

Top Global University Project

Osaka University's Initiatives to Become a World-Leading Innovative University

A Decade of Achievements

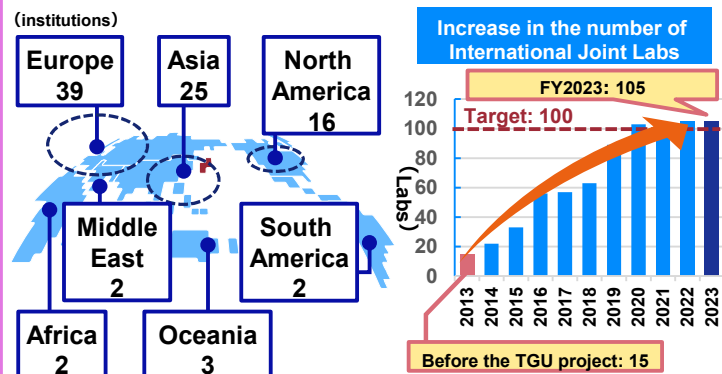
FY2014–FY2023



大阪大学
OSAKA UNIVERSITY

Expansion of support for the formation of International Joint Labs

Osaka University has been inviting researchers and research groups developing cutting-edge research at institutions overseas to engage in joint research at the university through the International Joint Research Promotion Program. Under this program, International Joint Labs have been established as permanent research bases, reaching 89 labs in FY2019, far exceeding the original target of 60, and totaling 105 as of the end of FY2023. Establishing these labs has led to an increase in the number of internationally co-authored papers and international symposiums, allowing the university to globalize its research and form world-class research hubs.



Opening of the UC/UCEAP Osaka Office

In December 2014, the university opened the UC/UCEAP Osaka Office on its Toyonaka Campus as the only base of the University of California (UC) in western Japan. As an initiative of this office, UC professors were invited to Osaka University under the Cross-Appointment System to engage in academic exchanges and provide lectures, including a Professor Emeritus of UC who gave special lectures in English as the university's specially appointed professor. The university also expanded its summer program to accept UC students, which was temporarily suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic, to encourage student exchanges between the two universities. These programs have greatly contributed to the globalization of the university and helped students develop global literacy.

Establishment of OSAKA University Venture Capital Co., Ltd.

Under its vision to become a world-leading innovative university, Osaka University is committed to applying its research outcomes for the benefit of society to create a bright future.

