked at an orthopedic hospital in Sapporo and then pursued her studies at the University of Alberta in Canada. She then received a doctorate from the Graduate School of Health Sciences, Sapporo Medical University. In 2003, she became an assistant at the Junior College of Medical Technology, Hokkaido University. In 2008, she changed her affiliation to the Faculty of Health Sciences and has served as an associate professor there since 2013. She is a researcher who is playing an active role at the forefront of sports, as exemplified by her involvement as a core physical therapist during the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

### Various experiences leading her to pursue a career in professional physical therapy

The motor function disability from illness, injury, or advanced age, or aging make it difficult for one to move and thus to perform everyday tasks. People who are in such a condition or who are likely to be in it need treatment (rehabilitation) aimed at restoring the basic motor functions ability for independent daily living (e.g., walking, sitting, standing). Such treatment is called physical therapy. Experts who help restore and maintain motor functions by physical therapy are called physical therapists.

Physical therapy is roughly divided into three types: (1) exercise therapy, treatment in which the physical therapist helps patients who require rehabilitation to move their body

by hand or with an instrument, or in which the patients themselves move their body; (2) physical therapy, treatment in which physical stimulation (e.g., warming and vibrating the affected area) is given to patients requiring rehabilitation; and (3) orthotic treatment using tape and other orthotic devices. Associate Professor Mina Samukawa at the Faculty of Health Sciences is engaged in research based on exercise therapy to prevent sports injuries, verify the effectiveness of exercise therapy, and promote health, particularly women's health.

Associate Professor Samukawa was born in Otaru City and has enjoyed alpine skiing since childhood. She entered Hokkaido Otaru Chouryou High School and joined the ski club there. The club, however, had only two members, her and a ski jumper, prompting her to practice with members of a strong team in the city. "In those days, there were often cases in which the athletes I practiced and competed with injured themselves, and those who suffered torn ligaments in their knees had to give up on competing," says Dr. Samukawa. "It made me wonder, vaguely, whether there might be a career in helping to treat and prevent sports injuries, inspiring me to pursue a career in physical therapy."

After entering the Department of Physical Therapy of the School of Allied Health Professions, Sapporo Medical University, she wanted to study in a country where she could learn advanced sports physical therapy. But her supervisor at that time advised her to gain clinical experience in Japan first, resulting in her decision to work as a physical therapist at an orthopedic clinic in Sapporo. She looks back on those days and comments, "I had abundant opportunity to examine top-level athletes in ski jumping, soccer, and other sports. This valuable experience gave me a clear image of the rehabilitation techniques I should strive to master, motivating me to learn sports physical therapy outside Japan. Thanks to a reference from my mentor in university, I pursued my studies at the University of Alberta in Canada.

### **Striving to develop a method for preventing sports injuries that takes into consideration the characteristics of competitions**

After returning to Japan, Dr. Samukawa engaged in research at Sapporo Medical University's graduate school and then joined the faculty of Hokkaido University in 2003. Today, she undertakes research in the Sports Physical Therapy Laboratory to address challenges in competitive sports, such as injury prevention through the elucidation of factors causing injury. She also works to contribute to the community, by helping the citizenry of Iwamizawa City promote their health through exercise as a member of the Health-Centered Community Project at Hokkaido University's "Innovative Food and Healthcare Master" Center of Innovation (COI).



Associate Professor Samukawa with her seminar students in the Sports Physical Therapy Laboratory. She works out with them at a gym to experience the effectiveness and significance of exercises researched by the students.

Dr. Samukawa has been active in various fields. As a physical therapist for the Ski Association of Japan, she has engaged in injury prevention and treatment during competitions, accompanying the Japanese national mogul ski team to competitions including the World Cup, the World Championships and the Olympic Games. She was also among the core staff of the physical therapy division at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Village, providing support to athletes from Japan and around the world. She fosters human resources necessary for the development of the science of sports physical therapy—a relatively new discipline in Japan—by passing on the knowledge she gains from these experiences to her students. Speaking of her determination going forward, Dr. Samukawa notes, "I hope my seminar students will think outside the box as they dedicate themselves to their studies. I hope we will publish research findings that act as a bridge between sports and clinical fields." She devotes herself to research each day with her students, in order to develop a method for preventing sports injuries that takes into consideration the characteristics of competitions, based on her various experiences at sports competitions.

