

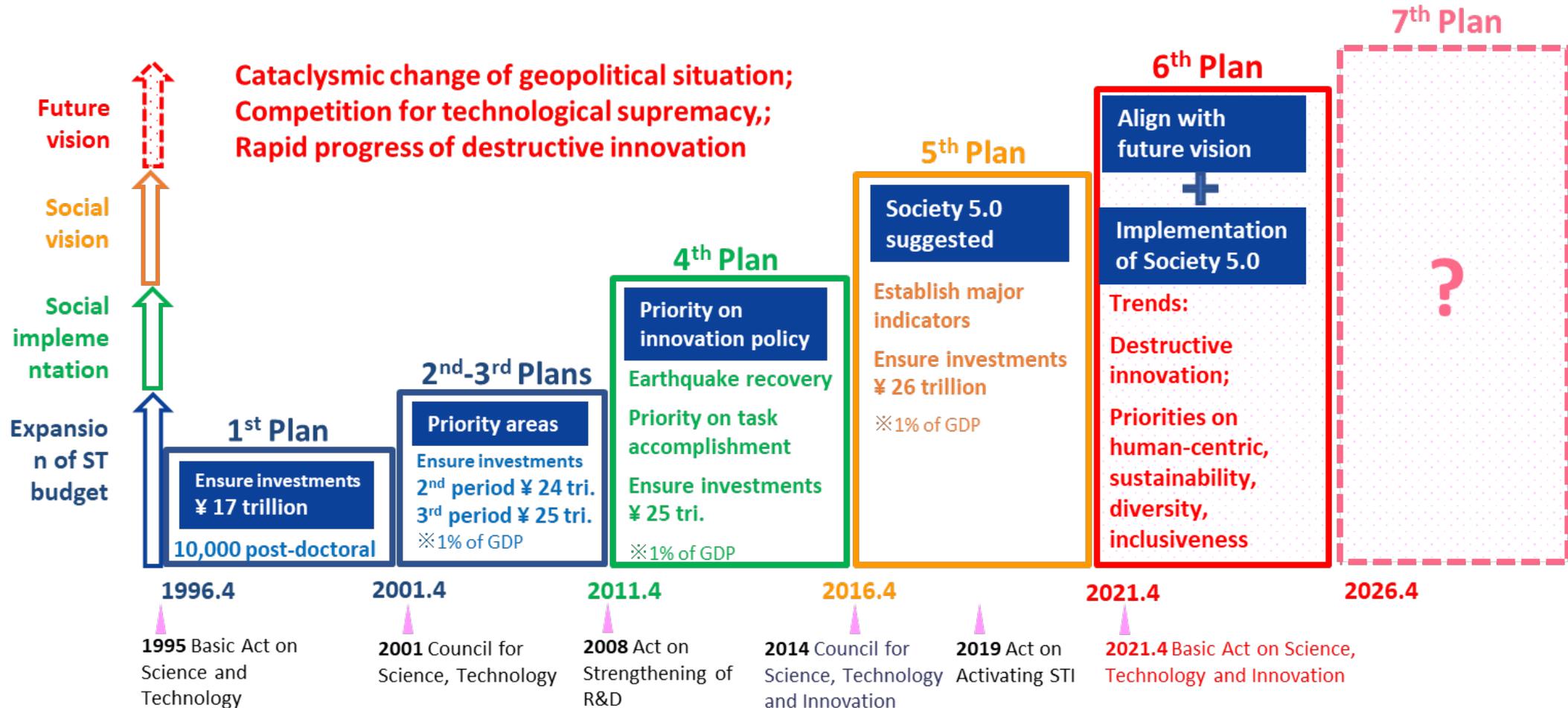
# **Strengthening Research Capacity and Promoting Brain Circulation with a Focus on Early-Career Researchers**

