

Concrete Measures for the Improvement of a Working Environment for Women Scientists (Proposal)

June 8, 2000

The members of the 17th Term urge the government, universities and research institutions, including national, public, and private:

- 1) To annually survey the sex ratios of teachers, researchers and managerial staffs at universities and research institutions, release the results and analyze the trends and changes, and particularly universities should carry out similar surveys for applicants for entrance examinations, first-year students, graduating students, and degree holders and their career path after graduation and report the result together with the analysis.
- 2) To set up a budget for specified purposes, such as the “Research and education project to promote gender equal participation in the field of science,” under the categories of research for the governmental institutions (including the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research by the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports, and Culture) or specific research costs for various research institutions.
- 3) To increase childcare aids for researchers, for example, by subsidizing childcare expenses, opening temporary daycare rooms during conferences and other meetings, establishing daycare centers at universities and national, public, and private research institutions and providing subsidies to facilitate the employment of babysitters and caregivers; and to create new programs which make it possible for researchers to continue their research activities, by allowing those researchers on childcare leave to temporarily work at home, subsidizing the cost to support housework, and providing scholarships to help them resume research activities after childcare leave.
- 4) To improve the method of recruitment and promotion. First, in filling in vacancies for educational and research posts, efforts should be made to

nominate women researchers appropriately, considering the changes in the sex ratios of graduate students and degree holders in the concerned fields. Special considerations are needed, especially in those fields with an exceptionally low percentage of women researchers. Second, the promotion of women researchers to professorship or managerial posts should be accelerated, for example, by appointing women members to join personnel selection committees.

- 5) To organize various mechanisms to prevent sexual harassment by implementing ethical codes and penal regulations and establishing counseling rooms, helplines, and investigating committees; and to report the actual condition.
- 6) To revise the qualifications for the application for the Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research by the Ministry of Education, Science, Sports, and Culture. The present regulation where only full-time researchers at universities, etc. are eligible is disadvantageous to women researchers. As such, measures are needed to allow part-time lecturers and others to apply.
- 7) In selecting the board, editorial, and reviewing committee members, academic associations should respect the sex ratios of the members. Those associations still marked by a low number of women members should make conscious efforts so that more women members would be appointed to be board members. Women members should be encouraged to be given more opportunities to participate in overseas training programs and international conferences, make presentations at annual meetings, and publish their papers in journals.
- 8) To allow researchers to use whatever names they prefer, including maiden names and pseudonyms both in public and private.