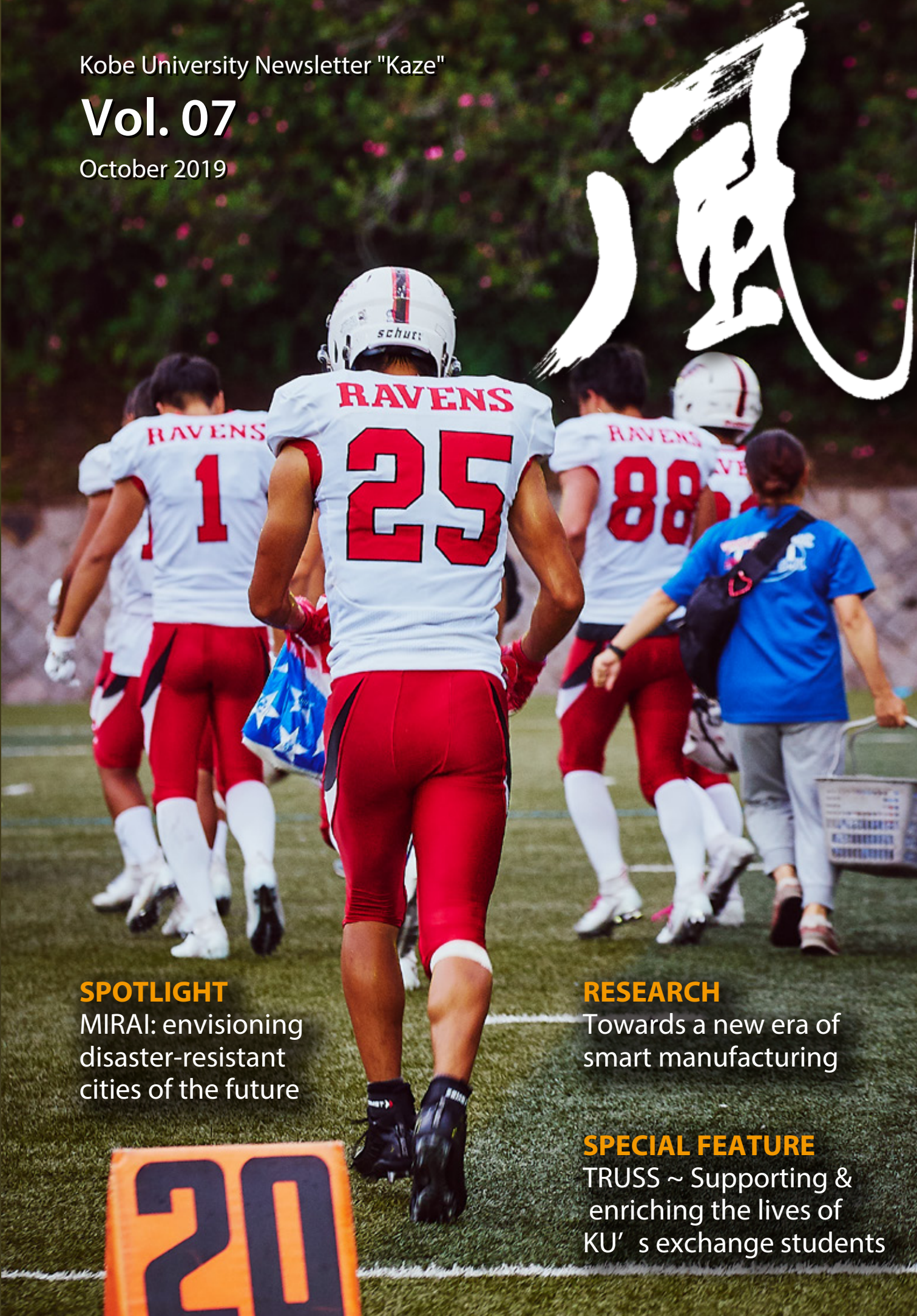


Kobe University Newsletter "Kaze"

Vol. 07

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Kobe insights

Enjoy sport in Kobe!

Fall brings cooler weather after the humid heat of summer and is considered the season for sports in Japan. People enjoy plenty of sports-related events in Kobe; such as the Kobe Marathon and the matches of local official sports teams (including soccer and baseball), in addition to this year's Rugby World Cup games.

Kobe University itself boasts a huge variety of sports and outdoor activity clubs- from tennis to paragliding, horse riding and sailing. Featured in this issue is KU's own American Football team The Ravens. Founded in 1975, it's one of the University's oldest and largest student clubs. From their humble beginnings over 40 years ago, The Ravens have developed into a well-established team with an active fanclub.

They are currently in the midst of their Autumn Season games against other university teams in the Kansai region. Just like how club activities in universities and high schools are often described in Japanese Manga comics, the male players train hard with the support of the team's managers and training staff. Many students enjoy their on-and-off campus lives through sports activities here in Kobe.



Photo Credits: Shim Jaewon (Kobe University Photography Club) & the International Affairs Planning Division.



Why "Kaze"?

There are two main concepts behind the title "Kaze", meaning "wind". Firstly, Kobe University's goal to innovate, creating a wind of change. Secondly, our location at the foot of Mt Rokkō, an area known for the invigorating wind of Rokkō-oroshi that blows down from the mountain range.

The calligraphy on the cover of "Kaze" was created by Professor Emeritus UOZUMI Kazuaki, a researcher of calligraphy at Kobe University.



