

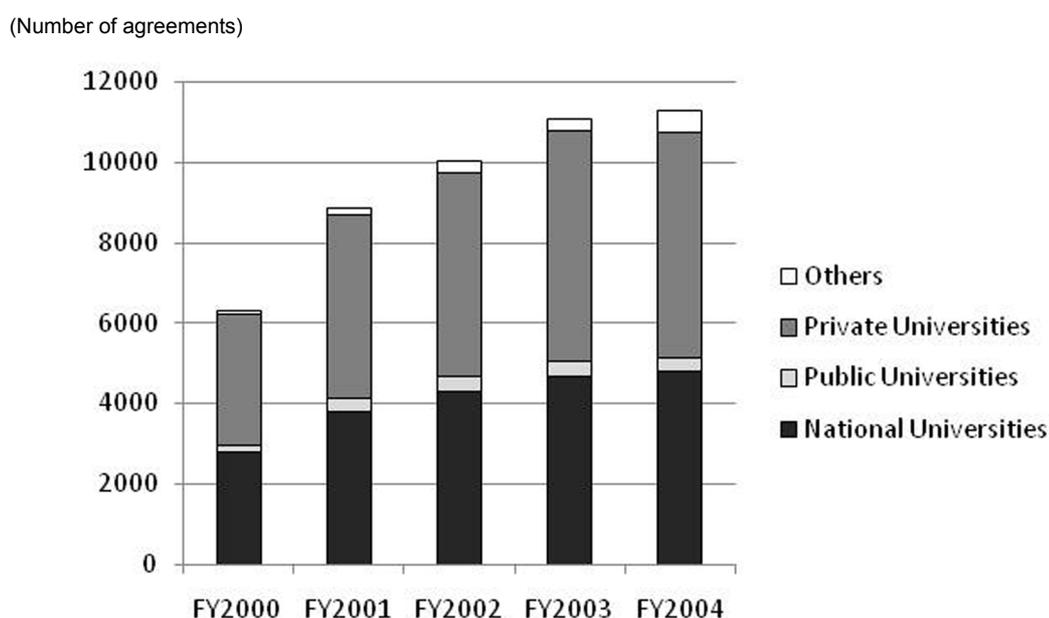
#### 4. Participation in international partnerships and consortiums

##### (1) Trends and issues

Along with the progressive globalization of the higher education market, international partnerships between universities across national borders are expanding rapidly. The most common form of international partnership established under public frameworks at the university-wide level that of academic exchange agreements concluded between two universities. According to surveys conducted by MEXT (*Results of the Survey on the State of Conclusion of Inter-university Agreements (as of October 1, 2004)*), the number of interuniversity partnership agreements concluded by universities was 2,997 in FY 1990, but increased to 11,292 in FY 2004 (Figure III-4-1).<sup>1)</sup> In particular, the number has increased rapidly over the past several years and almost doubled between FY 2000 and FY 2004, attesting to the expansion in international partnership arrangements in Japanese universities.

**Figure III-4-1: Change in the number of partnership agreements (FY 2000-FY 2004)**

Source: Prepared by JSPS based on MEXT (2005) *Results of the Survey on the State of Conclusion of Inter-university Agreements (as of October 1, 2004)* <sup>1)</sup>



In addition to these traditional partnerships, the number of consortium-type (or alliance [league]-type) arrangements bringing together multiple universities has been increasing in recent years. This is demonstrated by the fact that above-mentioned surveys began to include consortium-type agreements as a discrete survey category from FY 2004.

Typically, consortium relationships take the form of either partnerships established between two consortiums under a bilateral or regional framework, or kind of multinational league arrangement comprising a multiple number of universities. At first, Japanese

universities tended to form consortiums amongst themselves and then engage in exchange with similar consortiums overseas on a bilateral or regional basis. The above-mentioned MEXT (in FY 2004) reported 15 consortium-type arrangements with a total of 83 agreements, with all examples cited belonging to the bilateral consortium-to-consortium type of arrangement just described.<sup>7</sup> Recently, however, universities sharing a common profile have begun to form alliance-type partnerships under an international framework. As a result, an increased number of Japanese universities, chiefly large research universities, are now participating in multilateral cross-border consortiums. Table III-4-1 lists the major international consortiums.