2014

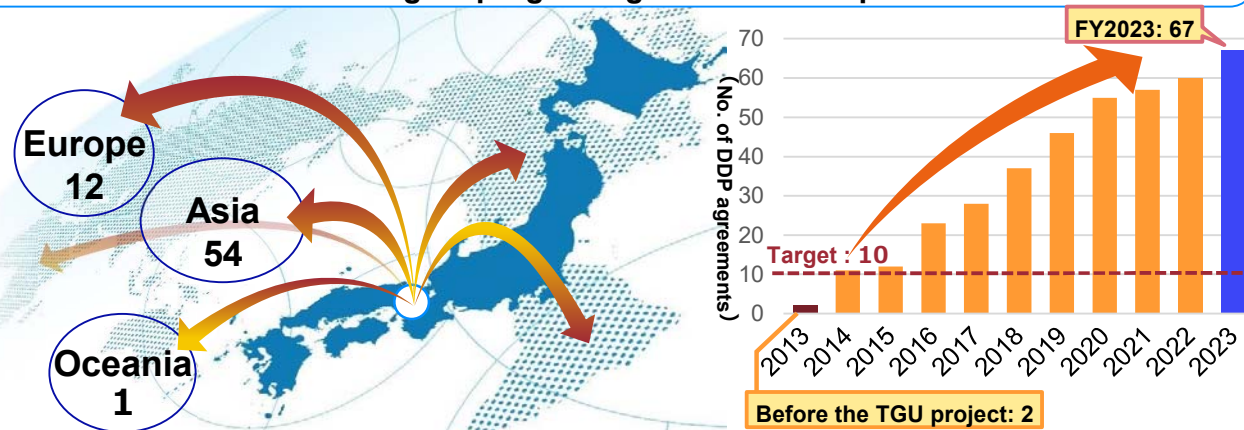
Promotion of Double Degree Programs

In 2014, the university established the Center for the Advancement of Research and Education Exchange Networks in Asia (CAREN) to promote Double Degree and Credit Exchange Programs with overseas universities, leveraging its strong networks with educational and research institutions in Asia. CAREN has since contributed to the increase of double degree program agreements in Asia. While only two agreements were signed in 2013 when the program started, the number of agreements grew to 67 by the end of FY2023, mainly on an inter-faculty basis, greatly surpassing the original target of 10. With more than 60 double degrees awarded to date, the Double Degree Program contributes to the growth of English-medium degree programs at the university.



The first Japanese-Chinese doctoral double degree in medicine conferred in 2022

Increase of double degree program agreements with partner universities



Building and expanding the global network

To strategically publicize its activities internationally, the university has built and expanded its global networks by participating in the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU), the Association of East Asian Research Universities (AEARU), the HeKKSaGOn German-Japanese University Alliance, and the Japan-UK Research and Education Network for Knowledge Economy Initiatives (RENKEI).



Establishment of the Center for Global Initiatives

The Center was established in 2016 as an organization responsible for planning and implementing strategies related to international collaboration as well as the global development of the university's education and research.



Establishment of the Center for Gender Equality Promotion

Established to achieve comprehensive gender equality, the Center was reorganized as the Center for Diversity & Inclusion in 2022.



Establishment of the Institute for Advanced Co-Creation Studies

Established to support young researchers, the Institute is designed to hire and nurture globally competent researchers capable of conducting world-class academic research with excellent research management skills and a deep sense of ethics.



Establishment of the Institute for Open and Transdisciplinary Research Initiatives (OTRI)

OTRI serves as an incubator of new scientific fields and cutting-edge innovations by promoting pioneering interdisciplinary research through collaboration across organizational, social and national borders.

2015

Launch of the Multilingual Expert Program (MLE)

With the rise of emerging economies in 2015, it became critical to nurture individuals with proficiency in multiple languages and advanced specialized knowledge who could play a leading role on the international stage. The university then launched the MLE Program to provide interdisciplinary education transcending undergraduate and graduate specializations to develop individuals proficient in languages in addition to English, the international common language, as well as expertise in humanities and social sciences, including law, economics, and history; and science, engineering and information sciences, which includes IT-related fields. A total of 136 undergraduate and graduate students completed the MLE Program by the end of FY2023.

Proactive utilization of the Cross-Appointment and annual salary systems

Under the Cross-Appointment System with overseas research institutions, the university accepted researchers with diverse backgrounds, particularly high-caliber female researchers living overseas, as Academic Staff in order to promote the globalization and diversification of its educational and research environment. Additionally, a new performance-based annual salary system was introduced alongside the existing salary system, enabling the university to attract internationally recognized outstanding researchers. The use of these systems has steadily increased, leading to greater diversity among Academic Staff and further strengthening the university's globalization efforts.

2016



大阪大学高等教育・入試研究開発センター

Establishment of the Center for the Study of Higher Education and Global Admissions (CHEGA)

CHEGA was established to conduct integrated research surveys relating to the connection between high school and university, domestic/international admissions reform, and education reform.

