

Shinagawa Proposal 2014

In order to support the competitiveness of Japan's universities within an increasingly global environment, the participants of the APRU Asia-Pacific Women in Leadership (APWiL) Workshop held in Shinagawa, Tokyo on July 1–2, 2014 offer the Shinagawa Proposal on the next phase of the improvement of the status of women in higher education in Japan.

We in academia are committed to supporting the advancement of women who endeavor to contribute to the generation and transmission of leading-edge knowledge essential for Japan's economic, social, and cultural progress and leadership in the 21st century. To improve the status of women in Japan's universities, we seek concrete leadership from each university and also from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (MEXT). Specifically:

1. Japan's universities should be held to the goal of increasing the proportion of women in faculty, research, and executive positions; for example, as a midterm goal for the percentage of women in faculty and executive positions, an increase to an average of at least 30%, consistent with government targets by the year 2020.
2. Each university must set its own goals and annual performance indicators for the improvement of the status of women; for example, 30% to 50% of the members of hiring and promotion committees must be women (when there is not a sufficient number of women internally, women in related fields from external departments/universities can be included).
3. Universities must provide clear and fair guidelines for the recruitment, retention, and promotion of female faculty and researchers. Additional attention must be given to the specific concerns of fixed-term and part-time faculty and researchers.
4. Supportive programs must be institutionalized, including mentoring and career development offerings for faculty, as well as female-friendly working arrangements; for example, the hiring of support staff for research and administrative work during periods of intensive care for children or parents and/or the utilization of information technology to enable telecommuting.
5. All Japanese universities must implement a zero-tolerance policy against any form of harassment, marginalization, and/or isolation of women, whether intentional or unintentional.

July 2, 2014

Proposed by all participants of the APRU Asia-Pacific Women in Leadership Program (APWiL) Workshop in Shinagawa, Tokyo

*The workshop, sponsored by Kyoto University, was held at the Kyoto University Tokyo Office in Shinagawa, Tokyo on July 1–2, 2014 as part of the Asia-Pacific Women in Leadership initiative of the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU). The workshop comprised fifty participants from fifteen universities and one organization, including those from member universities of APRU and the U.S.–Japan Research Institute (USJI).