

4. Host Institution's Commitment (in English)

To MEXT

Date

January 25, 2012

Name of host institution

Kyoto University

Name and title of head of host institution

Hiroshi Matsumoto, President

(Signature)



I confirm that the measures described below will be faithfully implemented on behalf of the Institute for Integrated Cell-Material Sciences (iCeMS) as part of the World Premier International Research Center (WPI) 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.

Beginning with the iCeMS' founding in October 2007 and continuing for 10 years, Kyoto University has given and will continue to give the World Premier International Research Center Initiative a position of special prominence. As clearly defined in its mission statement, the university strives to achieve a sustainable society for humanity, in harmonious coexistence with the natural environment, by continually nurturing its world-class research and education programs. Kyoto University strongly believes that having a world-leading research center within the university is an indispensable step toward furthering this mission to achieve ultimate sustainability. Under the strong leadership of the president, the university is vigorously committed to promote the WPI program and to actively take concrete and responsible measures, such as provision of research support systems and allocation of resources, necessary in maintaining such a world-leading research center. In terms of university policy making, a future strategy task force recommendation was submitted to the university's Deans and Directors (March 8, 2011) and the President and Executive Directors enacted a "10 Year Plan for Research and Educational Structural Reform Supporting Kyoto University's Growth" (December 6, 2011). To date, the iCeMS has demonstrated itself to be a proven leader within the university in numerous areas of structural reform in research, including in internationalization, multi-disciplinarity, and focused personnel policies. The university will use the institute as a role model for a highest world-standard scientific research institution, incorporating the iCeMS' extensive body of knowledge and experience into deliberations defining a future reformed and revitalized Kyoto University (for details on 'beyond WPI-iCeMS' refer to (6)).

<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.

To secure resources for center operation and research activities, the university takes the following measures:

- a) Provision of expenses of infrastructure to support the center's operation

As a necessary financial measure for the center's operation, the university provides indirect costs associated with competitive grants obtained by the center's researchers.

Infrastructure costs including building maintenance and utility fees will be allocated from the university budget. Fundamental research grants will be provided as well.

- b) Support in obtaining external funds such as competitive grants

To facilitate the center's researchers obtaining external funds, the university provides various support including opportunities to apply for startup funds. The funds will be used to support young researchers and foreign researchers to pursue research until they obtain their own external funds. The university will also provide researchers with various supports in every aspect of preparing the applications.

c) Support for center management to attract world top-level researchers

1) Provision of personnel expenses

The university provides five positions and expenses for principal investigator-class personnel in order to enable Kyoto University's world-leading researchers to conduct academic research at the center while cooperating with their original departments, as well as to minimize the impact of the absences of top-level researchers on their departments' educational and research activities.

For the administration, the university provides full-time administrative staff and necessary personnel expenses in order to establish an independent administrative organization. **Nine current university administrative staff will be allocated for major functions such as general affairs, planning, finance, research support and facilities.** Administrators with a good command of English will be preferentially selected. Note that, given ongoing discussions related to overall university administrative reform, numerous improvements are under consideration (including consolidation of administrative resources and revision of placement of university administrators).

2) Provision of research space

Aiming to maintain a world-class institute with global visibility, Kyoto University will provide a high-quality research environment with a total area of about 12,000 m² including exclusive-use facilities with fully equipped infrastructure. The iCeMS reached approximately this scale in fiscal 2010 with the completion of Complex 2 (including a new 3,000 m² building). The university intends to pursue further efforts to improve the research environment at the iCeMS.

3) Measures related to internationalization and public relations

Given the iCeMS' mandate to fulfill a role as an international research hub, the university will support the institute's international publicity and linkage efforts via measures including the issuance of publications such as pamphlets and press releases. Previously divided among various research and overseas-related offices, university-level support in this area was consolidated into the Research and International Affairs Division beginning in fiscal 2011.

In addition, the iCeMS will have access to the highest quality university facilities available, such as meeting spaces and halls for use during international symposia and academic conferences, campus libraries, cafeterias, and other common use facilities.

- (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 ensure autonomy of the center's operation, the university takes the following measures:

a) Flexible management of organization and operation system

An autonomous and independent management system that plays a role equivalent to the faculty will be implemented, to ensure the center's autonomy and the center director's leadership in making decisions regarding the center's overall operation. Decisions on important matters (personnel, budget, etc.) of the center will be made by the center director through discussions with the deputy center director, PI board chair, and administrative director (executive board), who assist and support the center director, in order to ensure appropriate operation. The director's term shall be for five years. Reappointment is possible. A director candidate shall be nominated by the executive board, and appointed by the university president.

At the same time, to enable the university to provide various support and advice promptly, the university president and executive vice-presidents meet the director of the center on a regular basis.

b) Introduction of flexible salary system to allow researchers' easy transfers

The world's leading foreign researchers, Japanese researchers who are highly recognized worldwide, and postdoctoral and other promising young researchers will be assembled at this center. For these researchers, whether from inside or outside the university, Kyoto University will allow applying a new personnel system that can appropriately reflect their achievements. To attract various researchers both from Japan and around the world, the university will accept the center director's request to implement a system of special allowances. The university also introduces a flexible personnel system in which the center director can select a salary system appropriate for each researcher that will assure the maximum flexibility for researchers in

transferring to the center.