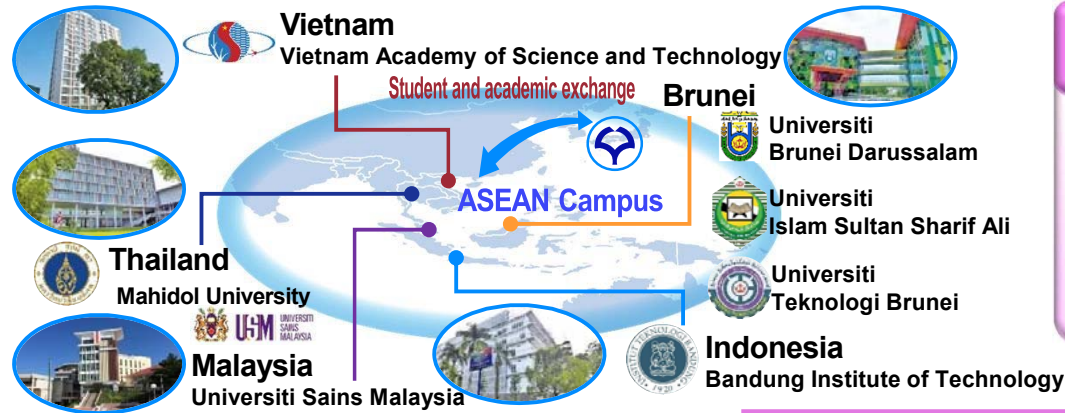


Establishment of the Center for the Study of CO* Design

This center pioneers the future of our university by facilitating the orchestration and co-creation of knowledge through collaborations with society's stakeholders and reorganizing and consolidating advanced cross-departmental education and research initiatives for which the university is known for.

Promotion of the ASEAN Campus Project

ASEAN campuses were opened in Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Brunei in FY2021, with an additional campus opening in Malaysia in July 2022. These campuses aim to foster the next generation of highly skilled global individuals from the ASEAN region and Japan, and address social and cultural issues specific to ASEAN countries. From FY2019 to FY2023, 19 students were enrolled in the Double Degree Programs established on these campuses, and from FY2020 to FY2023, 219 graduate and undergraduate students (192 ASEAN partner university students and 27 Osaka University students) participated in online/study abroad hybrid programs (the Osaka University International Certificate Programs, OUICP and OUICP-S) between ASEAN partner universities and Osaka University.



Launch of Ryumon

Ryumon was opened to support Chinese students applying for admission to Osaka University, which was reorganized and renamed the Admissions Assistance Desk (AAD) in 2021.

2017

Introduction of a new academic calendar (four-term system)

To further respond to the expectations of society, the university revised its academic calendar to introduce a more flexible four-term system as part of its education reform to nurture globally competent individuals, promote independent learning, and offer a wider variety of learning opportunities.

Establishment of the Co-Creation Bureau

Serving as a guiding compass for the university and a central hub for university-wide co-creation initiatives, the Co-Creation Bureau is a core institution that brings together internal and external stakeholders in the spirit of "University in Society, University for Society."



University-wide introduction of the Comprehensive Selection & Admission by School Recommendation (AO and recommendation examination)

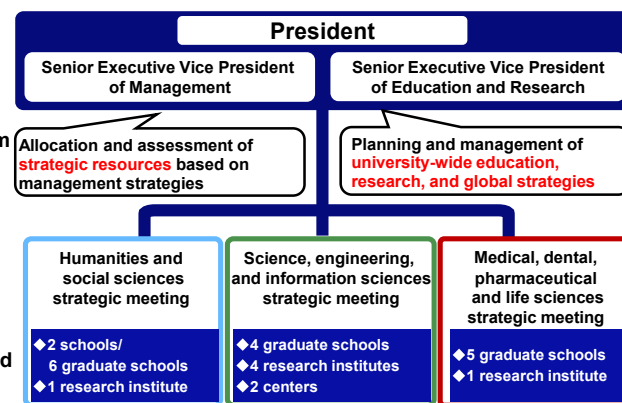
In FY2017, the second round of the university's general entrance examination was abolished, and a Comprehensive Selection & Admission by School Recommendation was implemented in all undergraduate schools to attract students who are eager to explore and solve problems on their own. The screening is based on a holistic evaluation of applicants' qualities, including their high school activities, academic performance, aptitude, motivation toward learning, and sense of purpose.

The number of applicants and that of successful applicants increased largely, by approximately 2.8 times and 2.4 times respectively, from the first year of the Comprehensive Selection & Admission by School Recommendation to FY2023. Follow-up surveys on the academic performance of students admitted through this system and those admitted by general entrance examinations show that in general students admitted by the former examination, rather than the latter, are highly motivated to learn and earn higher GPAs.