All the consortiums shown in Table III-4-1 are ambitious schemes envisaging a broad range of activities. Although the concept of a consortium is itself still young and many initiatives remain at the developmental stage, it is true that international consortiums already provide member universities with a framework for international deployment of various activities including education, research, and administration/management. Consortium-type organizational arrangements are becoming more sophisticated and competitive research funding for international alliances is also increasing. In response to this, more and more Japanese universities are seeking to use the opportunities furnished by participation in consortiums as a catalyst to greater international activity within their own organizations.

This section will report notable efforts in this area with a focus on (1) what leads Japanese universities to participate in international interuniversity partnerships and consortiums, (2) how universities contribute to consortium activities, and (3) how they utilize the opportunities brought by consortium participation to enhance their international activities and vitalize their organizations as a whole.

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<sup>7</sup> As typical examples of a consortium-type agreement, this survey detailed the “Agreement on the Network Scheme of Hyogo University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific,” the “Agreement on Student Exchange for the Design and Manufacture in Mechatronics Project,” the “Consortium japonais du Collège doctoral franco-japonais,” and the “Agreement for Friendship between universities in Jiangsu, China and Ishiwaka, Japan.(tentative title)”

**Table III-4-1 Major international university-wide consortiums**

| Country/region     | Consortium, etc.  | Activities (including some activities in the planning phase)  | Year | Participating Japanese universities   |
|--------------------|---|---|------|---|
| Asia               | AEARU (Association of East Asian Research Universities) | Student exchange, faculty exchange, development of common curricula and credit transfer systems, sharing facilities, equipment and information, joint research, workshops and international events, etc.  | 1996 | <u>Kyoto University</u> (1996)<br><u>Osaka University</u> (1996)<br><u>Tohoku University</u> (1998)<br>Tokyo Institute of Technology (1996)<br><u>University of Tokyo</u> (1996)<br><u>University of Tsukuba</u> (1996) |
| Pacific Rim region | APRU (Association of Pacific Rim Universities)          | Annual university president meetings, senior staff meetings, APRU projects (knowledge and technology transfer among APRU member universities), joint research projects, distance education (including online education), research symposiums, fellow programs (including holding a series of seminars on specific themes and award seed grants), doctoral student conferences, and student exchange (including summer programs for undergraduate students)        | 1997 | <u>Keio University</u> (2002)<br><u>Kyoto University</u> (1997)<br><u>Osaka University</u> (1997)<br><u>University of Tokyo</u> (1997)<br><u>Waseda University</u> (1997)   |
| International      | Universitas 21  | Conferences and meetings (for participants at various levels from top management to undergraduate students, and in various forms including field-specific and university-wide gatherings), student exchange (including study abroad programs, summer schools, and research presentation meetings), online graduate school programs, research-based interaction (researcher exchange and joint research), competitive research funds, publication of e-books, etc. | 1997 | <u>Waseda University</u> (2006)   |
| International      | INU(International Network of Universities)              | Conferences and meetings (AGM, administrative- and student-level conferences/meetings and research workshops on internationalization and education), student exchange, faculty and staff exchange, research cooperation, joint programs (education), awards and grants (research fellowship and seed funding), benchmarking activities, etc.  | 1999 | <u>Hiroshima University</u> (2000)<br><u>Ritsumeikan University</u>   |
| International      | WUN (Worldwide Universities Network)                    | Joint research, exchange of doctoral students and researchers through the International Research Mobility Scheme (IRMS), e-learning, interactive online video seminars, etc.  | 2000 |   |
| Asia               | Conference of Asian University Presidents <sup>*2</sup> | University president conferences, research and educational cooperation bases (network points and branch offices), student exchange (ASEP, common curriculum, and joint summer programs), and development of young researchers (acceptance at Kyushu University)   | 2000 | <u>Kyushu University</u> (2000)   |
| International      | AC21 (Academic Consortium 21)                           | Student exchange, faculty and staff exchange, sharing information on research areas of interest and academic activities, development of collaborative education programs, support for regional cross-cultural exchanges, and AC21 international forums  | 2002 | <u>Nagoya University</u> (2002)   |
| International      | IARU (International Alliance of Research Universities)  | Conferences and meetings, joint research, joint projects (workshops) related to various university activities, student exchanges, faculty and staff exchange, summer schools, internships, and development of joint/bilateral degree systems  | 2006 | <u>University of Tokyo</u> (1996)   |
| International      | CAAS (Consortium for Asian and African Studies)         | Researcher exchange, student exchange, joint academic events such as international conferences, seminars, symposiums, and lectures, deployment of joint research projects, joint development of young researchers, and sharing publications and information   | 2007 | <u>Tokyo University of Foreign Studies</u> (2007)   |