- The annual faculty salary system that the university has already introduced (a fixed-term employment contract and an annual salary system based on achievements) will be applied. Hiring beyond the retirement age will be allowed.
- The current salary system will be applied to the researchers while they will be allowed to concurrently remain in the original departments if approved. These systems will promote; (1) intra-university cooperation among researchers, (2) integration of different academic fields, (3) human resource development through their participation in the university's educational activities, (4) effective usage of university facilities, and (5) flexible transfer of researchers within the university.
- Salaries for foreign researchers can be paid in the foreign currency of their home countries upon request.
- For qualified technical and administrative staffers, a special employment contract will be arranged to extend a regular retirement contract.

- (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 university takes the following measures with regard to educational and research activities within the university:

a) Support for researcher transfers to the center

To support researchers on their smooth and flexible intra-university transfer to the center, principal investigator-class personnel positions will be provided so that the impacts on current educational and research activities, and administrative works will be minimized.

b) Support in relation to education and research activities

If approved by their original departments, researchers will be allowed to keep their research in part and education concurrently in their original departments. This will facilitate their participation in educational activities and their shared use of research facilities, equipment, and materials. This will, in turn, contribute toward more active research activities.

To support the center's women researchers, the university provides effective assistance for and consultations on their research, child/nursing care, and daily lives.

c) Support for foreign researchers

To support foreign researchers and their families, the university provides job applicants with a handbook that explains immigration procedures, housing, the health-care system, and other daily life information. An experienced foreign mentor will be assigned for a period of time immediately after the researcher's arrival in Japan.

To support schooling for researchers' children, a system will be established to provide pre-Kindergarten through high school education in cooperation with schools in Kyoto Prefecture.

- (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.

The university will accept necessary system revisions for implementation of new management methods unfettered by conventional modes of operation. Specifically, the university establishes an autonomous and independent management structure that serves a role equivalent to that performed by existing faculty-run management. Important issues (personnel, budget, etc.) will be discussed and decided by the center director, deputy director, PI board chair, and administrative director, in order to ensure prompt and appropriate administrative actions. The center director makes decisions on the following substantive matters necessary to promote this program:

- Matters related to recruitment of foreign and Japanese researchers, and postdoctoral and other young researchers
- Matters related to progress of research programs and evaluation of researchers' achievements
- Matters related to adoption/modification of the center's research programs
- Matters related to allocation and implementation of a budget for supporting research and operational activities of the center

- Matters related to management of research space in the center

For matters that require revision of the university regulations, the executive vice-president of the university in charge will provide specific consultation, and necessary administrative procedures will be handled by the head office administration in coordination with the center administration.

For administration, the university will provide several administrative personnel and necessary personnel costs while ensuring autonomy in administration. External personnel with a good command of English will also be recruited.

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

Support for infrastructure requirements

Aiming to maintain a world-class institute with global visibility, Kyoto University will provide a high-quality research environment with a total area of about 12,000 m² including exclusive-use facilities with fully equipped infrastructure. The iCeMS reached approximately this scale in fiscal 2010 with the completion of Complex 2 (including a new 3,000 m² building). The university intends to pursue further efforts to improve the research environment at the iCeMS.

- (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.

1) Beyond WPI-iCeMS

Given present economic uncertainties in Japan, at a minimum any plans for a new research organization at Kyoto University must be leading-edge and multidisciplinary, with a future-oriented research vision and solid financial footing based on funding from competitive sources. To date, the iCeMS has succeeded in establishing a new research field based on the integration of the cell and material sciences, as well as in securing substantial sources of external funding. If able to continue this progress toward scientific as well as financial self-standing over the next five years, based in large part on continued strong scientific output, the path toward establishment as a new organization will be assured. Such a new "global multidisciplinary research hub" may retain the integrated cell-material sciences at its core, while progressively incorporating new fields of research. This hub will be supported by the internationally- and human resources-oriented spirit of strategic management brought to maturity at the iCeMS. Kyoto University, for its part, will lend full support over the next five years to efforts to establish such an expanded organization for international multidisciplinary research based on the founding principles of the WPI program. Additionally, as part of ongoing educational and research organization reform efforts, the university anticipates that the iCeMS will serve as a role model in the creation of new world-leading scientific research institutions.

2) Proactive support related to the establishment of a world class research institute

Kyoto University has been characterized, since its foundation in 1897, by an "academic atmosphere of freedom"; one that values originality and independence rather than the mere accumulation of knowledge. Located in the historic city of Kyoto, the university has developed research on diverse fields with profound originality in this unique "academic atmosphere of freedom".

Based on this historical background, it is defined in its mission statement (declared in 2001) that the ultimate goal of the university is to contribute to future sustainable human societies, featured by harmonious coexistence within human and ecological communities on this planet. This goal can be achieved by bringing forth the outstanding research and education programs in conformance with high ethical standards, and by generating world-class knowledge. We strongly believe that the best research in the world is created in the environment where the academic freedom and autonomy in research are highly valued, and in this regard, Kyoto University is one of the best places to establish a world premier international research center to lead the world's research.