

# Aichi University: Bridging Japan's Global Vision and Academic Excellence

Aichi University advances global education, emphasizing international partnerships and cultural immersion to address Japan's labor shortages and promote internationalization.

By Paul Mannion and Bernard Thompson



"We are committed to supporting foreign students in both academics and integration into society."

Yuki Hirose, President, Aichi University

As Japan faces a series of pressing societal challenges, particularly in labor shortages and globalization, universities play an increasingly vital role in addressing these issues. Aichi University, under the leadership of President Yuki Hirose, is a prime example of an institution that is not only responding to this but is also setting a benchmark in higher education by fostering internationalization and community engagement.

Founded on the principle of developing students with a global perspective, Aichi University has made significant strides in integrating internationalization into its core mission. "Our university was founded on the principle of developing students with a global viewpoint," says Hirose. "We are actively working to globalize our student population by accepting foreign students and providing adequate international education to Japanese students. However, this endeavor requires collaboration with companies and governments to be truly effective."

The Japanese government's initiative to attract 400,000 foreign students as a means of revitalizing the education system aligns closely with Aichi University's objectives. According to Hirose, the university is committed to supporting foreign students not only in their academic pursuits but also in their integration into Japanese society. "We strive to support foreign students when they seek employment in

Japan," he explains, emphasizing the university's role in ensuring that these students can contribute meaningfully to the Japanese workforce and society at large.

One of the standout features of Aichi University is its ability to offer foreign students a unique combination of academic excellence and cultural immersion. Its president highlights that: "Japan's education level is one of the best in the world, and this provides a significant advantage for students studying here. However, our weakest point might be our inability to disseminate this information in English effectively."



Aichi University is actively involved in its Sakura 21 Project, which promotes intercultural communication between Japanese and international students, aiming to bridge this gap and enhance the university's global outreach.

Aichi University's commitment to fostering global citizens is also



Nagoya campus

reflected in its robust exchange programs and international partnerships. "In order to globalize our students, it is very important for our university to send them overseas so that they may gain direct experience living abroad," says Hirose. The university's Faculty of Modern Chinese Studies, for example, offers on-site programs in China, Taiwan and Malaysia, allowing students to immerse themselves in Chinese culture and language. Such initiatives are designed not only to enhance students' academic knowledge but also to prepare them for the complexities of a globalized job market.

relationship with China is inseparable," notes Hirose, underscoring the university's ongoing commitment to fostering academic and cultural ties with China, despite current geopolitical tensions.

Looking forward, Aichi University aims to expand its global reach by exploring new partnerships in Western countries and in Southeast Asia. Hirose states: "We are thinking about possible partnerships in Italy or France," indicating the university's strategic vision for the future. "This expansion is part of a broader goal to diversify the university's international student body and strengthen its global presence."

As Aichi University approaches its 80th anniversary in 2026, Hirose envisions a future where the institution continues to thrive as a global university, contributing both to Japan's academic landscape and its society, and to the world. "When I complete my term as president, my aim is to leave the university in a stronger position with a promising future," he says. This includes not only advancing human resources but also broadening the university's focus to encompass more science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related fields.

The university's focus on internationalization extends beyond student exchanges. Aichi University has established strong ties with Chinese institutions, maintaining a historical connection. This relationship has been mutually beneficial, providing a wealth of opportunities for both students and faculty. "Our rela-



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# Meijo University: 100 Years of Innovation

**Meijo University celebrates its centennial with new programs, global outreach and a commitment to research excellence.** *By Cian O'Neill*

As Meijo University approaches its 100th anniversary in 2026, the institution reflects on its legacy of educational excellence and looks forward to an exciting future. Founded in 1926 by Juichi Tanaka, the university has grown into a comprehensive institution with 10 faculties, each dedicated to nurturing students who can contribute significantly to society.

"Reaching 100 years of history is a remarkable milestone," says Akihiro Ohara, president of Meijo University. "Our mission has always been to nurture human beings who can contribute to society by leading not only our country but the world."