## **Relaxation**

### **Family time amidst nature**

In her childhood, Associate Professor Samukawa enjoyed swimming on the coast of Otaru and skiing in the mountains. Even today, spending time with her family amidst nature makes for a pleasant change of pace. The photo shows her dogsledding in Takasu Town in Hokkaido.





# Mustering the frontier spirit instilled in him at college to take on infinite challenges

Cherishing ties with people and the community

Alumni  
Interview



## HINATA Yu

Laboratory of Seeds Discovery and Development

| School of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Pharmacy – Graduate School of Life Science Graduate |

Dr. Yu Hinata moved to Rikubetsu Town in the Tokachi region of Hokkaido, where he launched the Laboratory of Seeds Discovery and Development, or Tane Lab., a company that develops and sells products made with medicinal plants, herbs, and forest resources. The company is run by himself and his wife, his university sweetheart. The couple, who began their activities in their adopted hometown, talked to us about the circumstances leading to their relocation to Rikubetsu, memories of their school days, and their new business.

(Y): Yu Hinata, (M): Mikie Hinata

### What are your most popular products today?

(Y) Essential oils from Sakhalin fir and Sakhalin spruce. They're popular for their pleasant forest scents.

### What's your workday like?

(Y) Our work centers on farming from early spring to

autumn, from a little past eight in the morning until late in the afternoon. From autumn to winter, we process, market, and sell the plants we harvest. Today, we grow 30 kinds of plants, engage in the development of food, cosmetics, and other products, and work to determine our flagship products going forward. With the motto I learned in my college days, "Try it yourself first," we hope to deepen our contacts with people in various fields and gradually increase those interested in our products.

### What made you move to Rikubetsu?

(Y) We used to work for a research laboratory at a pharmaceutical company in Honshu (Japan's main island). After we turned 30, we decided to rethink our future from scratch, giving thought to the possibility of using what we'd learned for work other than research. Under such circumstances, we began to think about moving to Hokkaido,

collecting information at the Hokkaido Emigration Fair that was being held at that time. Our conversations with officials from the Rikubetsu Town Office at the Fair led to our trial stay in the town, resulting in our selection of the town as our adopted hometown. We initially assumed the posts of the town's Chiiki Okoshi Kyoryokutai (Local Vitalization Cooperators), with me engaging in medicinal plant cultivation tests and my wife in activities to promote commerce, industry, and tourism.

(M) Hokkaido was my first choice as the destination for our relocation because I'd fallen for Hokkaido while living here during university, but we considered it carefully for a few years. We made up our minds only after finding positive answers to the various questions we asked ourselves, including about what's good about living in Rikubetsu and its alignment with our values and aspirations.

#### What difficulties did you encounter when taking up farming?

(Y) Before starting it, I had to be qualified to borrow farmland as stipulated in the Agricultural Land Act. Then, I had to find



someone to lend farmland to me. It was, and still is, tough that we had to plan and do everything from scratch. And differences in cultivation methods between medicinal plants and herbs on the one hand and general crops on the other requires me to study every day.

We faced a mountain of cultivation-related challenges from the weather, such as heavy rains, strong winds, and low winter temperatures, which can have devastating impacts on plants. That said, focusing only on cultivation methods would leave us little time for processing and sales. So, we're working to develop interesting products using the plants we grow while harvesting certain amounts of them.

My research experience at college has paid off, for example, in terms of work progress management and chemical knowledge of distillation to extract essential oils.

#### What prompted you to enter Hokkaido University?

(Y) Hokkaido University was a natural choice for me because I'm from Sapporo and the University was near where I lived. I chose the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Pharmacy because the profession of pharmacist seemed interesting.

