

HIRAKU(Outline)

Building of Consortia for the Development of Human Resources in Science and Technology

In today's global society, in which various countries and organizations closely interact, Japan's presence is diminishing in relative terms. The trends of low birth rate and population aging are rapidly advancing in Japan, leading to marked depopulation particularly in the provinces, seriously affecting the country's strength. In such a situation, human resources in science and technology are required to be more than specialists in their respective fields of science and technology, since they are expected to propose solutions to highly complex present-day problems. In view of this, the Consortium "HIRAKU(Home for Innovative Researchers and Academic Knowledge Users)," centering on Hiroshima University, Yamaguchi University and Tokushima University as joint executive bodies working in collaboration with other national and private universities, research organizations and private sectors in the Chugoku/Shikoku region, conducts the programs outlined below to develop doctorates with scientific specialization with a stronger background in the humanities, as well as those with humanities specialization with a stronger scientific background who will contribute to regional revitalization.

The Consortium serves therefore as a platform that supports the operation of the two programs: (1) Promotion of Young Researchers' Independence and Mobility through the introduction of tenure-track positions, and (2) Practical Training and Engagement of Innovators. Through these programs, the Consortium provides seamless support to doctoral students, postdoctoral researchers, and tenure-track researchers at their respective stages of career development.

(1) Program for the Promotion of Young Researchers' Independence and Mobility

The member organizations of the Consortium will launch a joint call for applications for tenure-track researcher's positions from promising young researchers from within and outside Japan. A quota will be set for female applicants. Upon appointment of selected applicants, the Consortium will

provide a research environment in which they can independently work as PI and, through the introduction of diverse and highly mobile employment schemes (including laboratory rotation and cross appointment), provide them with opportunities for networking with researchers working at other institutions, learning experiences, and encounters with prospective final host research organizations.

(2) Program for the Practical Training and Engagement of Innovators

In this program, the Consortium prepares a practical training environment for young researchers (including doctoral students) who belong to member organizations of the Consortium so that they can be independent innovators who will bring about change in local communities and the international community. To do so, the Consortium provides, in partnership with businesses and local governments, the opportunity for young researchers to contribute to problem-solving in actual corporate or societal settings through participation in joint research (including cross appointment) and PBL-oriented internships. Through such training of transferrable skills that enable young researchers to work in various sectors of society, the Consortium promotes practical training and effective engagement of young researchers.