Enhancement of the management system through the adoption of the OU-style provost system and establishment of strategic meetings

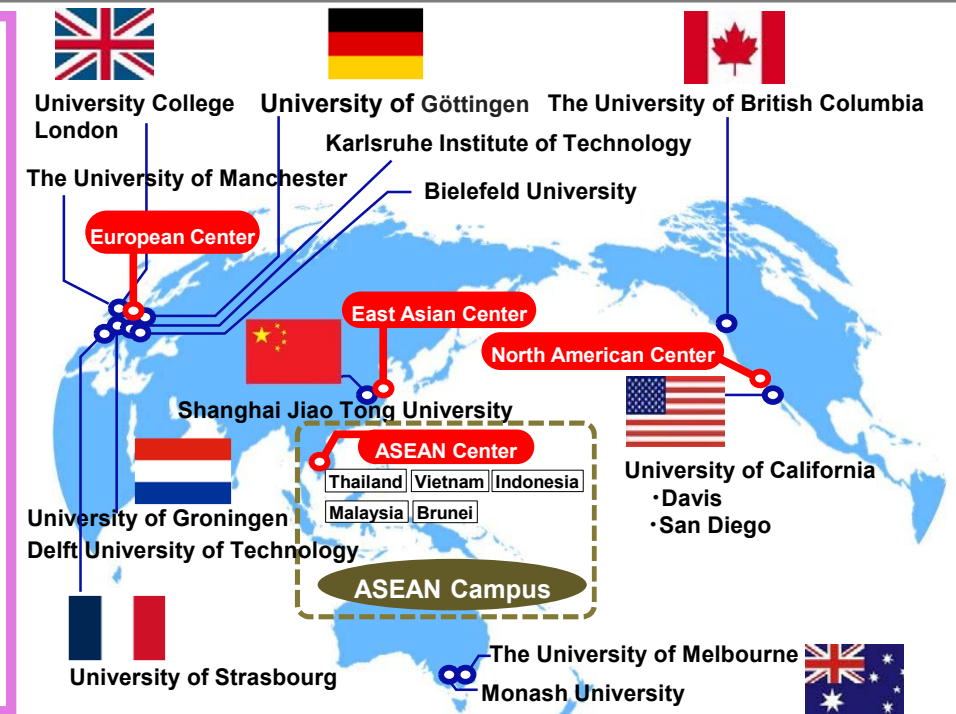
Osaka University appointed a Senior Executive Vice President of Management and a Senior Executive Vice President of Education and Research under the university's provost system. By combining this system with strategic meetings established to formulate strategies to optimize university-wide management, including personnel, education, and research; the university has created a governance structure that enables rapid, optimal decision-making with an emphasis on communication between the executive board and each department.

Under this structure, the university has been striving to strengthen research performance and promote research reform in each field, while developing new programs for graduate schools and reorganizing and reforming its education and research structures. These efforts have yielded significant results, including the approval to reorganize two graduate schools into the Graduate School of Humanities, established in FY2022.



Expansion of Global Knowledge Partners

Since FY2018, Osaka University has signed strategic partnership agreements with leading overseas universities, our "Global Knowledge Partners (GKP)," to work together to achieve the clear, shared objective of contributing to the solution of social issues. In organizational collaboration with these partner universities, Osaka University is promoting world-class cutting-edge research by setting up interdisciplinary joint research projects to tackle global social issues, such as the SDGs, and carrying out joint educational programs to develop globally competent, skilled individuals. In April 2021, the university hosted the Osaka University Partner Summit, an international symposium commemorating the 90th anniversary of Osaka University and the 100th anniversary of Osaka University of Foreign Studies, in which the leaders of the participating institutions, including GKP institutions, and Osaka University's president signed a joint statement confirming their commitment to strengthen and deepen cooperation.