(M) I'm from Hiroshima Prefecture. I chose Hokkaido University because I thought it would be interesting to live a student life where nobody knew me. I was interested in a career as a pharmacist, but that wasn't the only reason I chose the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Pharmacy. I thought studying pharmaceutical sciences would offer many other career options.

#### What was student life like?

(Y) I was snowed under with studies as an undergraduate and a graduate student, attending lectures and practical training sessions from morning until evening. I don't remember slacking off. [laughs] I was glad I could encounter the discipline of organic synthetic chemistry. It was tough, but I was able to continue my studies because they were fun.

When I was a first-year doctoral student, I had the opportunity to study at an American university for three months. Everything was fresh and new to me, due in part to cultural differences. I felt I was able to grow as a person, so it's the best memory of my college life.

(M) I remember having a hard time with animal experiments, forgoing my New Year holidays to continue my experiments on mice.

Living a student life that put studies above all else wasn't easy, but I also belonged to a mixed choral group, where I gained lots of experience and developed people skills, teamwork, and the like.

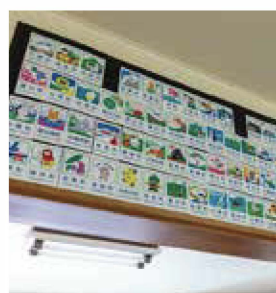
#### Having lived on Honshu (Japan's main island), what do you think is the appeal of Hokkaido?

(Y) Hokkaido tops the list of regions in Japan in terms of ease of living, including the climate. Surprisingly, it's also cold in Honshu in winter.

(M) All the food is delicious. And the natural scenery has a regional distinctiveness, making travel truly enjoyable.

#### Lastly, do you have anything to say to current Hokkaido University students?

(Y) My experience in talking with people who had various values and opinions during my time at academic conferences and overseas study is what sustains my career now. I hope the current students of the University will proactively venture into the outside world.



Municipality sign stickers Dr. Hinata has collected while driving—his favorite pastime



Essential oils developed by Dr. Hinata. They are also sold at the information center of Hokkaido University.

(M) I'd like them to visit various places and learn how diverse the world is. They should never be satisfied with the status quo, but should aspire to new heights where they can take advantage of their skills.

#### PROFILE

Born in Hokkaido in 1983, Yu Hinata received a bachelor's degree from the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Pharmacy of Hokkaido University in 2006 and a doctoral degree from the Graduate School of Life Science of the University in 2011. He then joined Shionogi & Co., Ltd., where he engaged in research in medicinal chemistry at the Pharmaceutical Research Division. He moved to Hokkaido in 2017, serving as Rikubetsu Town's *Chiiki Okoshi Kyoryokutai* (local revitalization cooperator) in charge of supporting and promoting new businesses. He has been president of Tane Lab. since February 2021. He has worked to promote regional revitalization in his adopted hometown all while valuing personal relationships.





## A bridge between Hokkaido University and the world

This issue features contributions from Mr. Juha A. Janhunen, who is active as a Hokkaido University partner in Finland, and Mr. Julien Chicot, who is active as a Hokkaido University partner in Belgium.



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### Dr. Juha A. Janhunen

Professor (emer.) of East Asian Languages and Cultures University of Helsinki, Finland

It was an unexpected honor for me to be invited to the role of a Hokkaido University Partner in Helsinki some years ago. I assume that I was selected because of the field of my academic chair, East Asian Languages and Cultures—of which Japanese Studies is a part. However, I also have a much deeper personal connection with Hokkaido University: I studied at Hokkaido University as a Monbusho (now, MEXT) visiting research student, back in 1978–1979. My host at Hokkaido University was the internationally renowned linguist Professor Jiro Ikegami (1920–2011), a famous specialist of Manchu and other Asian languages. Later, in 2001, I spent half a year at Hokkaido University as a visiting research fellow of the Slavic Research Institute, upon the invitation of the distinguished ethnographer Professor Koichi Inoue. During these prolonged research stays, followed by many shorter visits to Hokkaido University for conferences over the years, I have come to appreciate Hokkaido University as my second “home university”.

