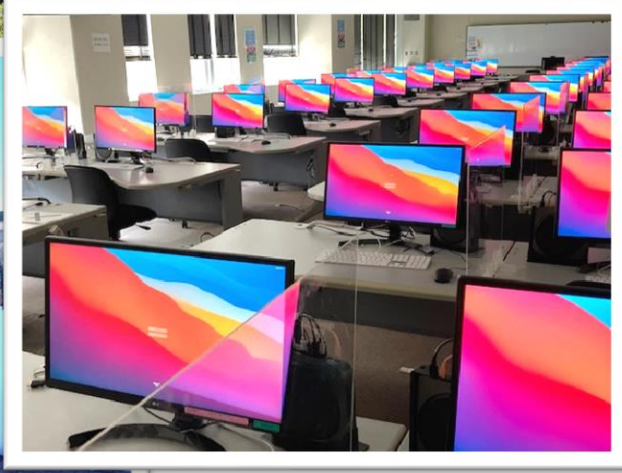
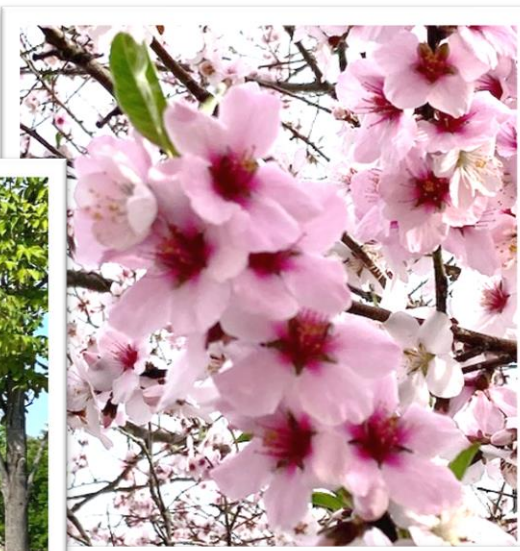




TOP GLOBAL
UNIVERSITY
JAPAN

From Aizu to the World From the World to Aizu

The University of Aizu's Top Global University Project Initiatives
[2020-2022 - Advancements of Global Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic]



The Public University Corporation
The University of Aizu

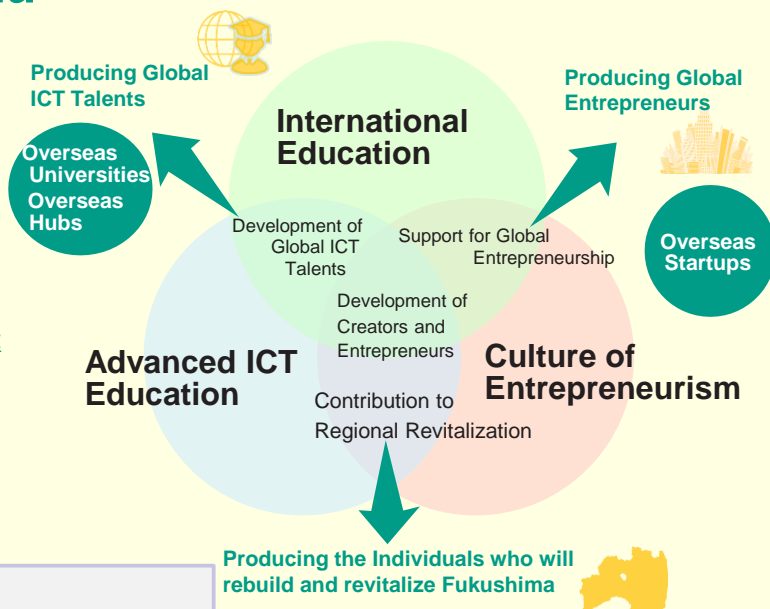
Goals of the University of Aizu

MEXT Super Global University Project (SGU Project)
(Type B - Global Traction Type) AY2014 - AY2023

We have been developing the following environment and systems with an aim to...

- (1) Develop and produce the individuals who will rebuild and revitalize Fukushima Prefecture.
- (2) Develop and produce individuals capable of playing active roles in global ICT companies, and
- (3) Develop and produce ICT talents who have a venture spirit and are active on the global stage with a venture spirit

...by leveraging the three distinctive characteristics of the University of Aizu, namely Advanced ICT Specialized Education, Education by and International Faculty, and Education that Fosters the Venture Spirit.