Cover photo for Kobe University Magazine "Kaze" Issue 7:
Ravens players by Shim Jaewon (Kobe University Photography Club)

Kobe University Magazine "Kaze"

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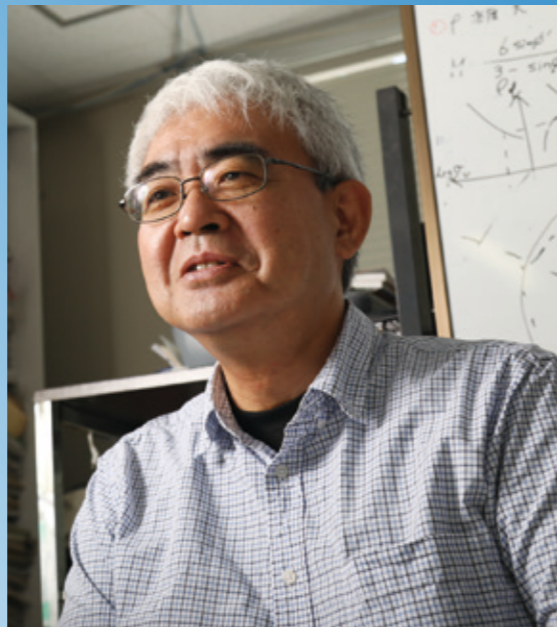
神戸大学



Contact us: intl-relations@office.kobe-u.ac.jp
(International Affairs Planning Division)

MIRAI: envisioning disaster-resistant cities of the future

There continue to be various approaches to disaster management and prevention regarding the possibility of future Nankai Trough earthquakes. The Nankai Trough is an offshore submarine trench that runs from Shizuoka Prefecture down to the seas east of Kyushu. The underlying fault is the source of a potentially devastating Nankai mega earthquake, expected to occur on the Pacific side of West Japan in the coming years. As a research institution located in a disaster area, Kobe University has been comprehensively researching how to ensure the safety of cities since the 1995 Great Hanshin earthquake. Consequently, researchers are currently working out how to design a sustainable, resilient city that can last for hundreds or thousands of years, ensuring the safety of future generations.



Atsushi Iizuka, Ph.D
Professor, Research Center for Urban Safety and Security

This new academic research unit is called 'MIRAI: Multidisciplinary Integration for Resilience and Innovation' ('mirai' means 'future' in Japanese). Striving towards such a vision involves keeping ideas and inspiration circulating around Kobe University and other institutes.

We spoke to MIRAI's research unit leader, Professor Atsushi Iizuka in order to find out more.

Q: Please tell us about the establishment of the MIRAI unit.

Prof. Iizuka: The unit was formed to gather experts from various fields at Kobe University, such as engineering, health sciences, humanities and social sciences, with the aim of researching disaster prevention and management. The MIRAI research unit is indispensable for allowing us to work together across different fields.

In addition to Kobe University, there are also other organizations in Hyogo prefecture that are using various methods to research disasters. These include the RIKEN Center for Computational Science's K supercomputer, Hyogo Earthquake Engineering Research Center's E-defense system; and the JAMSTEC (Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology) Center for Deep Earth Exploration's vessel 'Chikyu', which is measuring the Nankai Trough. One of the goals of this project is to make Kobe University a disaster prevention hub, where all this knowledge and data can be collated.

I think of the MIRAI unit as being like Kobe University's 'circulatory system'. Like blood travels around the body, I would like to invigorate the university by circulating knowledge, ideas and inspiration.

Q: The idea is to have everyone involved in one joint research project?

No, our plan is to have different research units working on various projects simultaneously. For example, I am now working on the Integrated Earthquake Simulation (IES), while the Research Institute for Economics and Business Administration is predicting how the Hanshin Expressway would be affected during a disaster. Meanwhile, research into how people's mental health and wellbeing are impacted by disasters is being conducted by the Graduate School of Health Sciences, and the Graduate School of Human Development and the Environment. The achievements of each project can inspire each researcher's work- even if they are in a different field. For this reason, there is a multidisciplinary meeting every month so that we can look at what is happening in each research field and share our thoughts and opinions.

Q: So it's like a follow-up meeting?

Yes. There are also groups that students can get involved in too, such as the Creative Dojo ('Research Unit for Future Creation & Innovation Creative Dojo') and various events, such as academic symposia, allow us to achieve greater mutual understanding across disciplines. Researchers can discover new perspectives by participating in these events. New perspectives and understanding of other research areas is how we can keep ideas and information circulating throughout Kobe University. These new perspectives enable researchers to conduct deeper research through synergizing results. This means that research field frameworks will also start to change. Consequently, this will also alter how Japanese people accumulate collective knowledge.

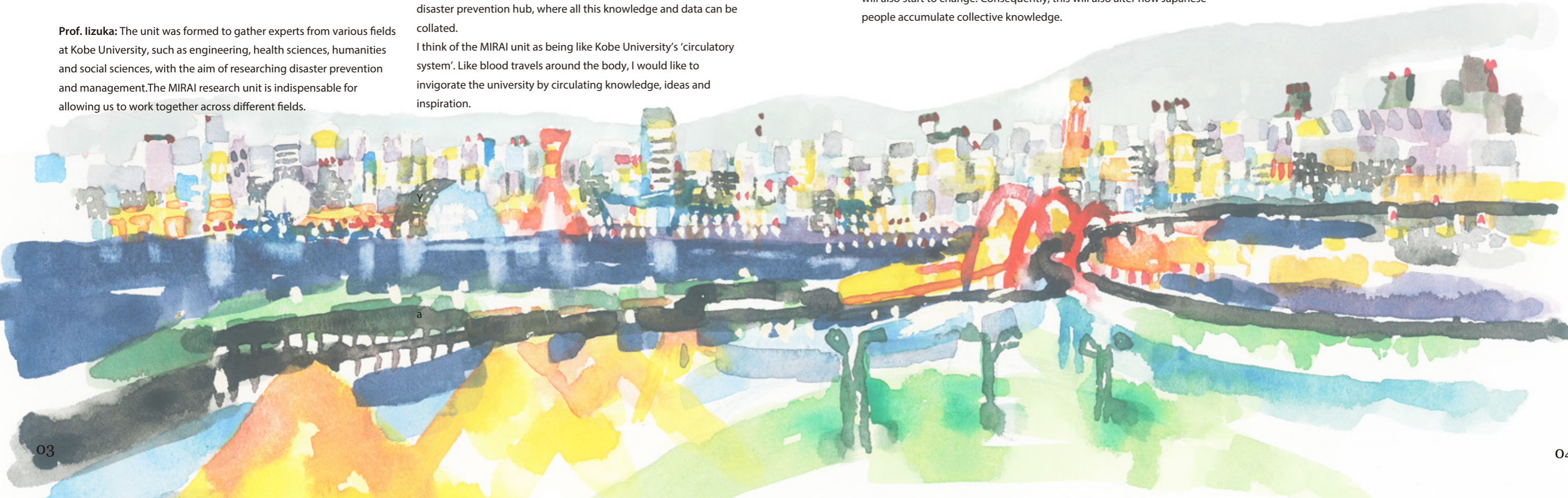


It is possible to integrate and visualize varied data using the Integrated Earthquake Simulation.