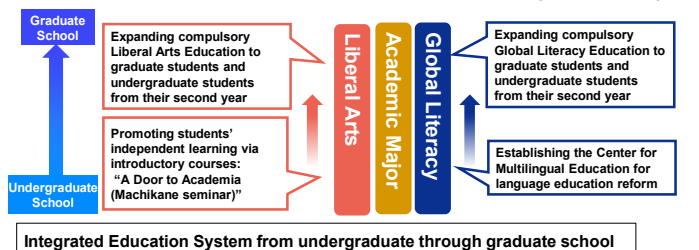
2018

2019

Establishment of the Center for Multilingual Education

To enhance students' ability to use English, the university revised its English education curriculum and introduced two new courses in FY2019: the Practical English course to improve basic English-language proficiency using an e-learning system combined with the TOEFL ITP test, and the Integrated English course for the comprehensive development of diverse English-language skills through active learning. The university has also continued to develop and improve English teaching materials tailored to the study of science and engineering and built a foundation to strengthen the English education system for third- and fourth-year undergraduate and graduate students in FY2019. The university opened the OU Multilingual Plaza in FY2020 to expand its initiative for multilingual education and support students' self-directed study of English, Japanese, and other languages. Additionally, to promote the diversification and ensure the sustainability of language learning, second foreign language courses have been offered as part of Advanced Global Literacy Education since FY2021.

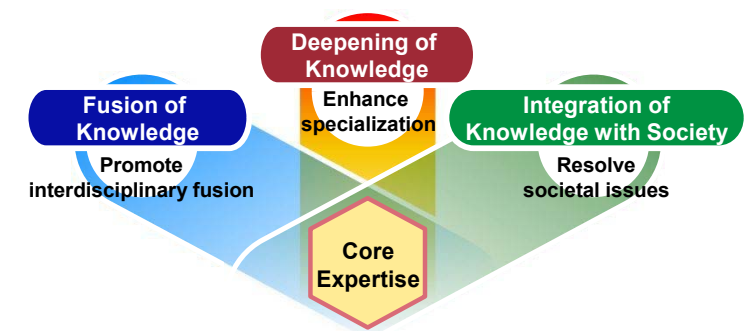
Curriculum Reform conducted since 2019 (Overview)



Implementation of university-wide curriculum reform

In order to foster innovative individuals, the university established an integrated education system that applies to all stages of study from enrollment to the completion of graduate studies, focusing on three pillars: Liberal Arts, Academic Major, and Global Literacy. Previously, Liberal Arts subjects and foreign languages were mostly studied during the first undergraduate year. Now, however, Advanced Liberal Arts and Advanced Global Literacy subjects are required beginning from the second half of the second undergraduate year and throughout graduate studies. This reform enables students to study these specialized subjects alongside their Academic Major, helping them develop multifaceted and comprehensive perspectives.

Double-Wing Academic Architecture (DWAA)(FY2020-)



Establishment of the i-TGP for new degree programs and the Double-Wing Academic Architecture

The Institute for Transdisciplinary Graduate Degree Programs (i-TGP) was established to enhance and reform the university's graduate school education and nurture doctoral professionals capable of generating social innovations across a wide range of fields not limited to academia. The President of Osaka University serves as Executive Director of i-TGP. Under this initiative, the university is actively engaging in PR activities for the university-wide promotion of the principles of the Double-Wing Academic Architecture (DWAA), a graduate education system geared toward interdisciplinary and social collaboration, while working to improve its diverse interdisciplinary educational programs. The university reorganized i-TGP by setting up the Office for Next Generation Researcher Development Project in October 2021 and the Transdisciplinary Education Division in April 2022.

Start of Global Village Operations

Osaka University opened two dormitories accommodating both Japanese and international students: Global Village Tsukumodai (396 residential units) in October 2020 and Global Village Minoh Samba (320 residential units) in April 2021. By providing a mixed living environment, these dormitories enable Japanese and international students to learn about their different cultures and embrace diversity, creating a foundation that will help them thrive in a global society.