\*1 The underlined universities are pilot institutions in the SIH Project.

\*2 The Conference of Asian University Presidents is not an "international consortium" but is included in the list because it is similar to one in that it is based on a partnership scheme, possesses a Charter, and engages in student exchange and other activities beyond the usual scope of a conference of university presidents.

**(2) Notable efforts****Keio University: Strategic conclusion of interuniversity exchange agreements**

Keio University is making efforts to establish university-level relationships with prominent overseas universities and research institutes because it is aware that it has fewer foreign students and agreements than other universities in Japan with a similar profile.

When establishing a new relationship, Keio takes the strategic approach of maintaining its strengths while overcoming its weaknesses: this entails a process of analysis of current conditions, surveys and site visits, followed by conclusion of agreements under the initiative of the international strategy headquarters and chiefly through the diplomatic channel of the President. In parallel with this, Keio is making efforts to develop existing faculty- or graduate school-based networks with prominent overseas educational and research institutes into university-wide agreements. As a result, between 2005 and 2006 the number of exchange agreements increased by 52 and the foreign student population by about 100.

**Nagoya University: Taking initiative in a consortium**

Nagoya University is a member of the Academic Consortium 21 (AC21), together with 24 other universities across 12 countries. AC21 was proposed by Nagoya University under the leadership of the President and established in 2002. Nagoya University called on its own partner universities to participate in the consortium and played a leading role from the preparation stage. The AC21 secretariat is located within Nagoya University. This led to a secondary effect of strengthening the university's administrative systems. (See Chapter 6 "Training and securing administrative personnel" for related information.)

Nagoya University actively participates in International Forums and Student World Forums (both held every two years), benchmarking (see Chapter 2 "Goal setting, action plans, and evaluation systems" for a detailed description) and other activities conducted by AC21.

**University of Tokyo: Enhancement of international presence through participation in consortiums**

The University of Tokyo participates in several international consortiums established under regional frameworks, including the Association of East Asian Research Universities (AEARU), the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU), and the International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU). These consortiums were all established around flagship universities in each country. Through active involvement in and contribution to these consortiums, the University of Tokyo is working to enhance its presence on the international stage.

AEARU, the first consortium in which the University of Tokyo participated, holds summer camps for students, theme-based workshops for researchers, workshops for administrative personnel, etc., in addition to general meetings and board of directors meetings. The university is actively involved in all these activities.

Osaka University, Kyoto University, Tokyo Institute of Technology and Tohoku University also participate in AEARU. (See 6. "Developing and securing administrators and staff" for discussion of Kyoto University's activities in this forum.)