In response to the evolving challenges of globalization and a projected shortage of 11 million workers by 2040, the Japanese government has set an ambitious goal of attracting 400,000 foreign students to Japan. Ohara emphasizes the pivotal role of higher education in addressing these challenges. "For domestic and overseas students, we provide the highest levels of education that will lead to them furthering their careers as leaders," he states.

As part of its centennial celebration, Meijo University is planning to establish a Graduate School of Information Engineering in 2026, building on its strong foundation in science and technology. This new graduate school will bolster the university's research capabilities and offer advanced training in information engineering, a field crucial for addressing contemporary global issues.

"We are introducing more methods to enhance our research environment," explains Ohara. "This will attract both domestic and international researchers, providing a cutting-edge research environment." Meijo University's commitment to research excellence is evident in its collaborative efforts with other leading institutions, such as its participation in the NanoTerasu next-generation synchrotron radiation facility coalition, which is fully backed by Tohoku University, and its focus on areas like LED development and disaster prevention.

The university's rich history of scientific achievement includes contributions from Nobel laureates and groundbreaking research projects like Profes-

"Our mission is to nurture human beings who can contribute to society."

**Akihiro Ohara,**  
President,  
Meijo University



sor Sumio Iijima's work on carbon nanotubes. This spirit of innovation continues to drive Meijo University's academic and research endeavors.

As Meijo University looks ahead to its next century, it aims to expand its global mission and showcase the unique attributes of the Chubu region. With its strategic location in the heart of Japan's industry and its rich cultural heritage, Meijo University is poised to continue its legacy of excellence and innovation.

With its robust academic programs, pioneering research and commitment to societal contribution, Meijo University is set to lead the way into the future, nurturing the next generation of global leaders.

# Tsuda University: Leading Women's Education

**Tsuda University empowers women to lead, innovate and excel in a dynamic global society.** *By Paul Mannion*



Kodaira campus, Tokyo



Sendagaya campus, Tokyo

Since its founding in 1900 by Umeko Tsuda, Tsuda University has pioneered women's higher education in Japan. The university is dedicated to fostering female leaders who make significant impacts domestically and internationally. Yuko Takahashi, the 11th university president, emphasizes: "The key is to increase female participation in top management roles." At Tsuda University, women hold many leadership positions, making it exceptional in Japan's largely male-dominated academic landscape.

Tsuda University emphasizes intercultural exchanges, partnering with 32 universities in 14 countries, enhancing students' cross-cultural communication skills and broadening their horizons. The university aims to attract more international students, particularly from

Southeast Asia, by introducing more English programs and support through a dedicated Center for International Exchange. This focus on global perspectives prepares students for an increasingly interconnected world.

Despite Japan's low ranking in the World Economic Forum's gender gap index, Tsuda University strives to challenge and change this status quo. The government plans to fill 30 percent of leadership positions in various fields with women by 2030, but it still has a long way to go. Tsuda University supports this goal through initiatives that empower women to take on leadership roles and change traditional perceptions. President Takahashi highlights that the visibility of women in leadership roles at the university serves as a powerful example

**Yuko Takahashi,**  
President,  
Tsuda University



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for both female and male students, showing that gender equity is achievable and beneficial.

Looking ahead, President Takahashi envisions Tsuda University continuing to be a catalyst for change. The Tsuda Vision 2030 aims to preserve the founding spirit of Umeko Tsuda while adapting to modern demands. One of the primary goals is to increase the international student headcount to over 100, fostering a diverse and inclusive academic environment. Additionally, the university plans to enhance its English language programs to reduce barriers for international students and to better prepare all students for global careers.

Through its strong leadership, global partnerships and commitment to gender equality, Tsuda University continues to lead the way in women's education in Japan. The institution's efforts contribute to individual student success and broader societal change, reflecting its foundational mission: empowering women to make a difference.

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