

# Hiroshima University— Knowledge creation for the prosperity of humankind

Hiroshima University is one of the largest comprehensive academic institutes in Japan with an annual income of ¥85.9 billion (US\$732 million). It offers courses in subjects ranging from law, economics, and education to science, engineering, and medicine. The university has approximately 11,000 undergraduate students, 4,200 graduate school students, and 1,100 international students from 66 countries as well as 1,700 faculty and 1,600 nonacademic staff.



"The founding principles of Hiroshima University are embodied in its motto: 'a single unified university, free and pursuing peace,'" says Masaki Sakakoshi, executive and vice president responsible for international education and peace. "The university is committed to nurturing students in

a stimulating, international environment where scholars pursue cutting-edge research for the prosperity of humankind. Our mission is to be a base for knowledge creation."

The roots of Hiroshima University go back to 1874 with the establishment of the Hakushima School. The modern university was formed in 1949 by combining Hakushima with six other schools. "The university worked closely with the city of Hiroshima to rebuild after the devastation of the first atomic bomb attack in history," says Sakakoshi. "We decided to move out of central Hiroshima and by 1995, had merged and relocated 9 of our 11 faculties to the Higashi-Hiroshima campus. The faculties of Medicine and Dentistry, and Hiroshima University Hospital are located at the Kasumi campus, while some departments of the faculties of Law, Economics, and the Graduate School of Social Sciences and the Law School are at the Higashi Senda campus.

## Top Global University Project

In 2014, Hiroshima University was selected by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) as one of Japan's top 13 universities for the Type A (see editorial on page 1492) Top Global University (TGU) Project.

"The selection of Hiroshima University by MEXT for this highly competitive project underscores our accomplishments providing world-class research and education to date," says Hajime Nishitani, vice president for internationalization. "Some of our ambitious goals over the 10-year duration of the project include increasing the number of international students to 20%, offering 50% of courses in English, and increasing international faculty members to 50%."

Objective assessment of the quality of education is a high priority at Hiroshima University. One of the measures that will be implemented as part of the TGU Project is peer review of the new educational programs by representatives from the international universities involved in the Student Experience in the Research University consortium.

Research is an integral part of the university's strategy for global-



Masaki Sakakoshi



Hajime Nishitani



Fusahito Yoshida

ization. Internationally renowned research facilities include the Research Institute for Radiation Biology and Medicine (RIRBM)—set up in 1961 to provide medical care for survivors of the August 1945 atomic bomb—and the Institute for Amphibian Biology, which holds unique expertise in rearing amphibians for studying the development, inheritance, and evolution of inbred strains of tropical clawed frogs.

"Our excellence in research was acknowledged in 2013 when we were selected by MEXT for the Program for Promoting the Enhancement of Research Universities," explains Fusahito Yoshida, executive and vice president for research. "We are an open-minded university that welcomes the global community of students and scholars to join us to solve challenging problems of the 21st century." Notably, researchers at the RIRBM are now studying the effects of radiation on people affected by the Fukushima nuclear reactor accident caused by the earthquake and tsunami in March 2011.



Institute for Amphibian Biology



Session on radiation emergency medicine in a Ph.D. program

## Aiming for the top

Hiroshima University is committed to creating knowledge on a global scale. "We offer a wide range of innovative educational programs, run unique research programs, and have launched highly successful industry-academia partnerships," explains Sakakoshi. "We want to improve our global visibility over the next 10 years to enhance our presence on the international stage. One of the goals of the TGU Project is to improve our international standing and be one of the top 100 universities in the world within 10 years."

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[www.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/index.html](http://www.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/index.html)