**Hiroshima University: Utilizing a consortium framework to strengthen institutional profile**

Hiroshima University has been participating in the International Network of Universities (INU) since 2000. INU comprises 12 universities across eight countries. Hiroshima University actively participates in INU's student seminars, research workshops, shadowing programs for administrative personnel, conferences on education, distance education programs, etc. as a board member.

Hiroshima University, proclaims "the pursuit of peace" as one of its basic philosophies and is utilizing the consortium's framework to deploy international initiatives in line with its

vision, providing a peace-themed subject (Peace and Change) taught in English for distance education using WebCT, and holding student seminars on the theme of “Peace” jointly funded by INU (with 55 participants). These activities underline the university’s distinctive character and strengthen its institutional profile.

#### **Tokyo University of Foreign Studies: Establishment of an international consortium under the initiative of headquarters**

Tokyo University of Foreign Studies established the Consortium for Asian and African Studies (CAAS) in March 2007 to develop linkage and promote cooperation with top-level overseas institutions in the field of Asian and African studies, and to form a world-standard hub for research and education in this field. The French National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations (INALCO), Leiden University, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the National University of Singapore, and School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London also participate in this consortium. Tokyo University of Foreign Studies led the establishment of the consortium and now serves as its administrator.

This is notable as a pioneering example for several reasons. It is one of the few consortiums in the field of arts and social sciences, it envisages international contribution from a basic research foundation, it is led by a Japanese university, and it was instigated through the leadership of the university’s international strategy headquarters.

#### **Tottori University: Interuniversity partnership developed from municipal-level exchange**

Tottori Prefecture has a long history of exchange and friendship with Gangwon Province in South Korea, Jilin Province in China, coastal states in Russia, and Tuv Province in Mongolia, all located around the Japan Sea. Developing out of the “Summit of North East Asian Regional Governments for International Exchange and Cooperation” attended by governors of all these provinces and states, the “Conference of North East Asian University Professors (tentative title)” was formed, with the involvement of universities in the region. The conference aims to promote academic exchange among member universities and resolve common issues for Northeast Asia by utilizing university resources. The first meeting will be held in fall 2007.

### **(3) Analysis and proposals**

#### **Purpose of participating in consortiums**

It is believed that establishing or participating in a consortium brings the following benefits to universities.

##### **(i) Enhancement of international prestige and presence**

Recently, international activity in universities is coming to encompass more large-scale, well-organized partnership. Participation in and active contribution to a quality consortium is an important means for an institution to enhance its international prestige and presence. Many of the international consortiums cited above impose strict conditions for membership. Joining an top international consortium can thus serve as a tool to guarantee a certain level of university quality.

##### **(ii) Strengthening the foundation for effective, efficient deployment of international activities**

As stated earlier, participating in a consortium itself brings benefits to member universities. However, “participation” in a consortium is a means, not an objective. The important thing is to utilize opportunities brought by consortium participation in order to develop international activities and ultimately apply them to reform and improvement throughout the university.

In fact, consortium participation strengthens all areas of university activity, including education, research, and administration/management, and furnishes opportunities for effective, efficient deployment of various initiatives. Nagoya University conducts benchmarking, staff training, and research exchange utilizing a consortium it proposed itself.

This is a very interesting example in that the university is seeking to utilize opportunities brought through the consortium in its own organization's administration and management, as well as in education and research activities.

(iii) Developing distinctive institutional character and enhancing university profile

Some universities are applying consortium activities to develop stronger institutional character and higher profile. For example, Hiroshima University is taking positive steps to develop activities in line with its basic philosophy of "the pursuit of peace", utilizing a framework of international networks to engage in distance education, peace-themed student seminars and other projects. Tokyo University of Foreign Studies has established a discipline-based consortium under the initiative of headquarters, utilizing its "strength" in Asian and African studies. These are notable efforts.