Development of Educational Programs

Honors Program



We established the Integrated Undergraduate-Master's Program, which encourages students to enter our graduate school where they can conduct research in an all-English environment. We also established the Unique Talent Discovery Program, which identifies and nurtures students with unique talents at an early juncture.

[Outcomes]

- ◆ Students are now able to shorten the length of their enrollment by one year, and use this time as a special leave of absence to engage in global activities.
- ◆ We established a system for supporting students' participation in international contests and events.

ICT Global All-English Program (ICTG Program)



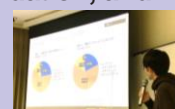
We established a program that allows students to graduate by taking only undergraduate courses taught in English. We also started a system that allows Japanese students to enroll in this course, allowing them to study in an English environment.

[Outcomes]

- ◆ 9.2% of undergraduates are enrolled in the program (as of October 2022), and the program's graduates are playing active roles domestically and abroad.
- ◆ Japanese language courses for international students are now credit-bearing.

Establishment of Courses for Technical Innovation, Entrepreneurship Foundation, and Overseas Training

Innovation and Start-up Education Program



We started a program for students to experience business management and virtual entrepreneurship. We also established a system to develop talents with experience learning entrepreneurship overseas.

[Outcomes]

- ◆ Students are now able to interact with entrepreneurs from around the world and start their own businesses with the support of a local foundation.

Overseas Study Program, Overseas Internship Program



For students interested in studying and researching abroad, we offer a variety of study abroad and internship programs to provide opportunities and support for overseas training.

[Outcomes]

- ◆ We increased our number of overseas partner universities, expanding study abroad opportunities for students.
- ◆ We established a system for students to participate in internships at companies in Silicon Valley and elsewhere.
- ◆ We established overseas offices (in the United States and China).

Creating an Environment for International Exchange

Global Lounge



We established the Global Lounge as a place where Japanese and international students can freely interact with each other.

Buddy Program



In the Buddy Program, international students and Japanese students form buddy pairs engage in exchanges that contribute to cross-cultural understanding and English language proficiency.

Aizu Geek Dojo (AGD)



The AGD is a new type of workshop equipped with 3D printers and laser cutters, as well as materials and tools for working with electronics. It also functions as a place for exchanges that will lead to business startups.

Partnerships with Companies and Organizations

- As part of supporting global entrepreneurship education, we established two endowed courses for undergraduate students with the support of a local foundation. In collaboration with the foundation, we are expanding the scope of entrepreneurial talent development.
- We have also received grants from several local companies, organizations, and publicly traded companies to help send students abroad. These grants have helped give many students the opportunity to learn about overseas business and start-up activities via three programs held in the United States, China, and Vietnam, respectively.

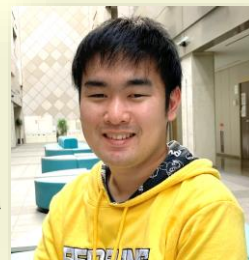
The Students Who Grew Through the University of Aizu SGU Programs

*Grade years are as of the time of the interview.

Honors Program

SASAKI Hiroto (Admitted April 2019 - 1st-year Master's Student)

It was my desire to go to graduate school from the time I was first admitted. I was certified as an Honors Program student during the second semester of my third year as an undergraduate. I finished my graduation thesis on a hectic schedule, because I shortened my undergraduate program by one year. At the graduate school, I am enjoying this environment where classes and research are conducted entirely in English and where life with many international students is the norm. In the summer of 2022, I did an internship at Alps Alpine Co. I was able to gain many different work experiences at the department I was assigned to. After careful preparation, I was able to give a satisfactory presentation at the post-internship report session. I would like to study computer science more broadly and deeply at the graduate school, and then contribute to Fukushima Prefecture and, if I can, to my home city.



ICT Global All-English Program (ICTG Program)

PANDA Dwitipriya (Admitted October 2021 - 2nd-year ICTG Program Undergraduate from India)

The UoA's flexible educational approach, broad curriculum, diversity and friendly atmosphere appealed to me greatly. Pursuing education here is an excellent opportunity for learning as well as overall personal growth. I am really enjoying my university life, which is a perfect blend of fruitful learning time and time for adventure and challenge.