Q: What is the Integrated Earthquake Simulation (IES)?

IES (Integrated Earthquake Simulation) is one of the projects implemented by MIRAI and it has recently been developed into an integrated engineering system. This project involves Tokyo University's Earthquake Research Institute among others, and uses the K supercomputer to process large amounts of data such as geographic information and property registers. This allows us to conduct an earthquake simulation over an entire city. As well as information about infrastructure etc., we can also input data on each and every building allowing us to simulate the possible effects of various disasters in detail. This provides more concrete guidelines for disaster reduction and prevention policies.

IES has the potential to simulate a variety of disaster scenarios over a wide area with high precision. Its application is not just limited to enhancing hazard maps. The range of scenarios



encompasses every possibility we can think of. For example, there are thousands of possible disaster scenarios resulting from a Nankai Trough earthquake. However, if we calculate all of that using the K Supercomputer, we can obtain quantitative data on the potential risks facing a particular spot in the city.

Q: Won't this affect land prices?

Not only that. Current methods of property management, insurance and investment may also change due to our research results. IES can simulate not only earthquakes but also a wide range of other disasters such as tsunamis, heavy rain, floods and typhoons at the same time. Therefore it is possible to analyze the simulation data for compound disasters.

Bringing the Kobe Model to the world

Q: How will this be implemented into society?

By establishing a technological research association. This will be comprised of universities, research institutions and private industries. Using the technologies like IES that we have developed as a base, each industry can commercialize them by creating business models. In other words, the aim is to create a market for disaster reduction and prevention. The government currently bears the responsibility for planning resilient cities. But if disaster prevention is commercialized, this responsibility will be borne by private economic activities. I term this a 'paradigm shift'.

Q: So, these research achievements are made available to the private sector for free?

That's right. The researchers participating in the unit should agree on this point.

Rather than focusing solely on the immediate benefits of the project, I would like to contribute to societal development (including our university itself) by making our research more widely known to attract talented students and researchers in the area. I would like to establish a 'Kobe Model' encompassing all of these aspects from regional cooperation (ie. making Kobe University into a hub linking disaster reduction and prevention research institutes) to connecting with the next generation. Subsequently, I would like this model to spread to other cities.

Q: Does your project outlook also include overseas?

In fact, we are currently setting up a collaboration with the University of California, Berkeley. The UC Berkeley have conducted earthquake simulations for the entire city of San Francisco. I would like to mutually exchange data with them. I think we can reach the next level of innovation if we form a strong collaborative partnership.

We also need to keep knowledge and ideas circulating within Kobe University- this is vital for the MIRAI project.



神戸大学大学院 工学研究科 道場「未来社会創造研究会」

Research Unit for Future Creation & Innovation

Creative Dojo



The Graduate School of Engineering's 'Creative Dojo' was established in April 2016 with a motto centered on 'the importance of creating human-centered value engineering for people's happiness and welfare.' According to Professor Iizuka, the research unit is 'the key to realizing a fusion of reasoning'.

It provides a network through which members can share their ideas and perspectives regarding solution and implementation policies, as well as debate different viewpoints, regardless of whether they are academics or students.

Industries have also taken part in the Creative Dojo and various workshops have been held. Experts from different fields discuss the same issues allowing the research topic to be viewed from multiple angles. As Professor Iizuka stated, it provides a space for knowledge and ideas to circulate.

The Creative Dojo also holds symposia, such as the 2017 and 2018 'MIRAI Festival' events. Kobe University researchers from various specialist fields, among others, made TED-style presentations regarding their views on the future in order to brainstorm how society might work. This event was also open to the general public and the audience could interact directly with the speakers. This not only provided an opportunity for information exchange between lecturers but also allowed for knowledge exchange between experts and the general public. Thus, the Creative Dojo provides a platform for greater mutual understanding.

*master's
Voice*

Witnessing the fusion between computer science and other fields at UC Berkeley

I conducted research into deep seafloor stability issues based on geotechnical engineering in Professor Iizuka's research laboratory. It was interesting because I could make interpretations regarding soil mechanics using the phenomena that the Earth Sciences faculty observed. Subsequently, I entered graduate school and spent one year and 4 months studying abroad at the University of California Berkeley. I took part in the city simulation research group as a visiting researcher, conducting transport and pipeline simulations. The research involved using a supercomputer to predict the effect that earthquake damage to underground pipelines would have on transport systems in the California Bay area (population 7.5 million).

First we overlaid the pipeline and transport networks and then superimposed a map containing data showing the strength of tremors from thousands of earthquake simulations. This allowed us to see the effects of earthquakes in detail over a wide area. For example, in the areas with strong tremors the pipelines break and this causes a blockade of nearby roads, which in turn impacts evacuation. I continue to have online meetings with the American team and this research will form a part of my Master's thesis.

I have also been able to participate in Kobe's Integrated Earthquake Simulation (IES) as a part time researcher. It has been a valuable experience for me as the project matches my own research aims. I enjoy observing the interdisciplinary fusion between computer science and civil engineering when using IT simulations.