**SAKASHITA Suzuka**

**Deputy Director General, Research Promotion Bureau,  
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology**

# Transition of Japan's Science, Technology and Innovation Policy

- Formulation of the Science and Technology Basic Plan every 5 years based on the Basic Act on Science and Technology (Advisory to the Prime Minister)
- **Social implementation** prioritised in the 4<sup>th</sup> Plan; **Society 5.0** proposed in the 5<sup>th</sup> Plan
- The current 6<sup>th</sup> plan is the 1<sup>st</sup> **Science, Technology and Innovation Basic Plan** based on the revised Basic Act on Science, Technology and Innovation



# In 2025, two Japanese researchers won the Nobel Prize.

## **【Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2025】**

**Prize motivation: “for their discoveries concerning peripheral immune tolerance”**

**Shimon Sakaguchi**

Affiliation at the time of the award: The University of Osaka, Osaka, Japan



## **【Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2025】**

**Prize motivation: “for the development of metal–organic frameworks”**

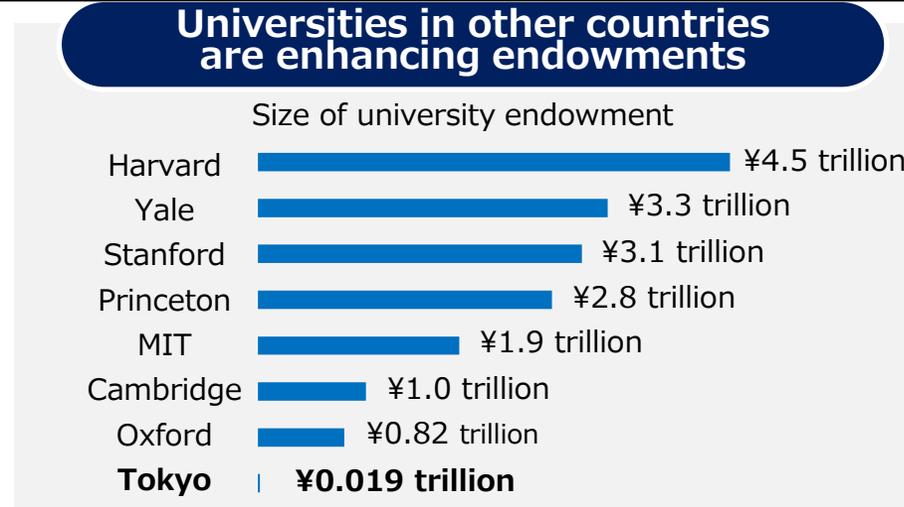
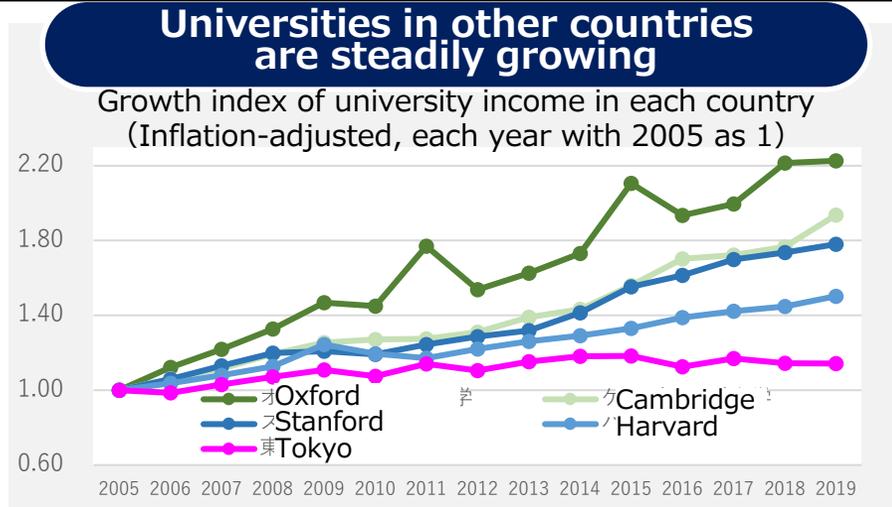
**Susumu Kitagawa**

Affiliation at the time of the award: Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan

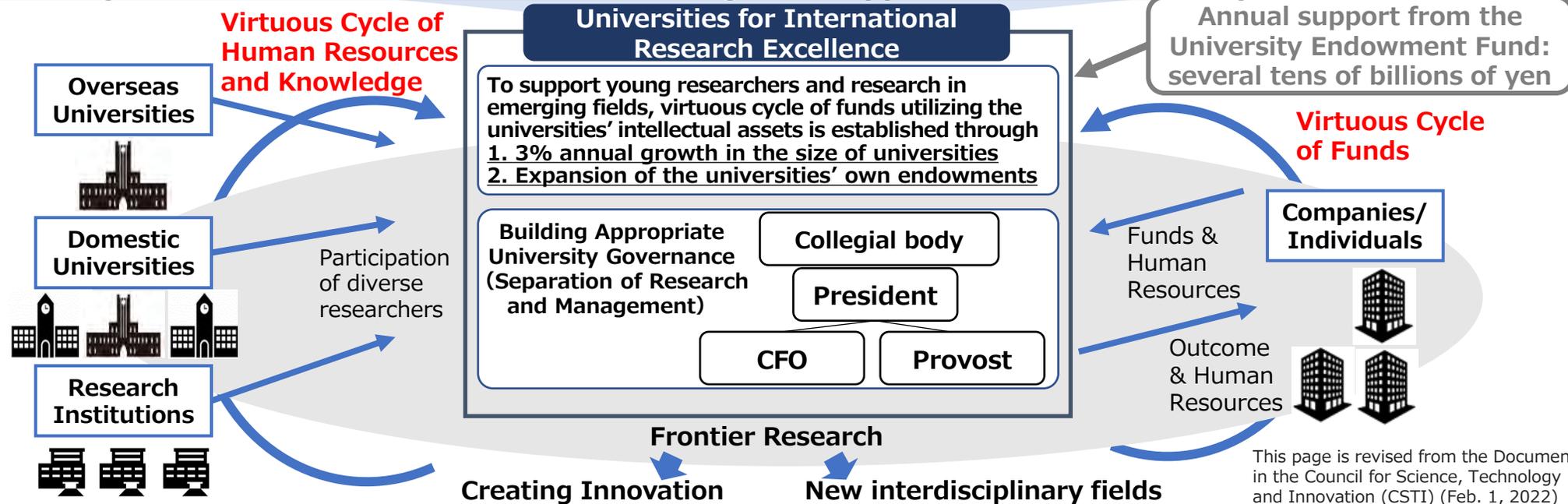


# University Endowment Fund - Policy Background -

- **The establishment of the 10-trillion-yen University Endowment Fund** will support young researchers, strengthen research infrastructure in emerging fields, and promote university reform.



## Realizing world-class research universities through the support from the University Endowment Fund



# Universities for International Research Excellence

Future vision of universities in Japan through the support from the University Endowment Fund