KONNO Seikuro (Admitted April 2021 - 2nd-year ICTG Program Undergraduate)

I enrolled in the ICTG program in my second year. I was worried about my level of understanding of course content if I took classes in English, but I did my best to communicate with the international students and cooperated with them in solving assignments. Despite the difficulties, I noticed that by integrating English into my daily life, I was able to steadily improve my English skills. Experiencing living English also helped me to begin to clarify my abilities and reality, and to think more concretely about what I want to do.

Establishment of Courses for Technical Innovation, Entrepreneurship Foundation, and Overseas Training

[Innovation and Start-up Education Program (ISEP)]



FUSAKA Keigo (Admitted April 2019 - 4th-year Undergraduate)

Two things about ISEP left the biggest impression on me. The first was the lecture on self-analysis in the program's Basic Knowledge Course on Starting Up Ventures, which helped me deepen my self-understanding. The second was the Silicon Valley Internship Alternative Program, where I was able to experience making things using the latest AI tools for the first time. Looking back, my undergraduate years were busy but fulfilling. During job interviews, I was able to successfully leverage my experience to land a job offer from the company of my choice.

ISHIKAWA Tatsuya (Admitted April 2021- 2nd-year Undergraduate)

I believe that the ability to use information is a necessary for actively creating a better life, so I am most interested in expanding children's possibilities and options through information education. Since I am also considering starting my own business, I am currently participating in ISEP to expand my network of contacts and brush up my business ideas, in addition to taking the courses the program offers. I hope to start a tutoring business in FY2023. In preparation for this, I am creating teaching materials for the high school course Information I, teaching extracurricular Information and career education classes at high schools in the city, and holding events to convey the joy of information science.



[Overseas Internship Alternative Programs]



MORIYA Akari (Admitted April 2022 - 1st-year Undergraduate)

◆Vietnam Internship Alternative Program (Online)

I joined the program because I like English and wanted to be exposed to business English since I want to work using English in the future, and also because I wanted to improve my skills in computer skills, which is a subject I only started learning at university. At first I was a little worried that I would not be able to make it through the long four-week length of the program, but gaining marketing skills and completing the internship in English has given me confidence.

[Feedback from Her Mentor at the Host Company]

NGUYEN Cong Son Marketing Manager of OHI (Vietnam)

Akari Moriya showed us her research and information processing skills, and found a lot of helpful information to support her tasks. She was a hard-working student and always tried to improve herself. Also, she spoke English well and asked for explanations if needed. She was also punctual and completed her tasks efficiently. I thank her for her efforts during the internship, and I am happy to have seen her grow.



The University of Aizu's Global Education Initiatives During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Since AY2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted on the university's globalization initiatives. However, the pandemic also had the effect of demonstrating the many advantages of online education. Online education has allowed students to closely interact with overseas students, researchers, and business leaders, expanding their networks. It has also allowed them to flexibly enroll in classes at overseas universities. In this and other ways, it has increased the diversity of international exchanges.

Honors Program

[Progress]

In recent years, more and more students have entered our graduate school, where all courses are taught in English. This is thanks to two factors. The first is an increasing number of students becoming Honors Program candidates, which allows them to receive benefits such as early assignment to a laboratory in preparation for graduate school. The second is increased participation in the Integrated Undergraduate-Master's Program, which allows students to graduate early and enter graduate school. There are also students taking special leaves of absence of up to one year.

[Response to the Pandemic]

The COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for students to use special leaves of absence for purposes such as study abroad. However, with the gradual relaxation of travel and other restrictions starting around 2022, more and more students are using special leaves of absence to start their own businesses, study abroad, or participate in internships.



ICT Global All English Program (ICTG Program)

[Progress]

Awareness of the ICTG program on campus has increased, with 68% of trial class participants enrolling in the program, and an increasing number of students taking specialized courses in English.

Some ICTG program participants have gone on to work for global companies, where they have leveraged their language skills. Others have leveraged their global knowledge into playing active roles at local companies. Both have developed into international engineers in accordance with their own objectives.

[Response to the Pandemic]

While international student recruitment efforts were limited by the pandemic, we conducted recruitment in a flexible manner through tools such as online campus tours and educational counseling sessions. Global recognition of the ICTG program has increased since the pandemic began. As a result, the number of applicants in FY2022 increased by 70% over the previous fiscal year, and applicants' countries and regions of origin have become more diverse. In addition to the advanced standing admission in October, we now also offer advanced standing admission in April. Our hope is that the advanced standing admissions will increase in the future.

