

Authority:

- Approved by the President
- OIST School Corporation Act

Chapter 1: WHO WE ARE: Founding and Governing Principles

1.1 FOUNDING OF THE OIST GRADUATE UNIVERSITY

The Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Promotion Corporation (OIST PC) was established on September 1, 2005, pursuant to the Independent Administrative Institution Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Promotion Corporation Act (Act No. 26 of 2005), in order to prepare the way for an international graduate university (the University) dedicated to science and technology. Following the successful establishment and operation of OIST PC, [the OIST School Corporation Act \(Act No. 76 of 2009\)](#) was enacted to provide the institutional basis for the University and to establish a framework for transitioning from a research institute to a fully functioning graduate university.

The express objectives of the OIST School Corporation (OIST SC) are to conduct outstanding international research and education in science and technology, and by this means to:

- ~contribute to the sustainable development of Okinawa; and
- ~to advance science and technology in Japan and the rest of the world.

1.1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE OIST GRADUATE UNIVERSITY

The founding documents established five central concepts to guide the University:

Best in the World - Be a leading center for education and research, which requires a culture where creativity, uniqueness, and diversity are encouraged.

International – Aim that more than half of the faculty and students will be non-Japanese and that English, as the international language of science and technology, will be the University’s official language.

Flexible – Encourage innovation, creativity, and adaptability (academically and administratively), accommodate new initiatives, establish an interdisciplinary academic structure, and treat every student as a unique individual.

Global Networking – Increase research and education opportunities and enhance the visibility of the University through hosting, attending at and participating in international meetings, conferences, workshops, collaborations, and the like.

Collaboration with Industry – Recognize that the research outcomes generated by the University’s research in science and technology may be developed and applied by industry for the benefit of society in general as well as to facilitate sustainable development of Okinawa and the competitiveness of Japan.

1.1.2 SCHOOL CORPORATION & UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

In keeping with the mandate of the OIST School Corporation Act, OIST SC and the University present a unified management structure:

The ultimate authority and responsibility for the management and operation of the OIST SC is vested in its Board of Governors (BOG). The BOG selects a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for OIST SC, and the CEO also serves as the President of the University. The BOG entrusts the day-to-day management of the University to the President. Additionally, the BOG appoints the Senior Level Executive, who is also the Vice-CEO.

The President, in consultation with the BOG, establishes a management structure for the University, a structure which is to be an efficient and effective vehicle for operating a distinguished international graduate university and which will ensure transparency and accountability in its administrative and fiscal operations.

1.2 MISSION STATEMENT

The University shall conduct internationally outstanding education and research in science and technology, and thus contribute to the sustainable development of Okinawa, and promote and sustain the advancement of science and technology in Japan and throughout the world.

1.3 CORE VALUES

Integrity, honesty, fairness, respect for others, and dedication to the OIST mission are the values that inform the activities and behaviors of individuals working for, or asserting an affiliation with, the University. The University promotes diversity and provides equal opportunities for all community members without regard for gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, medical condition, race, ethnicity, ancestry, culture, national origin, religion, or marital status.

In addition, the University operates within the principles established by the following policies:

1.3.1 OPENNESS IN RESEARCH

The University's central functions of teaching, learning, researching, and publishing depend upon an atmosphere in which freedom of inquiry, thought, expression, scholarship and peaceable assembly are given full protection and support. Therefore, it is the University policy that expression of the widest range of viewpoints is to be encouraged within the University.

In order to support the open and free exchange of ideas, the University as a matter of policy also encourages participation in the research enterprise by a diverse body of highly qualified individuals. Except in extraordinary circumstances as determined by the [President](#), participation in University research by otherwise qualified individuals will not be limited by citizenship, nationality, or ethnicity. Similarly,

participants in the University research shall not be denied access - based on citizenship, nationality, or ethnicity - to the intellectually significant portions of their research.

Additionally, because the University's research is intended for dissemination within the interested scientific community and throughout the world, only time-limited publication and disclosure restrictions based on contractual and/or legal obligations, such as those required for purposes of peer review and patentability review, may be imposed on the research.

1.3.2 RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE

OIST Graduate University Respectful Workplace Policy

The University is committed to providing a work environment that promotes education, research, and productivity through working relationships based on respectful communication. This commitment calls for a workplace where the following core values are upheld:

1. Everyone at OIST without exception has an important contribution to make toward the overall success of the University's mission.
2. This mission will be carried out in an atmosphere where all employees, in all types of jobs, value each other and treat each other with respect. Communication between employees should be polite at all times. This will be true even in situations of high pressure and urgency.
3. Diversity among employees is celebrated at OIST and employees must at all times exercise tolerance and respect for gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, medical condition, race, ethnicity, ancestry, culture, national origin, religion, or marital status. Special consideration should be given to [those employees with physical or mental impairment](#).
4. Managers, supervisors and others in positions of authority should consider themselves as role models in the promotion of these core values, without in any way abdicating their responsibility to direct their employees to perform work effectively.
5. In the same spirit, employees, irrespective of their job title, are encouraged to discuss issues of concern without fear that those discussions will result in negative treatment or punitive consequences from any other employee of the University.
6. To promote mutual understanding and avoid unnecessary conflicts, an atmosphere where native English speakers are considerate of non-native speakers, and vice versa, is expected so that no language-related barrier restricts employees from participating in discussions or in asking questions.
7. In response to staff input, the University will make reasonable changes to improve the work environment and productivity at OIST.
8. Intimate relationships between students and faculty (or those involved in the academic supervision of students), supervisors and subordinates, or with outside vendors or related parties should be avoided, as they may lead to harassing behavior or conflicts of interest and may adversely affect the working or studying environment. If such a relationship exists, it must be reported to a supervisor and the Vice President for Human Resource, and measures will be taken to prevent harassment and conflicts of interest as necessary. Any such report will be treated strictly confidentially.