Global Village Tsukumodai



OU Global Campus (Minoh Campus)

Upgrade to the Admissions Assistance Desk

In November 2021, the Ryumon admissions support system was developed into the Admissions Assistance Desk (AAD) by expanding the target applicants from individuals who graduated from universities in mainland China to individuals who graduated from overseas universities. By providing a single point to submit documents and centralizing the acceptance of documents from overseas study abroad candidates, AAD has clarified and streamlined the process, improving the trust placed in the university by international applicants. Additionally, by conducting the initial screening of application documents and sharing information with Academic Staff and graduate schools, AAD significantly reduces the burden on Academic Staff while also playing an important role regarding security export controls. The number of applicants using AAD has been increasing yearly, greatly helping Osaka University attract outstanding international students to all its graduate schools.

Launch of the Virtual University Tour

In September 2021, the Japan Forum for Internationalization of Universities (JFIU) was established to create an environment to share diverse achievements and strengthen cooperation across internationalization-oriented universities, including universities selected for the TGU project. Under the Virtual Tour for Prospective International Students from Diverse Cultures and Languages Project, adopted as part of the JFIU initiatives, Osaka University, in cooperation with other universities around Japan, hosted workshops to share know-how on attracting international students and briefing sessions to introduce the benefits of studying in Japan and the features of respective Japanese universities, as part of the nationwide effort to increase the number of international students in Japan. These workshops were attended by 399 people from 144 universities and 13 organizations, while the briefing sessions were attended by 9,753 people from 62 universities and one organization, effectively promoting Japan as an attractive overseas study destination.

Opening of the OU Global Campus (Minoh Campus)

The Minoh Campus was relocated and opened as a hub of research and education for world languages, including Japanese, and the diverse cultures and societies rooted in those languages.

Reorganization of the Center for Global Initiatives

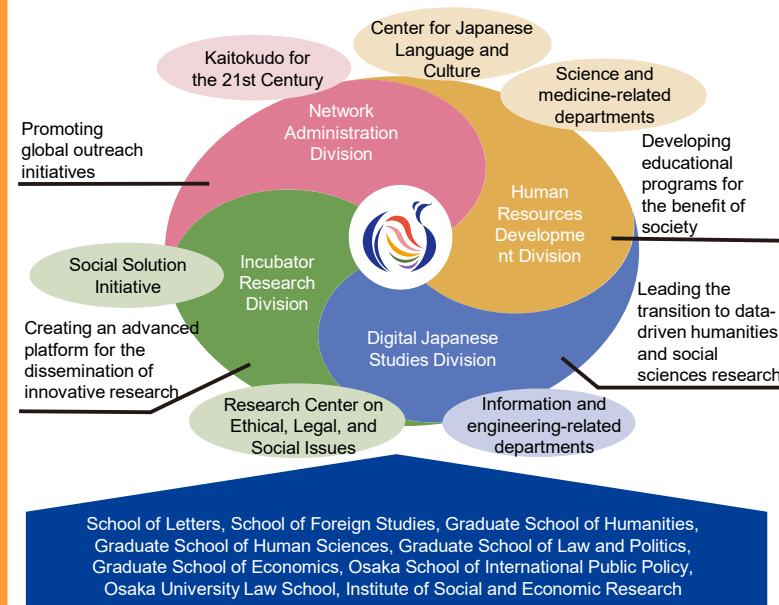
In close collaboration with internal organizations related to global engagement, the Center for Global Initiatives was reorganized in 2021 to serve as the university's central hub for developing plans for international educational and research collaboration and promoting university-wide global engagement initiatives.

2020

2021

Establishment of the Global Japanese Studies Education and Research Incubator

The Global Japanese Studies Education and Research Incubator was established in December 2020 to build a new platform integrating the humanities and social sciences for interdisciplinary, international, and society-university collaborative education and research. The university has since been taking the initiative to host international symposiums and workshops in a bilingual Japanese-English format in cooperation with domestic and international researchers and institutions. In 2023, after COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, the university organized a joint workshop in Osaka in cooperation with academic staff and students from the Asia Institute of the University of Melbourne, and a joint symposium in Seoul with the Institute for Japanese Studies of Seoul National University and the Institute of Japanese Studies of Dongguk University, in addition to regular international symposiums, strengthening cooperation and building networks with overseas Japanese studies research institutions.