Establishment of Courses for Technical Innovation, Entrepreneurship Foundation, and Overseas Training

[Progress]

We are working to diversify our study abroad programs in order to foster global awareness. In the area of global entrepreneurship education, we have established programs for different purposes in order to meet the different needs of students. Because of the pandemic, we have been expanding the use of hybrid (online and in-person) formats in our programs.

[Response to the Pandemic]

Leveraging the Internet in Study Abroad Programs

Due to pandemic travel restrictions, we established a new domestic summer program in AY2021, the Immersive English Experience for Study-Abroad Preparation Program, which includes exchanges with students at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in the United States. Students were also able to take online classes from the Regensburg University of Applied Sciences in Germany.

Silicon Valley Internship Program

Since AY2020, the first half of the Silicon Valley Internship Program has consisted of on-campus development training as well as technical presentations and exchanges with electronics manufacturers in the United States. The second half of the program has included two weeks of online technical development exchanges with Silicon Valley engineers and exchanges with local entrepreneurs. In AY2022, students will be able to visit Silicon Valley in person for the first time in three years. Preparations are underway to send students in February-March 2023.

Vietnam Internship Alternative Program

Since AY2021, we have been conducting an online internship program with our partner university FPT University in Vietnam. During the first week, students take FPT University's basic business training, which is taught in English. During the next three weeks, students engage in system development and marketing research at a Vietnamese start-up.

DNA Internship Alternative Program

In this program, students take online business training at a private university in China before learning about Chinese business at the Chinese office of a global Japanese company. (DNA is an international talent development scheme that takes its name from the initials D for Dalian, China, N for Neusoft, a Chinese company, and A for Aizu and Alps Alpine.



Online Cultural Exchanges with Overseas Students



Silicon Valley Internship Program (Pre-training)



Vietnam Internship Alternative Program



International Talks

Global Lounge Activities

Global Lounge activities took a great leap forward thanks to the use of online tools brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the International Talks in particular, mutual exchanges were deepened between the students of our partner universities abroad and UoA students through presentations by each. Thanks to significant changes to the activities that make them participation easier for everyone, more students now participate in international exchanges at the Global Lounge.

Efforts to Improve Students' English Proficiency (2020-2022)

We are engaged in a university-wide effort to improve English proficiency of our students. This includes taking action to encourage students to measure their own English proficiency using internationally-accepted tests conducted outside of the university as an indicator. In AY2021, we intensified our outreach to undergraduate students, and in AY2022 we expanded this to include graduate students. We continue various efforts to regularly encourage to further improve their English language skills.

The UoA's Center for Language Research (CLR) has taken the lead in the following initiatives that have resulted in a steady increase in students' TOEIC scores.

- Conducting individual guidance sessions for students by faculty and staff
- Assigning a TOEIC advisor and providing TOEIC test prep courses
- We started the Go Beyond 500 campaign, which awards students who exceed the internal TOEIC score target with a keychain charm colored corresponding to their score. <Fig. 1>
- The percentage of students achieving the TOEIC score target by class was posted on campus to encourage students to take the TOEIC. <Fig. 2>
- A TOEIC test prep corner featuring a collection of around 380 TOEIC test prep books was set up in the university library. <Fig. 3>
- We made the following changes to the English curriculum after AY2022:
 - (1) Taking the TOEIC online is now required in English elective courses.
 - (2) Students who scored a 750 on the TOEIC can now apply for credit for the English Excellence elective course.
 - (3) Students up to year two who scored a 650 or higher on the TOEIC are eligible for early enrollment in English elective courses.
- We used external funds to purchase TOEIC test prep books to provide to students admitted in AY2022 and AY2023.
- We placed posters in laboratories and elsewhere to encourage students to take the TOEIC. <Fig. 4>
- We distributed TOEIC test prep books to first-year master's students.



<Fig. 1> Poster describing student's TOEIC experiences to encourage testing



<Fig. 2> TOEIC score graphs posted at several locations on campus



<Fig. 3> Library TOEIC Test Prep Corner

Student Voices

*Grade years are as of the time of the interview.



SHIRAI Kaho

(Admitted April 2020 - 3rd-year Undergraduate)

I have improved my score in my last three attempts. I received a gold charm. In the future, I will focus more on reading and aim for a perfect score. Until then, I will continue to take the TOEIC. I want to use my proficiency in English, a subject I adore, and the skills I gain at the UoA, to work for a global company after I graduate.