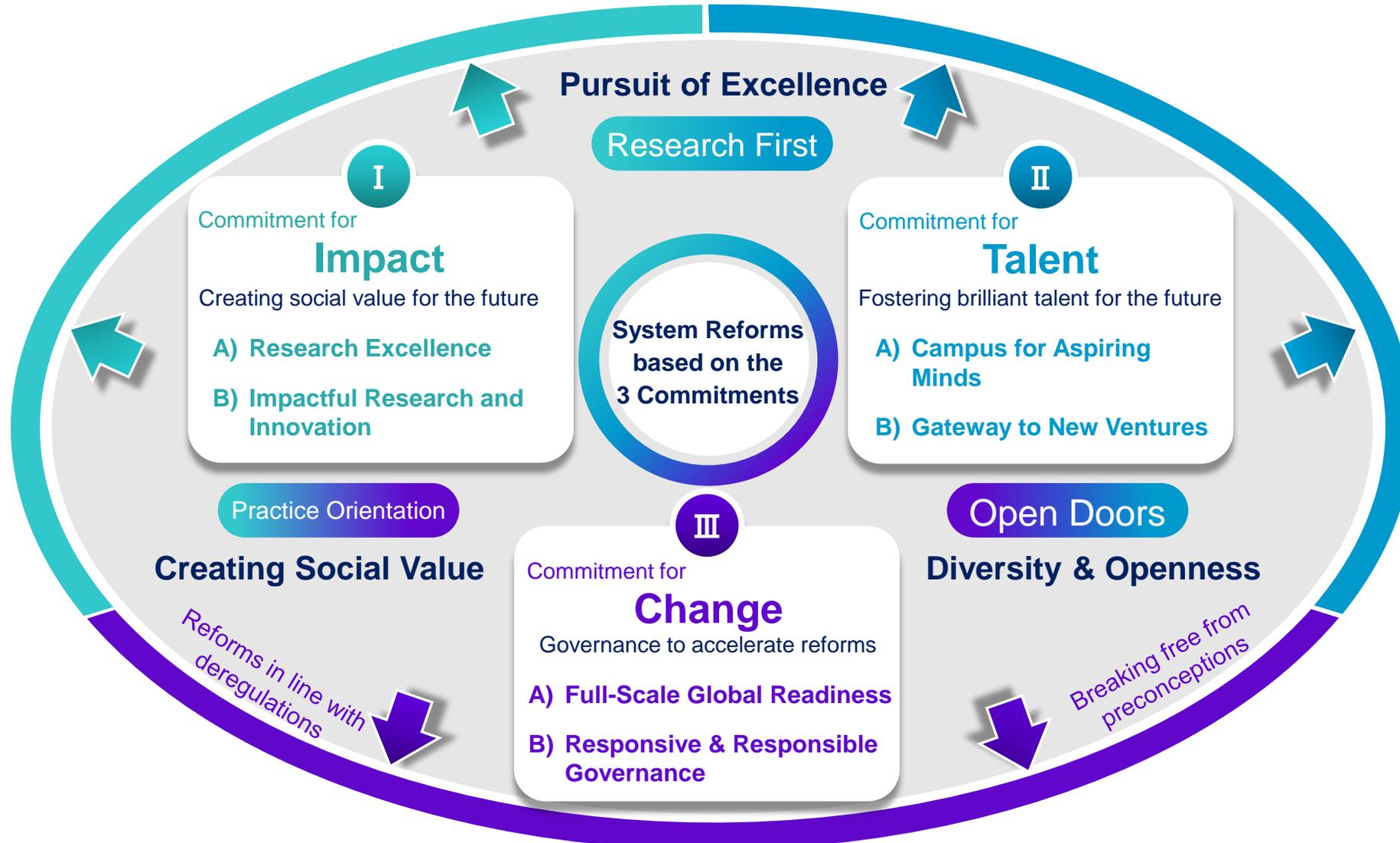
- ❑ World-class research environment (compensation, research facilities, support system, etc.) brings the world's top-class human resources
- ❑ World-standard education and research environment with collaboration with top overseas universities, using English and Japanese as common languages
- ❑ Ph.D. students are exempt from tuition fees and receive a living allowance, allowing them to pursue their doctoral degrees while researching to their full satisfaction