(iv) Facilitating access to funding

Universities expect that participation in a consortium will work to their advantage in terms of obtaining external funds. Although any attempt to verify effectiveness in obtaining external funds would be premature at this stage, judging from directions in competitive funding allocation in Europe and Japan, there appears to be an international shift towards funding for consortium-based networks rather than individual institutions. In this regard, it is expected that participating in a prominent consortium that conducts substantial activities, and engaging in these activities in a positive manner, will be an important element in facilitating access to external funds.

### Strategic approach to strengthening partnerships

A variety of international consortiums have been formed and developed internationally, but not many of them have involved Japanese universities as a driving force from the establishment stage. As shown in Table III-4-2, however, an increasing number of Japanese universities are leading the establishment of consortiums, assuming important posts in their operation, and working actively to develop initiatives within them. A large number of international consortiums are still in the developmental stage. Increasingly, Japanese universities will be expected to strengthen organizational partnerships with other member institutions, develop a win-win relationship in which all partners can enjoy benefits, and contribute to further invigoration of consortium activities.

**Table III-4-2 Universities playing a leading role in a consortium**

(FY 2006)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| International Consortium                                |  |
| Association of East Asian Research Universities (AEARU) | Vice President (President-designate):<br>Kyoto University                            |
| Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU)          | Board member:<br>University of Tokyo   |
| International Network of Universities (INU)             | Vice President: Hiroshima University   |
| Academic Consortium 21 (AC21)                           | Initiator/Secretariat/Steering Committee member:<br>Nagoya University                |
| Consortium for Asian and African Studies (CAAS)         | Initiator/Secretariat:<br>Tokyo University of Foreign Studies                        |
| Conference of Asian University Presidents               | Initiator/Steering and Administrative Liaison<br>Committee member: Kyushu University |

A university serving as a consortium secretariat can benefit from a secondary effect of strengthening their own administrative capacity to perform international operations in general. This process often presents a major challenge for the university involved. It is desirable, however, that universities use such opportunities and experiences as a means to

further internationalize their administrative and management functions.

Many international consortiums and other organized international partnerships evolved out of joint research projects conducted in the past. Therefore, it will be important for headquarters to gain a sufficient grasp of activities within each individual division and department within their universities in order to promote and deploy university-wide international initiatives strategically. Some universities are developing international networks through such departmental activities. Keio University, for example, is attempting to harness the high-quality networks developed in each of its faculties and departments to formulate university-wide initiatives. Such efforts are important in that they provide university-wide support for progressive activities at individual departmental level as well as strategic deployment of international activity in the university as a whole.

While organizational partnerships can be developed out of discrete international joint research activities, there are also some cases where consortiums function to vitalize such activities themselves. Development of a university-wide framework produces mechanisms to promote and support international joint research, resulting in formulation of new research projects and streamlined management processes. Recently, some international consortiums have themselves instigated joint research initiatives. Under this method, rather than relying on a track record of joint research in its member universities, a consortium launches a research project based on a common area of interest coordinated among member universities, then invites faculty members from member universities to participate. This style of joint research provides individual researchers with opportunities to access wider international research networks.

Consortiums bring a wide range of opportunities, but they also present many challenges. The most difficult and important issue is securing funds to establish and maintain consortiums. Several consortiums currently operate by supplementing their fiscal base of membership fees with external funds such as voluntary contributions and international research funding schemes. However, such funding sources are not necessarily sufficient, and financial problems are undoubtedly restricting consortium activities. In order to secure sustainability and further develop their activities, it will be increasingly crucial for consortiums to devise more effective means for fund-raising.

Furthermore, a range of models for consortium organization could be explored. It would be beneficial to consider the possibility of developing new types of partnership, including consortiums with an element of international cooperation between industry and academia (plus government).

## Reference

- 1) Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) (2005) *Daigakutôkan kôryû kyôtei teiketsu jôkyôtô chôsa no kekka ni tsuite (heisei16nen 10gatsu 1nichi genzai) [Results of the Survey on the State of Conclusion of Inter-university Agreements (as of October 1, 2004)]*.