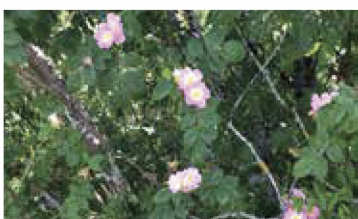
When I first came to Hokkaido, I immediately felt the close sim-

ilarity with Finland. During my travels in all parts of Hokkaido, I found that the entire natural environment — the climate, vegetation, and the animal world, is surprisingly like that of Northern Europe. Sapporo is a Japanese city where a Finnish person can feel at home. In addition, Hokkaido University and the University of Helsinki are of similar size, and are located at the heart of their cities.

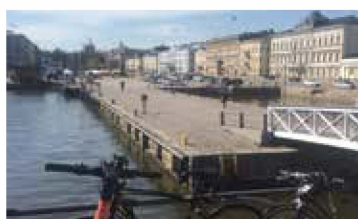
In 2011, I was very glad to learn that Hokkaido University decided to establish its Europe Office at the University of Helsinki. Many of my collaborative projects with Hokkaido University have been connected with the Europe Office. I remember, in particular, a very interesting seminar on the history of “Turanism”, organized by the Europe Office. “Turanism” was a pre-war cultural movement that linked Japan with Eurasia as far west as Turkey, Hungary, and Finland. It cannot be ignored that there are many phenomena, both cultural and linguistic, that the Finns share with the Japanese, as well as with several other peoples in Northern and Central Eurasia. My own research is concerned

with the languages and prehistory of Siberia and Mongolia in particular, fields that are also being studied at a high international level at Hokkaido University. The University now has a separate Center for Ainu and Indigenous Studies, which is without a doubt the world leader on topics pertaining to the Ainu.

The pandemic has been a challenge for maintaining international contacts at all levels. In Helsinki, Hokkaido University is fortunately constantly present in the form of its Europe Office, and there is the possibility of distant collaboration, but for students and teachers alike it would be important to maintain a direct contact as well. I sincerely hope that mutual visits will be possible very soon again. For our university, Hokkaido University is one of strategic partners in Japan, and I always recommend Hokkaido University, ahead of other Japanese universities, as an exchange target for our students.



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1. Part of the University of Helsinki Center Campus: Asian languages department in the yellow building to the right. Hokkaido University Europe Office in the brown building in the back.
2. Lake view (from the countryside).
3. Wild roses at the seaside in southern Finland.
4. Helsinki harbor with the central plaza at the seaside.



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## Dr. Julien Chicot

Senior Policy Officer, The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities

My former tutor at Hokkaido University, Professor Toru Yoshida, asked about my interest in applying to become a Hokkaido University Partner. I was very honored to have his recommendation and accepted. At that time, I was working for a network of European Research & Technology Organizations. I was already convinced of the crucial role of research and innovation in our societies, and was willing to be more active in science advocacy. The offer from Hokkaido University was therefore very well-aligned with my vision of the role of universities in our societies and my career choices. Hokkaido University is a university that has played a significant role in my education and, more broadly, in my life. It is therefore important for me to encourage Europeans to go there for a study or research stay, and to appreciate it as much as I did. I am also deeply impressed by the ambition and commitment of Hokkaido University to increasing its openness to the world and strengthening its global visibility through its former visiting students and researchers.

I participated in the Hokkaido University Short-Term Exchange Program (HUSTEP) in 2008-2009. My home university in France required

that all its students spend a year abroad. Thanks to the wide curriculum offered by HUSTEP, I expanded and deepened my knowledge in economics, history, sociology and even linguistics. I also learned more about ikebana, koto and calligraphy. I clearly remember the high quality of the Japanese language courses: When I arrived, I was a complete beginner and was very dependent on the support of my Japanese mentor; And in a few weeks, thanks to my great Japanese teachers, I made spectacular progress and could have basic conversations with anyone in Japan. The quality of life on Hokkaido University's campus and, more broadly, in Sapporo must be acknowledged. I am deeply convinced that I made the best choice when I decided to study there.