# Overview of the Strengthening Plan

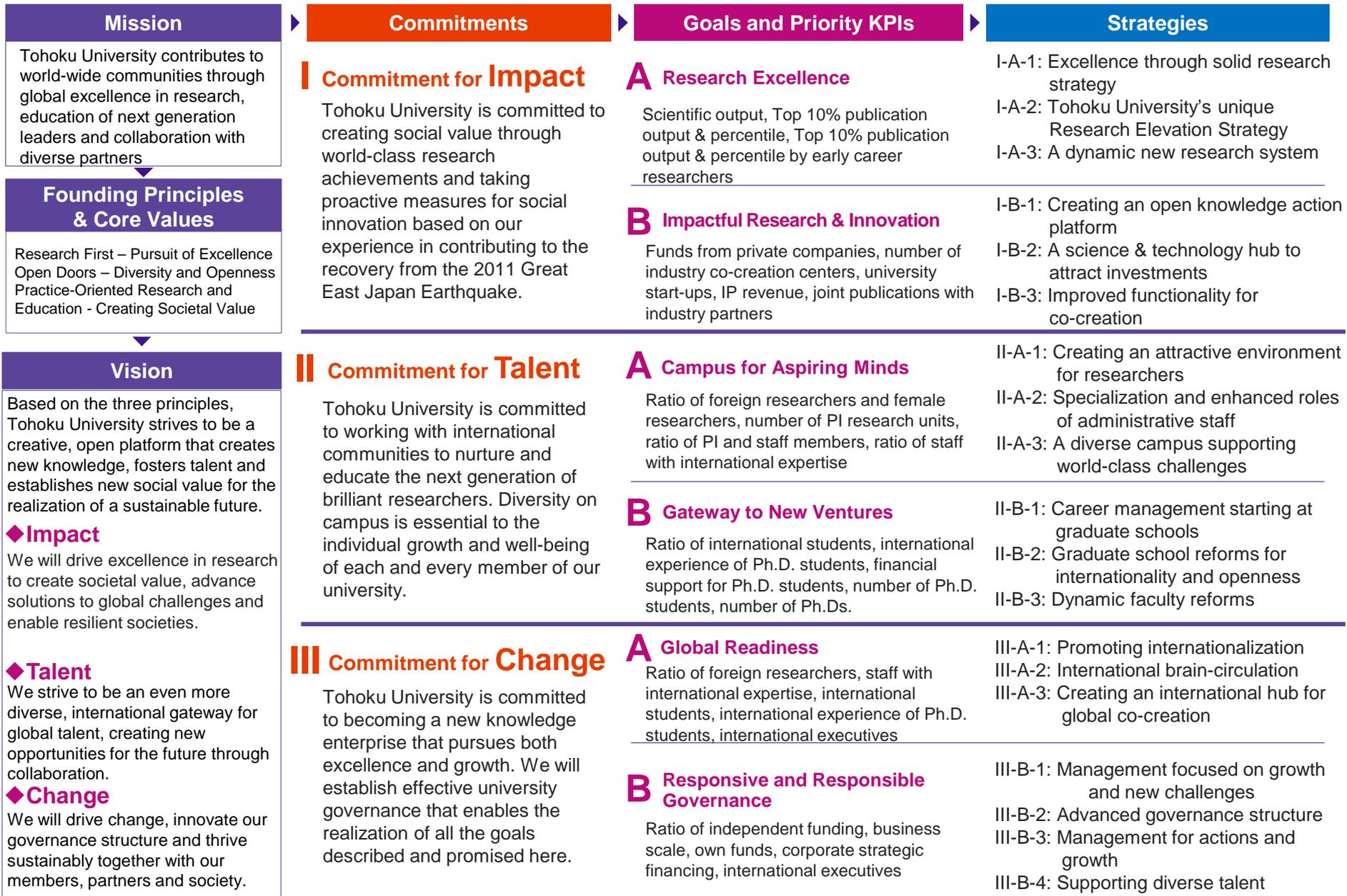
Contributing to Communities at Home & Abroad  
Knowledge, Talent & Social Value Based on the Three Founding Principles