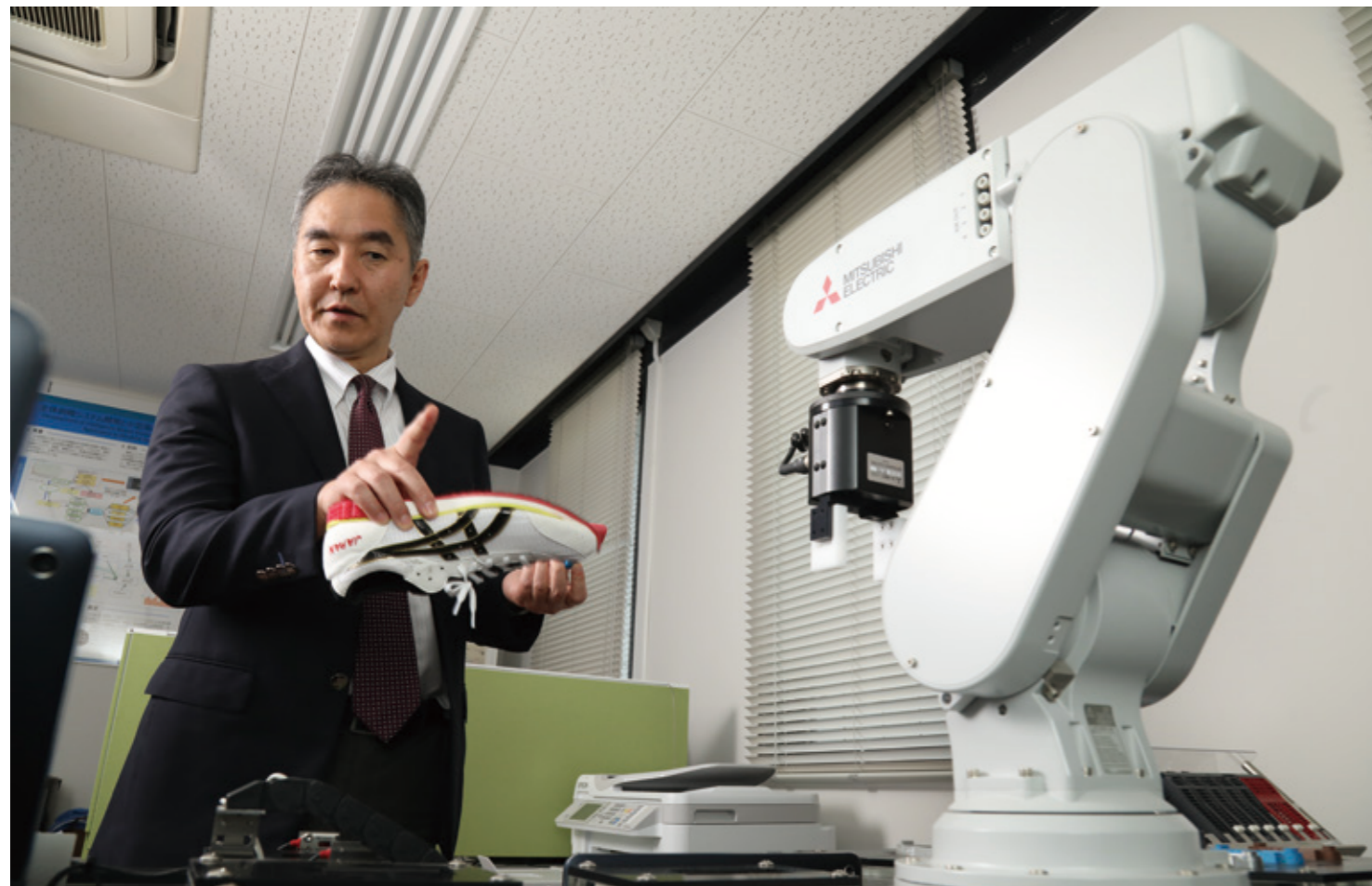
Using the engineering skills I learnt in America and at Kobe, I would like to realize further wide ranging collaborations between different fields, such as IT and agriculture, and IT and medicine. My current research feels very worthwhile as I can see how it benefits people.

Miki Komatsu
Graduate School of Engineering: Civil Engineering Major Master Program
Second Year student



“Towards a new era of smart manufacturing”

Revolutionizing the production of tailor made goods through consumer involvement and 3D printing



The Cabinet Office’s Cross-ministerial Strategic Innovation Promotion Program (SIP) was started by the Japanese government with the aim of realizing the scientific and technological innovation essential for the revitalization and sustainable development of Japan’s economy.

Kobe University had 3 SIP projects- one of which was ‘Research on Innovative Design/Manufacturing Methodology of Tailor-made Rubber Products and Socio-Economic Value Co-creation with Reactive 3D Printer’. led by Professor Toshiya Kaihara from the Graduate School of System Informatics.

This project aimed to develop a method of producing products with significant benefit to consumers. As an example, they were able to develop a design and production system to make tailor made running shoes at the same speed and cost as mass produced products. This is called the ‘New value co-creative manufacturing method’ by Professor Kaihara.

Q: Please could you tell us how the project started?

Prof. Kaihara: There was a call from SIP for ‘Innovative design and manufacturing technology’ that would satisfy consumers by bringing them closer to the production process. In other words, directly connecting to the user during planning with the end goal of increasing their satisfaction with the product.

In the current age, detailed user data can be obtained using the Internet of Things (IoT). Using IoT, the end user can be involved in product design- so wouldn’t it be a good idea to create products together that users really want? We decided to call this whole process ‘value co-creation’.

Q: Why did you decide to focus on shoes?

Kobe is home to industrial rubber manufacturers and shoemaking is Kobe’s local industry. In order to connect the two, we developed a 3D printer for rubber and used this to manufacture the soles of shoes.

This project is inter-disciplinary; in addition to the Graduate School of System Informatics, other schools at Kobe University also worked on various aspects of the project (see diagram below).

The future of production: ‘Smart Factories’

Q: Please tell us more about what kind of production system you developed.

We put the concept of ‘value co-creation’ into action through a system to produce tailor-made running shoes. First, we developed a digital model of a person in order to analyze foot shape and movement.