9. We will take disciplinary action against those who engage in disrespectful communication, discrimination, harassment, bullying, or [sexual violence](#) depending upon the nature and severity of the act and the seriousness of the consequences in accordance with our [Rules on Disciplines, etc. for Employees](#).

1.3.3 COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS

The University's PhD program is at the heart of the University, and its participants are selected from the very best science and technology graduate students in the world. The University is committed to their success, both while in the thesis program and beyond.

During their graduate training at the University, each student will work closely with world-class faculty pursuing unique, highly individualized programs of study in modern well-equipped laboratories. The University's international composition and interdisciplinary approach has been expressly designed to spark exploration, creativity, discussion and innovation, in order to assure that our students will advance the cutting edge of research in science and technology. By providing excellent conditions for thesis research (including good practical support for living and thriving in Okinawa), the University advances the goals of its students and encourages them to become tomorrow's leaders.

1.4 University Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct (Code) is a statement of our shared and mutual commitment to upholding ethical, professional and legal standards in conducting our lives and making decisions within the University community. The University values integrity, honesty, fairness, diversity, respect for others, and equality of opportunity; it strives to assure that no activity of the University undermines fundamental principles of human dignity. OIST does not discriminate on the basis of gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, medical condition, race, ethnicity, ancestry, culture, national origin, religion, or marital status. The [OIST Gender Code of Conduct](#) further emphasizes the core principles of equality for all individuals regardless of their gender, gender identity, or gender expression.

As members of the University community, all faculty, staff, students, the University officers, members of the Board of Governors, and all the University affiliates and volunteers are responsible for maintaining and demonstrating these values and for observing the ethical standards of both the University and the broader community in which it operates. The values contained in this Code of Conduct must be integral elements of the University's educational, research and business practices. Each of us also must be cognizant of, and comply with, the relevant external policies, standards, laws and regulations that pertain to our activities.

1.4.1 APPLICABILITY

The University's Code applies to the following members of the University community:

- ~ Those who are paid by the University when they are working for the University, including faculty, staff, researchers and students;
- ~ Those doing business with the University, such as consultants, vendors, and contractors;
- ~ Those who perform services for the University as volunteers; and
- ~ Those who assert an association with the University (such as alumni).

1.4.2 BUSINESS TRANSACTIONS & OTHER ACTIVITIES

Members of the community must transact the University business in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the University policies, rules, and procedures. Business transactions and other activities within the University may not always be subject to specific laws, regulations, or codes of ethics. In these instances, our core values will govern. The fact that a particular business or other practice is common, customary, or expedient will not justify its use at the University if that practice conflicts with the core values of the University or any other requirements of the Code.

1.4.3 PROTECTION OF INFORMATION

Community members receive and generate on behalf of the University various types of confidential, proprietary, and private information. It is imperative that each member of the University community understands and complies with Japanese law concerning access to and disclosure of various types of information. In addition, each member of the University community must comply with disclosure/nondisclosure agreements with third parties, and with the University policies, rules and procedures pertaining to [the use, protection](#) and [disclosure](#) of such information. Be aware that, in some cases, these rules and procedures may continue to apply even after a person's relationship with the University has ended.

1.4.4 CONFLICT OF INTEREST/CONFLICT OF COMMITMENT

Members of the University community who serve as faculty or staff owe their primary professional allegiance to the University and its mission. Outside professional activities, private financial interests, or the receipt of benefits from third parties can cause an actual or perceived divergence between an individual's private interests and the duty of allegiance to the University.

In addition, due to its small size, its structure without departments, and its tradition of facilitating partners' employment solutions, we must be extremely careful to ensure that relatives' relationships do not result in a lack of fairness in judgments and decisions related to university administration by managing the relevant conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived. Executives, Faculty and staff who have another Executive, Faculty, staff or student of the University as a relative are expected to give due consideration to ensure that their own conduct does not undermine the fairness and neutrality of the university administration when participating in judgments and decisions related to university management or when participating in internal committees. However, this does not in itself preclude those who are in relatives' relationships from pursuing their own career paths.

To help prevent such potential conflicts of interest or commitment (including the appearance of a conflict) from arising, the University puts in place a framework to manage such Conflicts of Interest/Commitment. This framework aims to relieve members of the University community of the concern that they may be falling into conflicts of interest by indicating whether there are any concerns about the COI and, if there are, what measures will be taken to manage them. Executives, Faculty and staff who have another professional or financial interest or who have their relative in the University Executive, Faculty, staff or student position shall disclose them in accordance with the applicable policies and procedures set out in the Corporation's Rules for Conflicts of Interest Management, which constitutes part of Policies, Rules and Procedures Library at Chapter 22, [Avoiding Conflicts of Interest & Security Export Control](#).