Global Japanese Studies Education and Research Incubator



Establishment of the Center for Diversity & Inclusion

The Center for Diversity & Inclusion was established on 1 April 2022 to implement projects and propose measures to promote diversity effectively and seamlessly. Based on the Osaka University Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Declaration, the Center is striving to create attractive working and learning environments where the abilities and individuality of all Osaka University members are celebrated, by taking over and expanding the role of its predecessor, the Center for Gender Equality Promotion, which had been in operation since April 2016. One of the goals of the Center is to increase the percentage of female researchers. To do so, the Center is committed not only to supporting female researchers to continue their careers and strike a work-life balance, but also to empowering them to enhance their roles.

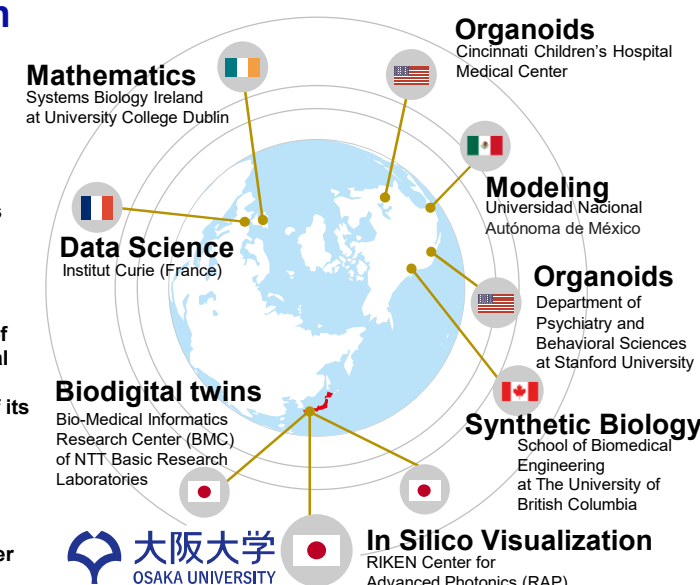
Establishment of the Osaka University Tuition Fee Exemption for International Honor Students

Osaka University is promoting initiatives to attract outstanding international students as part of its effort to increase student diversity and enhance research capacity. To facilitate such initiatives, the university launched the Osaka University Tuition Fee Exemption for International Honor Students for students enrolling from FY2024 onward, separately from the existing Enrollment/Tuition Fee Exemption Program for students with financial difficulties. Osaka University expects that the strategic use of this system will attract graduate school applicants and increase the number of international students with higher academic standings, fostering friendly competition and knowledge exchange with Japanese students.



Premium Research Institute for Human Metaverse Medicine selected for the World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI)