I am now working as Senior Policy Officer for The Guild of European Research-Intensive Universities, a network comprising 21 of the most distinguished universities in 16 European countries. My role consists in supporting our members to engage in policy discussions, at the level of the European Union, in the fields of open science, innovation, medical research, and Artificial Intelligence and digital research. The Guild also advocates for stronger scientific cooperation with

like-minded non-European countries, including Japan.

Hokkaido University has a great motto. 'Be ambitious!' Their ambition is key to the success of Hokkaido University in achieving its missions. It implies staying united, open to the world, and committed to proposing solutions to the global challenges our society is currently facing through frontier research and innovative pedagogy.

I would be delighted to use both my professional position and my role as an HU partner to contribute to further strengthening the links between European and Japanese universities. I am willing to facilitate project-based research collaboration between Hokkaido University and Guild universities and, on a policy level, to support the participation of Japan as an associate country to Horizon Europe, the main EU research and innovation funding program. In parallel, I will keep promoting individual initiatives of Hokkaido University, such as international exchange programs and summer schools, to our European universities, as these actions are crucial for increasing our mutual understanding and trust.



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1. The Grand Place, the central square of Brussels.
2. View of Brussels from Poelaert Square.
3. One of the most famous frateries or fritkots of Brussels: the place to buy traditional French fries.
4. Parc du Cinquantenaire, one of the most popular parks in Brussels.

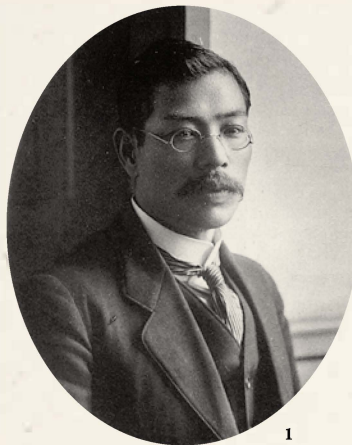


# 140 years of challenge

SCENE-15

## 1907-1950

### College Preparatory Courses



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#### A preparatory course affiliated with the Agricultural College of Tohoku Imperial University

In 1907, Sapporo Agricultural College was elevated to university status as the Agricultural College of Tohoku Imperial University, and a preparatory course affiliated with the college was established. While Sapporo Agricultural College also had preparatory and similar courses, they represented an institutional irregularity because they aimed to supplement the inadequate junior high school curriculum while improving students' academic abilities to the level necessary for the regular course. The preparatory course for the Agricultural College of Tohoku Imperial University corresponded to high school under the prewar system of education.

Before World War II, the most popular route to university was via ordinary elementary school (six years), followed by junior high school (five years), high school/college preparatory courses (three years), and then university (three years). High schools were intended for advancement to university, as exemplified by the so-called "number schools": the First Higher School (Tokyo), the Second Higher School (Sendai), the Third Higher School (Kyoto), the Fourth Higher School (Kanazawa), the Fifth Higher School (Kumamoto), the Sixth Higher School (Okayama), the Seventh Higher School (Kagoshima), and the Eighth Higher School (Nagoya). For students who entered high school, advancing to university was not difficult because the combined enrollment capacity of high schools in Japan did not differ much from that of universities. This means that fiercely competitive entrance exams were over once a junior high school student had advanced to high school. It can be said that the three years in high school was a course for nurturing elite students who would go on to university.

#### Immersion in foreign languages

The curriculum in 1912 for the preparatory course of the Agricultural College of Tohoku Imperial University, which corresponded to high school, included the following subjects in descending order of total number of credits for three years: German (22 credits), English (16), mathematics (11), military

drills (9), chemistry (8), and physics (6). Other subjects included art, zoology, botany, surveying, Japanese, morals, and geology and mineralogy. All were fundamental subjects necessary for students to specialize in agriculture at university. The number of credits in German and English stands out. Of the 97 credits that students accumulated in three years toward completion of the preparatory course, the 38 credits in German and English accounted for nearly 40 percent of the total. Further, English textbooks were used in math and in geology and mineralogy, and lectures in botany were occasionally given in German. Through immersion in foreign languages in the preparatory courses, students were prepared to use the languages to advance their studies at university.

