

5. Host Institution's Commitment (in English)

Date 2/8/2012

To MEXT

Name of host institution Tohoku university
Name and title of head of host institution
Akihisa Inoue, President
Signature

I confirm that the measures listed below will be taken faithfully regarding "Advanced Institute for Materials Research" adopted under the World Premier International Research Center Initiative.

<Provision in host institution's mid-to-long-term plan>

- Describe clearly the host institution's mid-to-long-term strategy plan and how the center is positioned within that strategy.

National University Corporation, Tohoku University states in the second interim plan (from April 1st, 2010 to March 31st, 2016), under Article 2 "Measures to Achieve Research Goals (1) Measures to Achieve Goals Concerning Research Levels and Research Results, section ①-3 Development of World-Class Scientific Research on Priority Areas," that in order to make Advanced Institute for Materials Research (AIMR), selected and established by the World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI), the top international research network center, Tohoku University will strengthen and support its research and operation. Section ②-1 "Drive Innovative Research through International Advanced Research and Education Organization" states "The host institution will promote innovative research by making use of International Advanced Research and Education Organization, WPI-AIMR, the Graduate School of Biomedical Engineering." In addition, taking account of the importance of human resource development, under Article 1 "Measures to Achieve Educational Goals," section ②-4 "Fostering of the Highly-Qualified Researchers in the Multidisciplinary Area" states "The host institution will carry out education programs to train human resources of high-level multidisciplinary research under the collaboration of International Advanced Research and Education Organization, AIMR, and Global COE Program."

The Tohoku University Action Plan "Inoue Plan 2007 (Revised for 2011)" introduced in June 2011 clearly states that Tohoku University takes steps, including reinforcing the organization of the WPI, in order to play a leading role as part of a top-class international research network. The support for the center is a shared determination of the university and the policy obtained the understanding of the entire members of the university. This policy will be passed down to the next president.

<Concrete Measures>

- Describe the concrete measures that the host institution will take to satisfy the following requirements.

(1) How it will support the center's need to secure resources that match or exceed the project grant through such means as competitive grants obtained by researchers participating in the project,

in-kind contributions and other forms of assistance by the host institution (including partial payment of salaries, provision of research space), and/or external donations.

As a core facility of research activities, the WPI-AIMR main building was built in July 2011 by a subsidy from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the matching fund of the host institution. The main building holds research space for approximately 10 PIs, a combination room for interactive activities, and a multi-purpose hall especially for outreach activities. As a host institution, Tohoku University constructed laboratories for Mathematics Unit and a library in the same building. AIMR plans to use existing facilities in Katahira campus for WPI-AIMR and promote research activities under one roof. Additionally, the host institution will basically pay the personnel expenses of all researchers who are also affiliated with the host institution prior to the formation of the center. Beyond that, the host institution will expend enough money each year on such items as research expenses and other researcher support, the installation of apparatus required for research at the center, the refurbishing of research space, and management, administration and other items required for the smooth execution of the center's research. Aside from that, the host institution will provide the researchers with priority access to the Technology Center for Research and Education Activities' high-performance electron microscopes and other research equipment and assistance so that the center can implement global top-level research.

In addition to this support from the host institution, the researchers who will participate in the center obtained funds totaling approximately US \$ 29,000,000 from outside organizations, based on the actual achievement of FY 2010. The amount of the total funds is projected to remain at the same level or more in the future, too. Thus overall, the host institution fully expects to secure an amount of resources for the center that is equal or greater than the amount of support provided by this program.

(2) How it will institute a system under which the center's director is able to make substantive personnel and budget allocation decisions necessary to implementing the center project—a system, which in practice, allows the center director autonomy in making decisions regarding the center's operation.

To secure the independence of the Center administration, the host institution will only retain its authority of extremely important items such as the appointment and dismissal of the Center Director. The other items such as personnel affairs, budget execution and other items effectively will be determined by the Center Director.

In other words, with regard to personnel affairs, the host institution will only retain authority over the appointment and dismissal of the Center Director. The other personnel affairs within the center including the employment of PIs will be determined by the Center Director.

The budget allotted to the center (personnel expenses and non-personnel expenses) will be turned over in its entirety for free execution at the judgement of the Center Director, and it will be possible to carry over funds, allocated for budget items that are not implemented by the end of the fiscal year to the subsequent fiscal year.

(3) The support it will provide to the center director in coordinating with other departments within the host institution when recruiting researchers for the center, while giving reasonable regard to the educational and research activities of those departments.

The host institution will support the In-house Council of AIMR, comprising heads of related departments and research institutes, and coordinate with other departments by taking their educational activities into consideration.

(4) Its flexibility in applying, revising, or supplementing the host institution's internal systems as needed for the center to effectively implement new management methods (e.g., English-language environment, merit-based pay, top-down decision making) unfettered by conventional modes of operation.

We established the International Advisory Board, including Nobel Prize laureates as members, which advises the Center Director to support top-down decision making by the Center Director. An environment will be established, including the use of Internet technologies, to facilitate swift consensus building and organic linkages between the Center Director and the International Advisory Board. Also, so that work at the Center can be conducted smoothly in English, we will continue to assign staff with superior English skills, in addition to expertise in such fields as accounting, personnel and research assistance, as administrative staff on a priority basis.

Tohoku University's "University Professor System" will also be actively used to invite the world's cutting-edge researchers to the center.

A standing task team will also be established with the Executive Vice President in charge of Research as its lead for rapid examinations and responses in cases when the Center Director requests the flexible administration, revision, improvement or adjustment of the host institution's systems, and the host institution will otherwise prepare an environment for the smooth conduct of top management by the Center Director.

(5) Its accommodation of the center's infrastructural requirements (for facilities, e.g., laboratory space; equipment; land, etc.).

As a core facility of research activities, the WPI-AIMR main building was built in July 2011 by a subsidy from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the matching fund of the host institution. The main building holds research space for approximately 10 PIs, a combination room for interactive activities, and a multi-purpose hall especially for outreach activities. As a host institution, Tohoku University constructed laboratories for Mathematics Unit and a library in the same building. They plan to use existing facilities in Katahira campus for WPI-AIMR and promote research activities under one roof.

In addition, an accommodation facility for researchers from overseas is planned to be built near the WPI-AIMR main building in the spring of 2013, and about 30 rooms will be allocated for the researchers invited by WPI-AIMR. To secure research space in accordance with the advance of the research and the expansion of the center's research organization, the center will be given priority use of joint-use space at the university or campus level, and the Facilities Preparation and Administration Committee will deliberate all items of concern regarding the use of research space and other facilities and accommodate the center's needs.

(6) Other types of assistance it will provide to give maximum support to the center in achieving its concepts and objectives and becoming a world premier international research center in both name and deed.

As mentioned above, National University Corporation, Tohoku University's interim plan and the "Inoue Plan 2007 (Revised for 2011)" clearly state their support for WPI-AIMR.

Tohoku University intends to provide its maximum continued support to the center as a special research zone within the host institution, arrange organic relations with the International Advanced Research and Education Organization and other plans of internationalization, making them into vehicles for education and research and help us contribute, as one of the world's leading universities,

to the development of our society.

As an outlook for the future, after the completion of this program, the cooperation among the related departments and research institutes, which will be achieved by AIMR as locomotive, will serve as a base for developing new integrated organization for materials research as a “World-leading center of intellect” at Tohoku University.