

Message from the President



It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2020 edition of *Kyoto University at a Glance*. My term as the 27th president of Kyoto University began on October 1, 2020. I hope that during my six-years as president I can successfully guide the university to yet further prominence in the international academic community, and that the university's unique and vibrant academic traditions will find new and creative ways to flourish as we continue into the 21st century.

Since its foundation in 1897, Kyoto University has cultivated a spirit of creativity and originality in its students and researchers through an institutional philosophy of academic freedom founded on frank and open dialogue. From its earliest days, the university has placed great importance on steadily increasing its international presence—expanding its partnerships and making a meaningful contribution to the international community.

Kyoto University's international exchange and collaboration is pursued through close partnerships with institutions overseas, student and researcher exchange programs, interdisciplinary research collaboration, and a multitude of other activities. The creative and groundbreaking accomplishments of the university's researchers continue to garner international recognition in the form of prestigious accolades, such as the Nobel Prize, Fields Medal, and other prestigious awards.

One unique feature of Kyoto University's syllabus is that it provides our undergraduate students with opportunities to experience innovative and advanced research right from their first-year of study—an approach rooted in the university's long-standing tradition of fostering a spirit of adventurous self-reliance and independence in its students, as well as stressing the importance of hands-on interaction and dialogue.

In 2017, Kyoto University was assigned by the Japanese government as one of the first Designated National Universities (DNU). DNU status has enabled the university to implement even more ambitious initiatives in the areas of university management, education, and research, and it positions Kyoto University at the forefront of a new era of international academic exchange and collaboration. In the field of industry-government-academia collaboration, the university has established a new "KyotoU Model," which includes four university subsidiary companies that make diverse use of the university's advanced knowledge "seeds" to further engage with and contribute to society.

At the time of writing this introduction, the global spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) remains a serious problem for all sectors of society, necessitating universities and other institutions to adapt to new modes of operation. As a national academic institution, Kyoto University has a duty to disseminate its scientific knowledge and ensure its effective utilization for the benefit of society. As we face new challenges, such as those posed by the novel coronavirus pandemic, we will continue to respond flexibly and creatively, making every effort to provide our students and researchers with the best possible environment in which to maximize their talents and abilities, and make a difference to society and the world at large. Our doors are always open to keen and creative students and researchers from around the world—I invite you to join us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Minato".

Nagahiro Minato
October 2020