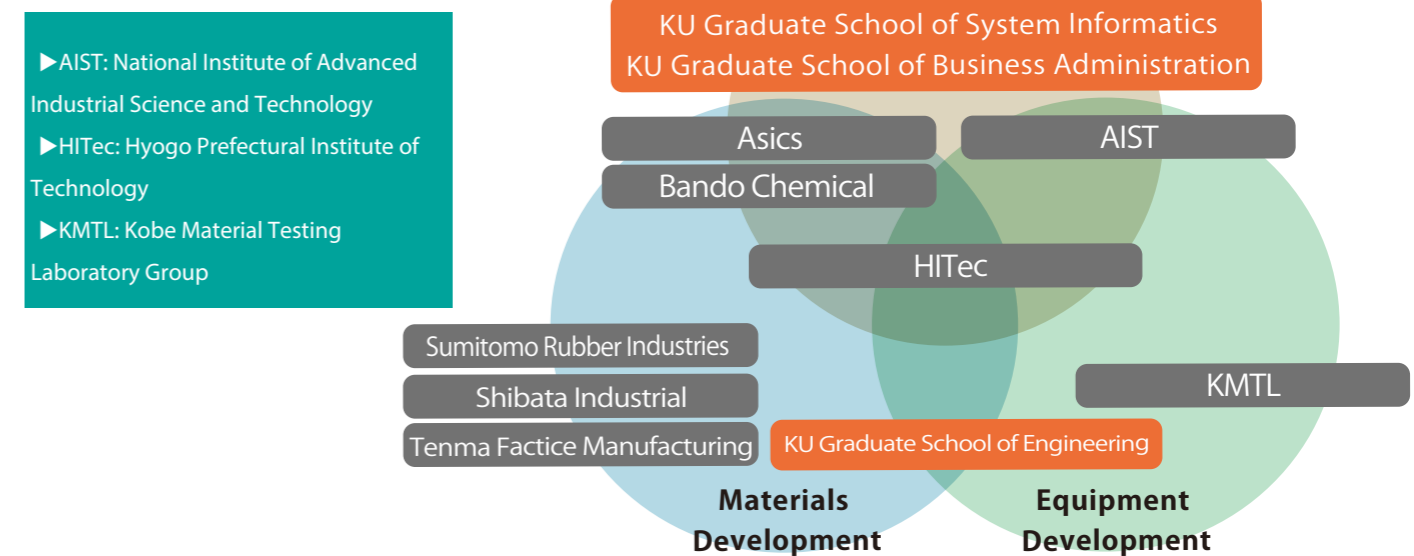
Then we calculated the 3D foot data. Through simulating running movements, we could quantitatively evaluate functionality and comfort. Using the digital model, we can take into account individuals’ needs, for example ‘I want to run fast’ or ‘I want to reduce the pressure on my knees’ and choose the most appropriate shoe and sole design.

We have also developed a smartphone application for users. By taking pictures of their feet from three angles and uploading them to the Cloud, a digital model is created that can then be viewed on their smartphones immediately. After entering what kind of shoes they want, the user can choose from a number of suitable designs suggested by the application. Customers can also see when they are due to receive the product.

This method of product production is known as ‘smart factory’. The whole creative process is conducted via the Internet. The communication between the user and the model factory, where the product will be automatically manufactured, is realized through a software agent (a piece of software that can work autonomously). The AI that is built in to all the machines shares the information about what will be manufactured each time. Basically, this is an extremely effective production method.

When a new order comes in, the AI acts as a production manager and can change operations in an instant. This makes it possible to continuously manufacture different products quickly and affordably- in a similar way to mass production.

Institutions and companies involved in the project



Research at Kobe

Mass customization at the same speed and cost as mass production

Q: So customized products can be manufactured on the same line?

That's correct. The factory's production system is connected to users' smartphone applications and the Cloud, so it can create the most appropriate product for each individual while also optimizing the factory's production schedule.

The application quickly calculates the cost of the product and the delivery date; this information is sent to the user's smartphone within seconds. Once the user agrees, the product automatically starts to be made.

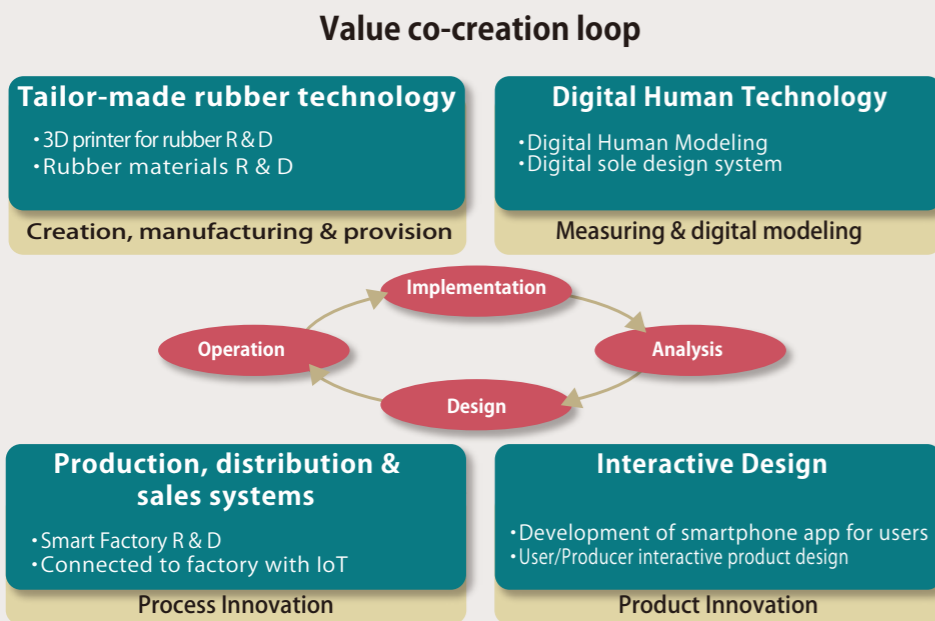
Q: The 3D Printer is also on this production line?

Of course. The specifications of each order are calculated and the 3D printer is utilized as necessary. One product might make full use of the 3D printer, another product might just require 3D printing for one part.

The sole of a shoe consists of three parts- the outer, mid and inner soles. The materials and manufacturing methods are different for each one, so three separate 3D printers were developed for this. Including the materials, this technological development is a world first.



"Value co-creation has been realized using a combination of digital models, smartphone applications, smart factories and 3D printers."



Creating a market based on users' needs

There are three levels of production:

- ▶ Completely tailor-made (the **pro market**, eg. for professional athletes)
- ▶ Semi tailor-made (the **second market**, eg. for civilian marathon runners)
- ▶ Partially tailor-made for regular users (the **third market**)

To obtain the specifications needed for the pro market, sensors and cameras are used to build up a detailed profile of the user's body. Then the most suitable design is chosen and the whole thing is 3D printed in order to obtain maximum performance for the user. The technology developed here is reflected in the products for second and third markets. To use vehicles as an example- the cutting edge technology developed for F1 racing cars is eventually applied to civilian cars.