Hirokichi Nakajima recalls the preparatory course: "The prep course offered many hours of foreign language classes, two or three hours every day. I was so busy consulting my dictionaries in preparation for the classes that I had little or no time to prep for math and other subjects." Yoshihiko Tochinnai also reminisces about those days: "Classwork for the prep course

**Many students in preparatory courses chose the college of certain professors in specialized areas of study, or That's why the preparatory courses on the quiet campus energy. (Shiro Ozaki, an enrollee in a preparatory course in 1915)**

was a considerable burden...It forged our minds and bodies, as we studied hard. By the time we felt stuck in a rut, getting tired of the daily grind in the prep course, we were able to put on a college cap and proceed to the regular course, where the specialized lectures rekindled our interest."

#### Popular teachers in the preparatory courses

The majority of students at high school or in preparatory courses were in their impressionable adolescence, aged between 17 or 18 and their early 20s, and the teachers there were their guiding lights. In the case of the preparatory courses for the Agricultural College of Tohoku Imperial University, Manroku





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1. Manroku Aoba, a professor in the preparatory course (ca. 1912, Hokkaido University Archives)
2. Takeo Arishima a professor in the preparatory course (ca. 1912, Hokkaido University Archives)
3. Hans Koller, a German language teacher in the preparatory course (ca. 1912, Hokkaido University Archives)
4. Preparatory course students gather at the house of Hermann Hecker, a German language teacher in the preparatory course. (1930s – 40s, Hokkaido University Archives)
5. Pins of 35 high schools/college preparatory courses under the old system of education (Hokkaido University Archives)
6. Preparatory course students relaxing on the Central Lawn (ca. 1940, Hokkaido University Archives)
7. Ski lesson using a single pole, a technique introduced by Hans Koller (1917, Hokkaido University Archives)
8. Main gate of the Agricultural College of Tohoku Imperial University and the lecture hall for the preparatory course (ca. 1910, Hokkaido University Archives)
9. Military drill for preparatory course students (1911, Hokkaido University Archives)
10. Monument to Preparatory Courses, with the inscription “Be Ambitious” in Japanese (photographed in 2015)

Aoba (physics: 1907 to 1937), who was nicknamed “Aoman,” was trusted by students so deeply that alumni later erected a bust of him. Takeo Arishima (English: 1907 to 1915) gained popularity by using, as textbooks for classes and extracurricular reading sessions, poems written by Walt Whitman and pieces of writing by William Shakespeare, Arthur Conan Doyle, Thomas Carlyle, Peter Kropotkin, and other writers. Shinma Mizobuchi (morals: 1908 to 1911) encouraged students to do exercises, particularly judo, in order to promote their health. On Sunday, he often took his students on outings to Barato, Zenibako, Makomanai, and elsewhere. The Swiss-born teacher Hans Koller (German: 1908 to 1925) taught chorus, laying the foundations for the Hokkaido University Chorus. He also introduced his students to skiing before the sport took off in Japan. After the preparatory courses for the Agricultural College of Tohoku Imperial University became those for Hokkaido Imperial University, there were also many popular teachers, including Chikayoshi Uno (Japanese: 1924 to 1949), Genzo Suzuki (botany: 1922 to 1943), and Hermann Hecker (German:

**for its atmosphere, for their ardent admiration  
for their dreams of launching careers overseas.  
brimmed with vibrancy and emanated so much**

1930 to 1949). The students received varying influences from their teachers as they developed a strong sense of solidarity while visiting their teachers’ homes and engaged in extracurricular activities with them after school and on holidays.