TAKAHASHI Kaede

(Admitted April 2020 - 3rd-year Undergraduate)

The official documentation of programming languages and tools is in English and is constantly updated, so English reading comprehension is a must. This was my second time taking the TOEIC. I took it as a way to check my English proficiency, and I received a gold charm. In the future, I would like to work as an engineer at a game developer after deepening my research at graduate school.



KASUYA Shunsuke

(Admitted April 2022 - 1st-year Undergraduate)

I took the TOEIC for the first time after getting a feel for the test at the TOEIC preparation course I was taking. I received a silver charm for my performance, which motivated me enough to aim for a perfect score in the future. I love computers and English, and I am excited about university life.



<Fig. 4> Poster to encourage master's students to take the TOEIC IP test

Scholarship Donations

The University of Aizu Super Global University Project is supported by government subsidies as well as scholarship donations from local companies, foundations, and other donors. Although our ability to visit companies and organizations was limited by the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to obtain around the same amount of scholarship donation

◆ Main Uses of Scholarship Donations in AY2022 (As of December 2022) (Total: ¥8,400,000)

- Expansion of the Aizu Geek Dojo makerspace and startup incubator
- Measures to improve the English proficiency of undergraduate and graduate students
(Test fee subsidies, purchase of test prep books)
- Subsidies for participation in overseas internships
- Subsidies for tours of domestic advanced tech facilities

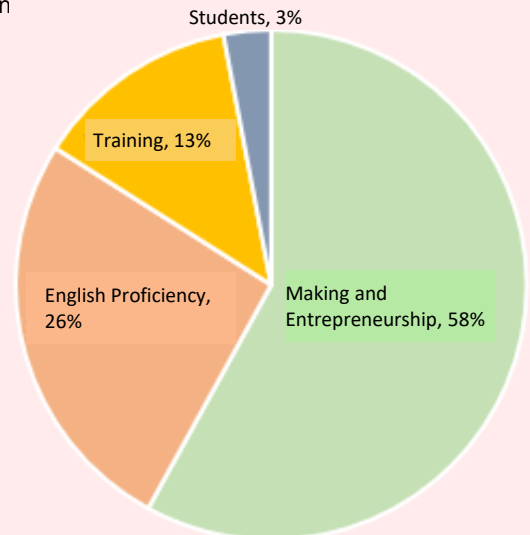
◆ AY2022 Donors

(Alphabetical order)

- Aizu Economic Club
- Alps Alpine Co., Ltd.
- Komatsuzaki Inc.
- Cybertrust Corporation
- Local Venture Creation and Support Foundation
- Tocom Co., Ltd.

◆ Expansion of Aizu Geek Dojo's Startup Incubator Function

In August 2022, the new Aizu Geek Dojo, which functions as both a makerspace and startup incubator, was opened with the support of the Local Venture Creation and Support Foundation. We expect that more students than ever before will use the AGD, leading to closer collaborations with outside organizations and encouraging technological exchanges that will lead to the creation of global startups. So far, the AGD has hosted startup events organized by the foundation as well as technical workshops by major companies in the prefecture.



Main Uses of Scholarship Donations for SGU Project in AY2022



Aizu Geek Dojo Opening Ceremony

[Request for Donation]

Please help us promote the University's globalization and the realization of global entrepreneurship education.

With the Super Global University Project subsidies from MEXT ending in AY2024, we must find the additional funding we need to independently further our globalization efforts. To that end, the UoA is reaching out to companies, organizations, and other donors to provide scholarship donations.

"Internationality" is the beating heart of the University of Aizu. Japanese students, international students, and faculty members from around the world gather at the University of Aizu and go out into the world. It is the international relationships they build that produce synergies for the region and for Japanese society.

We are looking for organizations and individuals who are willing to support our globalization efforts. Donations are tax deductible for both corporate and individual donors.

Scholarship Donations ⇒ https://u-aizu.ac.jp/sgu/en/info/news/post_41.html



About the University of Aizu

The University of Aizu opened in 1993 as Japan's first university specializing in computer science and engineering. Since its inception, the UoA has conducted world-leading research, development, and education with a faculty including many outstanding foreign researchers that is still unmatched in Japan. In this way, we have embodied our founding principles of "from the region to the world" and "to Advance Knowledge for Humanity."

Aizu has a tradition of advancing society through the power of education. This spirit has been inherited by the University of Aizu, which develops talented individuals with the knowledge and skills they need to play an active role in the world.

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