On the other hand, the third market also has an impact on developments at all three levels too. We can receive varied feedback from

"Using IoT allows consumers to be involved in the products' creation."

regular users about their needs, such as 'I want to run for a long time' or 'I want to run fast', which allows new products to be developed. Thus, the range of available products across the whole system will increase as the cycle for the third market continues. Consequently, the price of the products in the second and third markets will decrease, the production time will get shorter and the market size will grow. I predict that this is how the 'value co-creation' method of production can become a business model. Moreover, 'value co-creation' can help consumers enjoy walking and running. For example, people's feet weaken as a result of aging. However, if we can produce shoes that fit people perfectly, this could allow them to enjoy walking for the duration of the product's life cycle. In this way, I would like to use the 'value co-creation' system to bring benefits to people by creating 'supportive artificial products'.



Increasing the competitiveness of the Japanese manufacturing industry

Q: How well do these shoes perform in reality?

We carried out a demonstration experiment during the Kobe Marathon. We made customized shoes to match the running styles and foot shapes of 4 participants. Using sensors we could monitor them as they ran. Three of the participants had also run the marathon the previous year, so we could obtain feedback on their prior experience too. They rated the customized shoes higher and got better times than in the previous year. All the participants finished the marathon and two said that the experience was a great personal achievement for them.



Q: How versatile is the 3D Printer for rubber?

We can create various rubber products. It is possible to make the most suitable product for the user- not only in terms of 'shape' but also 'motion'. In the future, I would like this system to be used for sporting goods such as supports and swimwear; power assisted suits, and products for medical and care staff, among others. We are already receiving inquiries about the 'value co-creation platform'.

Q: So this is the implementation phase of the project?

That's right. At the Hyogo Prefectural Institute of Technology, we have set up the 3D printer for rubber and smartphone system that we developed and it can be used by various industries. In addition, we have established a '3D Smart Manufacturing Research Center' at Kobe University. If there is a problem with the 'Value co-creation platform' that we cannot solve, we can do further research and development at the center. I would like to support the Japanese production industry through this system. The next step is to look at not only the production methods but also the system structure in order to increase international competitiveness. To reiterate, it's not just about selling products but offering something of value that people can use and enjoy. This will give the Japanese manufacturing industry a unique and powerful competitiveness.



Cultivating international health professionals at Kobe University

English-taught Master's and Doctoral programs in Health Sciences

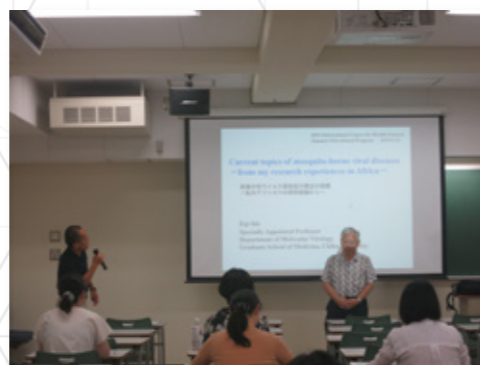
The need for global medical professionals equipped with the skills to work across borders and cultures has recently been increasing. It is vital that institutions for higher education cultivate individuals to meet the growing demand for high-level healthcare professionals who can operate internationally.

In response to these trends, Kobe University's Graduate School of Health Sciences has been offering an 'International Course for Health Sciences (ICHS)'. Initially established as a Master's Program in 2012, this English course was subsequently extended to a Doctoral program in 2014. All lectures are taught in English by faculty members, enabling students from across the globe to obtain Master's and Doctoral degrees in health sciences from Kobe University. In addition, guest lectures by distinguished professors from institutions worldwide are held on topics covering a wide range of fields; these include biophysics, rehabilitation science and nursing.

As a training course which fosters global experts, ICHS aims to equip students not only with comprehensive expertise in the health sciences but also with cross cultural understanding, communication and problem-solving skills. This ensures that graduates are well-equipped to cope with the high and varied requirements of international health activities. Through in-depth coursework, ICHS cultivates students into advanced practical specialists with a rich knowledge and deep understanding of socio-economic situations and lifestyles.

The Graduate School of Health Sciences also offers a short intensive course called the 'ICHS Summer Educational Program'. This program includes lectures on disaster management, maternal and child health, infectious diseases, health communication and lifestyle-related diseases. The lectures are given by invited professors from institutions throughout Japan and South East Asia, and experts who work for international organizations, hospitals and pharmaceutical companies.

Over 40 students have completed the course and are currently working for global companies. Graduates of the ICHS programs are expected to contribute to international society primarily through international organizations and NGOs active in the field of global health.



Examples of the varied guest lectures that have taken place as part of ICHS post-graduate programs



Researching the history of E-sports

Q What were you doing before you came to Kobe University?

I majored in English at Sichuan Normal University. As part of a program where I could choose English and another language, I picked Japanese and studied abroad in Japan for a short while as a third year student. During that time, I realized that I wanted to study at a graduate school in Japan. There are many reasons why I chose Kobe University. I got the impression that there are many kind people in Kansai, as well as stunning scenery, old buildings and fun places to visit.

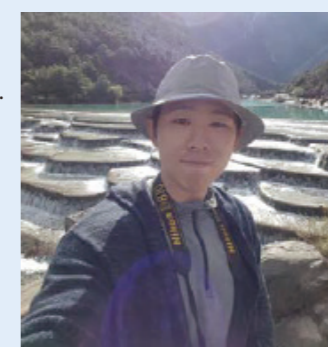
Q What kind of research are you conducting now?

I'm interested in E-sports, so I'm researching their history. Recently there are many E-sports tournaments held all over the world and it's becoming more popular. In Japan, E-sports were included in the culture section of Ibaraki's National Athletic Meet and this has been in the news recently. An E-sports club was formed in China in 2000 and they compete in many tournaments worldwide. E-sports events are not just limited to the gaming industry, they are also part of the general sports industry. Until recently, the expression 'sports' was not used to describe gaming tournaments and of course, there was no E-sports industry. Gradually competitive video games began to be considered a kind of sport. Around this time, more expert players and Universities started to make their own rules and clubs, and hold tournaments. Consequently, we now have this competitive gaming culture. The process of setting up these events has become very similar to other kinds of sports. I think it is interesting that these changes have happened so quickly in the last 10 to 20 years. As part of my research I have interviewed game developers and people involved in E-sports clubs in Shanghai. I also did an internship at a game company from January to March this year and was able to try making my own game. Through doing research, I have been able to access a world I didn't know before, and this has been a great experience.

Q Tell us about your future goals.