#### Campus life for six years: three years in preparatory courses and at university

The preparatory courses for the Agricultural College of Tohoku Imperial University and later Hokkaido Imperial University differed from high school in that the former assumed that students would advance to that university. The majority of students at Hokkaido University under the old system of education spent

six years on the same campus: three years in the preparatory courses and another three at university. Only two other Imperial Universities of Japan had preparatory courses: Taihoku Imperial University in Taiwan and Keijo Imperial University in Korea. The Hokkaido University campus witnessed close teacher-student relations and schoolmate relations for a long time.

The preparatory courses for Hokkaido University were abolished in 1950, when a new system of education was introduced. In 2004, preparatory course alumni played a key role in building the Monument to Preparatory Courses for Hokkaido University on the campus. Inscribed on the stone monument are the words “Be Ambitious” in Japanese.



#### Hokkaido University HISTORY 1907-1950

1907	September	The Agricultural College of Tohoku Imperial University and its affiliated preparatory course are established.
1908		Hans Koller, a German language teacher in the preparatory course, introduces skiing using a single pole.
1911	October	Oseikai Club, aimed at promoting friendly relations between preparatory course students and teachers, is established.
1918	April	The preparatory course for the Agricultural College of Tohoku Imperial University is reorganized as the preparatory course affiliated with Hokkaido Imperial University
1920	March	The Oseikai Club releases the song Yoraku Migaku.
1923	May	The preparatory course affiliated with Hokkaido Imperial University is renamed the Hokkaido Imperial University Preparatory Course.
1936	June	A bust of Manroku Aoba, the former director of the preparatory course, is erected.
1941	February	The Oseikai Club reorganizes as the Osei Hokokukai Association.
1945	October	Army and naval academy graduates enter the preparatory courses. The Hokokukai Association is dissolved.
1947	April September	Three female students enter the preparatory courses. The Hokkaido Imperial University Preparatory Course is renamed the Hokkaido University Preparatory Course.
1949	May	Hokkaido University reorganizes as the new Hokkaido University after promulgation of the National School Establishment Act.
1950	March	The preparatory courses are abolished.

#### Hokkaido University Archives

This facility collects, classifies and preserves historical documents and records of Hokkaido University. It also conducts investigations and research on its history.



## Institute for the Advancement of Sustainability established

On August 1, 2021, Hokkaido University established the Institute for the Advancement of Sustainability, led by the president of the University. The new organization consists of two offices: a newly established SDGs Initiative Office, tasked with vigorously advancing SDG-related programs, and the previously existing Sustainable Campus Management Office. Based on the close cooperation of these two offices, the Institute will strive to create a smart, green, sustainable campus.

In the run-up to the launch of the Institute, a press

conference was held on July 29, where Executive Vice-President Atsushi Yokota, who leads the SDGs Initiative Office, explained the background and purpose of the Institution's establishment and its activities going forward.

Bearing in mind that background as well as the history of the University's development, we at Hokkaido University are committed to contributing to the achievement of the SDGs by making the most of our beautiful campus, our vast experimental forests, and other physical and intellectual property.

July 29th, Press conference (13:30-14:30 Centennial Hall)

Subject of the press conference (speakers)

Establishment of the Institute for the Advancement of Sustainability: Organizational reform for contributing to efforts to achieve the SDGs and address global challenges  
 Atsushi Yokota, Executive Vice President, Director, the SDGs Initiative Office, Institute for the Advancement of Sustainability  
 Makoto Demura, Professor, Advisor to the President (SDGs)  
 Kazunori Iwabuchi, Professor, Advisor to the President (Institute for International Collaboration)  
 Hiroshi Abe, Director, URA Station

Hokkaido University ×  
SDGs



Creating a sustainable future  
together



Executive Vice-President Atsushi Yokota  
at the press conference.



Speakers at the press conference, and Executive Vice-President Hiroshi Yoshimi  
 (From left: Executive Vice-President Hiroshi Yoshimi, Executive Vice-President Atsushi Yokota, Professor Makoto Demura, Professor Kazunori Iwabuchi, and Director of the URA Station Hiroshi Abe)

## Professor Hideyoshi Harashima receives the Høst-Madsen Medal.

On June 24, 2021, it was announced that Professor Hideyoshi Harashima at the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences would be the latest awardee of the Høst-Madsen Medal, the highest award of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP).