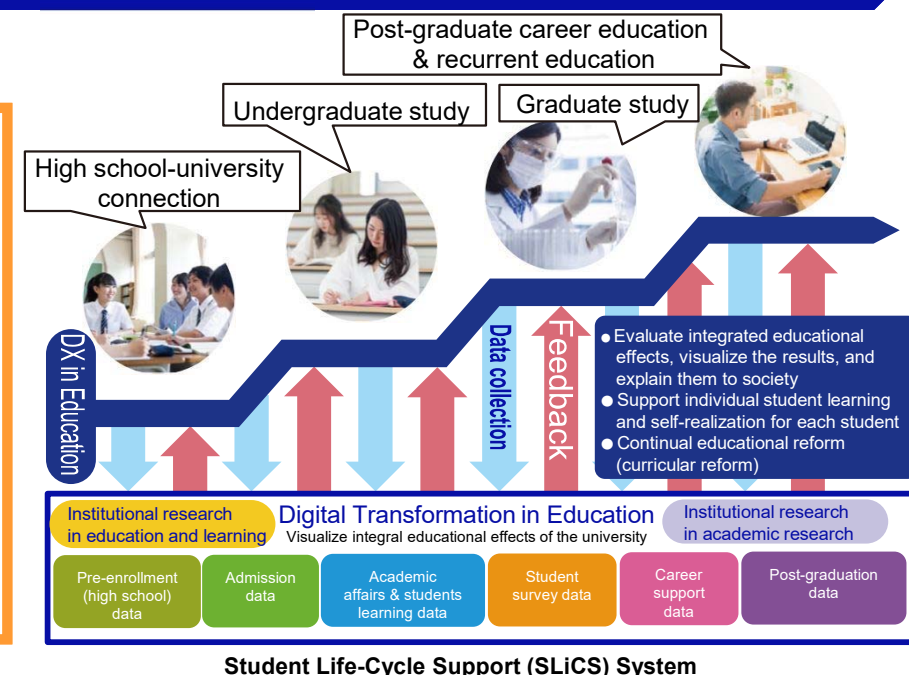
To create new scientific fields and promote research in these fields, the Institute for Open and Transdisciplinary Research Initiatives (OTRI) was established in 2017 and has since been conducting pioneering interdisciplinary research across organizational borders. Under the Integrated Frontier Research for Medical Science Division, a field of special importance for OTRI, the university established the Premium Research Institute for Human Metaverse Medicine (PRIME) as a center of interdisciplinary research integrating human organoid-based biomedical science, information and mathematical sciences; quantum science, humanities and social sciences; and clinical medicine. In recognition of its track record of achieving outstanding research outcomes, PRIME was selected for the World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI) Program in FY2022. With PRIME having established overseas satellites and being in cooperation with four overseas research institutions, it is exploring research internationally. This distinguished international research center is one of the results of the initiatives taken by the university under the TGU project.



2022

Establishment of the Center for Student Success Research and Practice

In April 2022, the university opened the Center for Student Success Research and Practice to promote student-centered education that makes the most of digital technology and enhance the effectiveness of quality assurance in education. The Center enables the university to provide data-based personalized and optimal academic and student support from pre-enrollment through to graduation/completion. By analyzing data and information collected by the Center, the university can visualize medium- and long-term educational outcomes during enrollment and even after graduation/completion.



Student Life-Cycle Support (SLICS) System

Opening of a collaboration hub in Silicon Valley to develop unicorn companies

OSAKA University Venture Capital Co., Ltd. (OUVC) and the Co-Creation Bureau opened a joint collaboration hub in Silicon Valley in the U.S. to develop university-based startups and signed a partnership agreement with Berkeley SkyDeck, a global startup accelerator from the University of California, Berkeley. OUVC aims to produce globally active unicorn companies by reinforcing cooperation with local venture capital companies as well as stakeholders, such as investors, entrepreneurs, and Japanese networks, and encouraging Osaka University startups, researchers, and students to immerse themselves in the ecosystem of Silicon Valley.

Environment conducive to the growth of startups

“Startup ecosystem”



Laying the groundwork for Osaka University-based unicorn companies
Strategic use of Silicon Valley

2023

A World-Leading Innovative University
Creating a Society where Each Member
Leads a Meaningful and Fulfilling Life

Preparations underway for establishing the OU Human Resources Data Platform

One of Osaka University's digital transformation (OUDX) initiatives has been to begin developing the OU Human Resources Data Platform in 2023. By applying the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system commonly used in business to the university's environment, human resource data of Osaka University's community (i.e., prospective students, current students, alumni, faculty, etc.) can be centrally managed, analyzed, and visualized in various ways so that it may be effectively leveraged. The platform affords the capability to contribute to all aspects of education, research, and management and is expected to be particularly effective in the field of education as indicated below:

- draft optimized curricula by aggregating and analyzing students' academic progress
- measure the effect of educational programs by analyzing grades, class evaluations, and other metrics
- analyze students' behavioral patterns so that current challenges may be more accurately ascertained by tabulating academic progress, student surveys, and other data
- quickly respond to inquiries by providing a portal site for individual students and making use of FAQs as well as chatbots