I have decided that I want to continue my studies on a doctorate course. I'm currently preparing to apply for a research fellowship for young scientists. I don't know whether I will get the grant or not, but the process of applying has been an opportunity to learn about myself. I feel like I can express my feelings more clearly. In the distant future, of course I would love to make my own game and establish a gaming event. When I think about the future of AI development, I am attracted by things that we still can't do with AI, such as content creation. I have started studying programming and worked as an intern. Next, I want to take on more challenges while continuing my studies.

Visiting Yulong Snow Mountain in Yunnan



Approximately 1,300 international students from countries around the world are currently studying at Kobe University. In this corner, our international students introduce their native countries and offer some insights on studying abroad in Japan.

International voices



Ikurin Nin

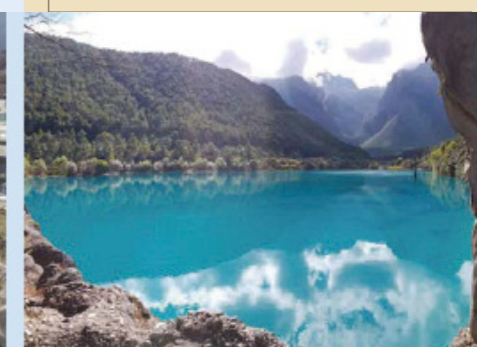
2nd year Masters student studying Human Behavior in the Graduate School of Human Development and Environment.

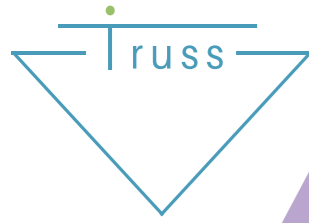
Originally from Shandong Province in China. He is skilled at Taekwondo and has taught it to children in his home country. His girlfriend is also currently studying abroad, in Shiga prefecture. 「心想事成」 means you should try to realize the thoughts and ideas in your heart.



The People's Republic of China

Located along the lower reaches of the Yellow River, Shandong Province has the third highest GDP in the country- with Jinan as the province capital. The area boasts a rich history, being known as the home of Confucius. Shandong food is considered to be among China's top 4 cuisines. The boiled dumplings and Tsingtao beer are especially famous.





TRUSS

Supporting and enriching the lives of KU's exchange students.

TRUSS is Kobe University's International Communication club. Since its establishment 25 years ago, TRUSS has been facilitating communication between domestic students and foreign students, as well as helping exchange students with many aspects of university life. A Truss is a triangular support framework used in constructing roofs and bridges. One of the club's principles is the idea of building bridges between people's hearts. To learn more about their activities, we talked to three of the club's leading members- Suguru Matsunaga, Ryusuke Ota and Mihiro Hatada.

Q: What kind of activities does TRUSS do?

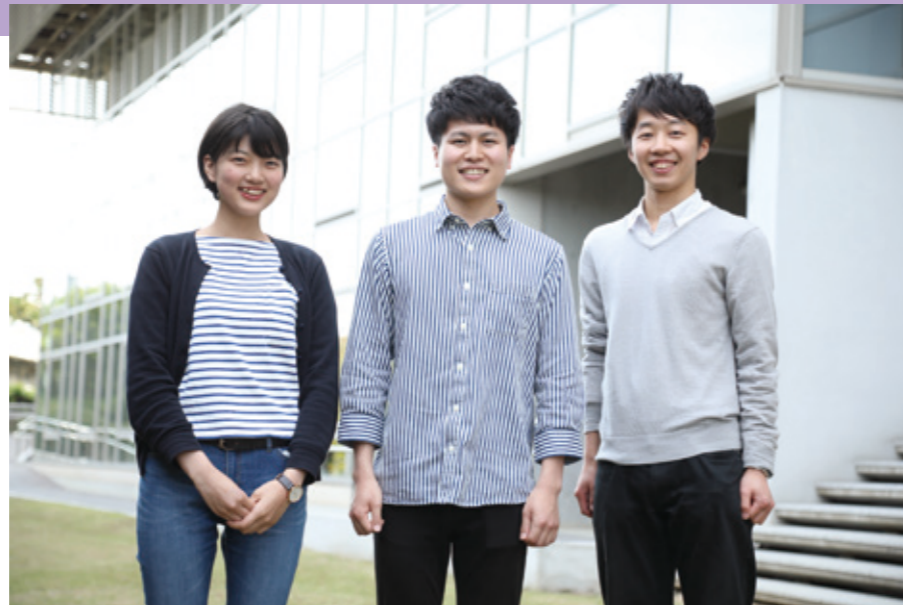
Matsunaga: In addition to providing support for those studying abroad at Kobe University, we plan and hold social events for Japanese students and exchange students. There are around 1300 foreign students at Kobe University but Japanese students don't have much opportunity to speak to them during their daily university lives. However, there are many Japanese students who want to communicate with foreign students- over 100 of them have signed up to join TRUSS.

Ota: The running of the club is centered on a committee made up of leading members. We have over ten planning groups in charge of the events from the initial idea to realization.

Q: Could you describe these events in more detail?

Matsunaga: A typical example would be the Welcome Party. We hold it twice a year; in April and in October when exchange students enter Kobe University. It always attracts over 120 people- it's not just limited to new students, anyone can attend.

Hatada: In addition, we usually hold various other events about once every 1 to 2 months.



TRUSS Treasurer	TRUSS President	TRUSS Vice President
Mihiro Hatada 3rd Year German Literature, Faculty of Letters	Suguru Matsunaga 3rd Year Global Cultures, Faculty of Global Human Sciences	Ryusuke Ota 3rd Year Applied Chemistry, Faculty of Engineering

Q: Is it possible to communicate smoothly at these events?

Ota: Well, of course there is the language barrier. Also, there are many people who find it hard to start a conversation, so we give them a push (laughs). Outside of starting a conversation, I have found that it is possible to communicate using my English and even gestures. Also, there are many exchange students who are studying Japanese, so we can also communicate by speaking Japanese slowly. I would like these methods to be more widely used to increase intercultural exchange.



TRUSS's Welcome Parties are held in April and October. They attract over 100 attendees.



Students enjoy the weekly event



Farming experience in Tamba Sasayama



Exchange students on a Kobe walking tour

Q: What kind of support do you provide for exchange students?