Professor Harashima has been active in nanomedicine, gene therapy, nucleic acid medicine, and drug delivery for the more than three decades since he majored in pharmaceutical sciences at the University of Tokyo.

The Laboratory for Molecular Design of Pharmaceutics, headed by Professor Harashima, is known for its world-leading research on drug discovery, including the development of a multifunctional envelope-type nano device (MEND) that controls intracellular gene delivery and the distribution of siRNA, mRNA, pDNA, and other genetic materials in the body.

Professor Harashima says, “The prestigious medal I was awarded is the fruit of untiring efforts made over the

past two decades by all the members of our laboratory, including young faculty members, graduate students, and international students. I feel truly honored for them. The medal encourages me to continue to take on new challenges in science.” We cannot take our eyes off his research!



Professor Harashima

(Reference)

The Hokkaido University Research Times

Using pioneering nanomedicine to make Hokkaido University a hub for genetic medicine

<https://www.hokudai.ac.jp/researchtimes/2021/05/3-1.html>



The Hokkaido University  
Research Times



Web magazine on research at  
Hokkaido University



Hokkaido University  
Research Profiles



Website featuring research results and  
technologies owned by Hokkaido University



Professor Harashima and young faculty members  
(From front left: Assistant Professor Takashi Nakamura, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences; Professor Harashima; and Associate Professor Yuta Takano, Research Institute for Electronic Science. From rear left: Associate Professor Yuma Yamada and Assistant Professor Yusuke Sato, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences)

(Photos by Kenta Nakamura, PRAG)



## A bright autumn day

Photographer: Akihito Yamamoto



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After a summer marked by record-setting heatwaves, the campus has begun to clothe itself in autumnal colors.

We at Hokkaido University established the Institute for the Advancement of Sustainability (see Topics), furthering our efforts to make the most of this beautiful campus in order to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

The trees lining Ginkgo Avenue, annually thronged with visitors, will soon be reaching the peak of their autumnal hues. The campus will be blanketed in a colorful array of leaves.

Note: For videos showcasing the natural splendor of the campus in different seasons, please visit the University website.



Videos of  
campus views  
QR code



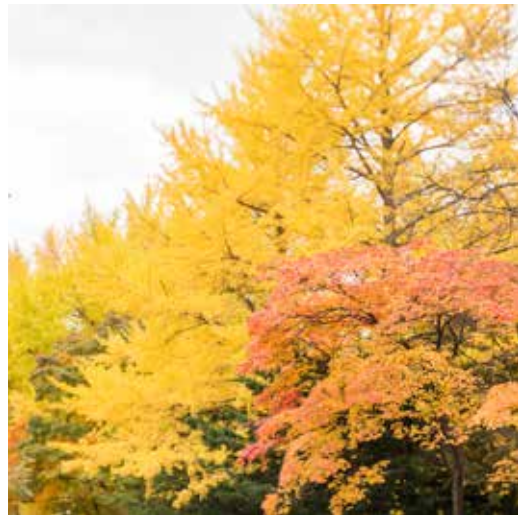
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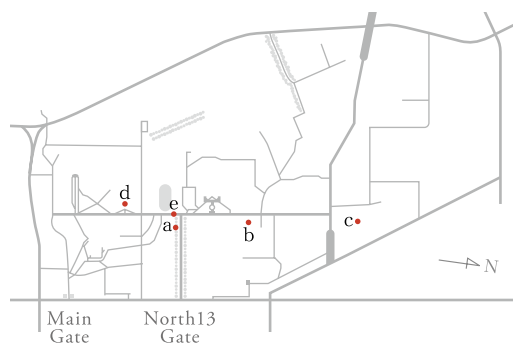
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d



e



- a. Ginkgo Avenue
- b. School of Medicine
- c. The Second Farm
- d. The Hokkaido University Museum
- e. Main Street