Expanding Functionality as New Open Knowledge Action Platform



# Commitments → Goals → Strategies

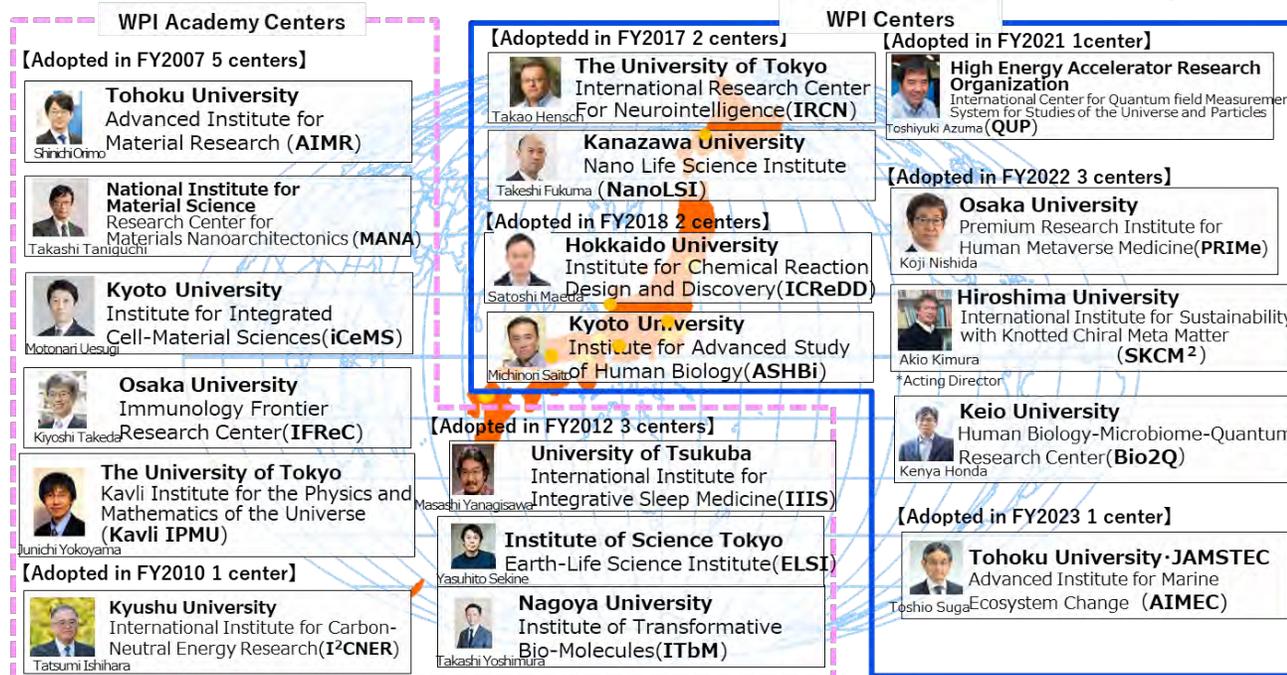


- ◆ Long-term, intensive support for WPI centers aiming to become **“research hubs for international brain circulation”** (Total ¥7 billion per center for 10 years)
  - ◆ Establishment of “bottom-up” basic science research centers
  - ◆ International research center with world-class research standards
- [Key Requirements]**

- ✓ **7-10 or more Top level PIs**
- ✓ **30% or more researches from overseas, International open call for Postdocs, English-centric environment**
- ✓ **Research system reforms**, including merit-based salary system and top-down decision-making system

## [WPI centers] 18 centers

\*As of February 2026



## Achievements

- **The Nobel Prize**
  - Dr. Yamanaka** (iCeMS) (2012: Physiology or Medicine)
  - Dr. Kajita** (KIPMU) (2015: Physics)
  - Dr. List** (ICReDD) (2021: Chemistry)
  - Dr. Sakaguchi** (IFReC) (2025: Physiology or Medicine)
  - Dr. Kitagawa** (iCeMS) (2025: Chemistry)
- **Top 10% high level papers**
  - WPI avg. : approx. **20%**
  - (Japan avg. : approx. 8.5%)
- **International co-authored papers**
  - WPI avg. : approx. **50%**
  - (Japan avg. : approx. 30%)
- **International researches**
  - WPI avg. : approx. **40%**
  - (Japan avg. : approx. 8%)

- ◆ KAKENHI supports all types of curiosity-driven research (i.e. scientific research based on researcher’s creative ideas) from basic research to applied research, covering all fields, from the humanities and social sciences to natural sciences.
- ◆ To strengthen Japan’s research capacity, we promote challenging research by young researchers beyond existing academic frameworks and support their participation in international research networks.

## Image of research categories in FY2025