Hatada: For those who have just arrived in Kobe, they need to visit the local ward office to sort out their residence status, pension and health insurance. Parts of this process are difficult for Japanese people too, but we support exchange students by helping them fill in the forms and taking them to the correct counter.

Matsunaga: Most exchange students live in dormitories. We help by handing out supplies left behind by previous exchange students to the new arrivals for free.

Q: How long do exchange students usually study at Kobe University for?

Ota: Usually 6 months or 1 year. Most exchange students study at Kobe University for only one year.

Hatada: We also support postgraduate students studying at Kobe University.

Q: You must have to hold many events to facilitate intercultural exchange over such a short time period?

Matsunaga: That's true. Although we miss them when they leave after only one year, I'm always glad that we put effort into organizing the events when exchange students thank us afterwards.

Ota: I think exchange students come to Japan because they like the country and want to know about Japanese people. But in reality, many find it hard to approach groups of Japanese students. We want to create an open space where they can easily

“We want to create an open space where they can easily communicate with Japanese people as well as make friends with other exchange students.”

communicate with Japanese people and other exchange students.

Hatada: There are many Japanese students in TRUSS, including me, who are interested in other cultures and studying abroad. So we often keep in touch with exchange students through Facebook and Instagram even after they leave.

I am studying German literature so I often enjoy learning about German society and various things from German exchange students.

Q: What has been your most successful intercultural communication event?

Matsunaga: That would have to be our weekly event. We were the first to try doing a weekly event as a committee and this is one of the big changes we've made. The Japanese and exchange student community that has resulted from these events is a visible mark of their success.

Ota: We have also started a LINE group called 'TRUSS Information'. It's like a forum where exchange students can easily ask questions.

Matsunaga: It's Ota who does the initial introductions. He invites the exchange students who attend our events to join the LINE group and now we have 300 members. If anything happens, we can make announcements on there. It's an effective way to communicate with members.

Hatada: It's very popular because exchange students can also casually send messages- it's

different from a typical SNS. During disasters, exchange students have also been able to use it.

Q: As a safety support network?

Matsunaga: That's right. When there have been earthquakes or heavy rain, and also when evacuation announcements have been made for Kobe University Campuses, we have translated emergency information off the TV and posted it on the 'TRUSS Information' LINE group. We have also posted details of websites which have disaster prevention information in English.

Ota: In the LINE group exchange students can also communicate with each other. They have used it to share useful information, such as where to evacuate to. If incorrect information is posted, it is also possible for Japanese members to correct it.

The weekly events and the LINE group. It is great that this committee was able to make these two big improvements to TRUSS.

Matsunaga: I would like to continue to help foreign students and create spaces for international exchange. Everyone, please come to TRUSS's events!

For up-to-date information about events, follow: <https://twitter.com/TrussKobe>

Tabemonogatari

Reducing food loss to revolutionize how people eat

Last year, Agricultural studies student Yurie Takeshita formed the 'Tabemonogatari' group aimed at changing the food industry. The group subsequently won prizes at a business competition and were featured at the TEDxKobe event. Discover more about how Yurie Takeshita turned her passion for reducing food waste into an entrepreneurial organization in the following interview:



Q: What kind of group is Tabemonogatari?

Yurie Takeshita: We started the organization with 3 people in April 2018 with the founding principle of 'Filling the world population with 'Yum''. In countries like Japan, there is a surplus of leftover food while in other parts of the world people go hungry. Many people feel guilty about this. Food loss refers to food that is grown for human consumption but then discarded for a variety of reasons. Tabemonogatari aims to address the lack of balance in the food industry by reducing the amount of discarded food and strengthening primary agricultural industries. The words 'tabemono' (food) and 'monogatari' (story) make up the organization's name. We would like to show the meaning behind the name through our activities.

Q: What kind of activities are you doing?

At the moment, our main activity is buying up fruit and vegetables that cannot be sold through normal distribution channels and selling them. Lots of vegetables are discarded because they are too big to sell or have blemishes. In the beginning, we contacted farmers to ask them for their discarded vegetables. Recently, there have been more incidences where farmers have contacted us. We also do the same with fruit that is unable to be sold in supermarkets and stores. We sell them to bakeries and cake shops, as well as to individuals. I would like to work together with Japanese Agricultural Cooperatives.

Q: What inspired you to start Tabemonogatari?

The first time I wanted to try tackling the food loss problem was when I studied abroad in Canada as a high school student. It really shocked me how my host family casually threw away large amounts of uneaten food. It's something I will never forget. I started to seriously think about making it into an organization during the summer of my third year at university when I attended a lecture by an entrepreneur. Watching them speak so enthusiastically made me determined to start my own enterprise.

Q: We heard you won awards at a business convention. What kind of event was this?

It was the 'Yunus & You: Social Business Design Contest 2018' - known as a gateway to success in social business. It was started with the aim of fostering innovative social business enterprises among young people as envisioned by Bangladeshi Nobel Peace Prize winner Professor Muhammad Yunus. Teams were selected from an application screening of around 140 groups. The chosen teams received mentorship and four workshops to flesh out their ideas, before presenting their business plans at the end of October last year. The most difficult part for me was how to make my opinions on food into a business. I reconsidered whether business fit with what I wanted to achieve many times. The three of us built upon our ideas during the workshops. Professor Yunus said that 'Corporations do business but they only give money back to the shareholders. Their profits should be used so that everyone can live well'. These words really resonated with me. Although we didn't win overall, our team got three industry awards. One of these was the 'Borderless Japan' award that we were able to win thanks to many people's support.

Q: What are your future goals?

I would like to bring the organization's principles to my hometown and Kobe. After that, I want to expand into other regions. Last year, I got the chance to be a student speaker at a TED event for the first time (TEDxKobe). We also held our own event in Kobe last November, which we were able to achieve thanks to crowd-funding. In the future I would like to set no limits on myself and take on various challenges.

A version of this interview was originally posted on Kobe University's Japanese website on November 22 2018.



Above: Participants at 'Yunus&You'.
Below: Yurie Takeshita speaking at TEDxKobe.





SPECIAL REPORT



20 years of partnership with Jagiellonian University

On July 5th, 2019, the Jagiellonian University Vice-Rector for Educational Affairs Prof. Armen Edigarian gave a special lecture at Kobe University to commemorate our partnership's 20th anniversary.

The partnership began with an inter-faculty agreement between the Faculty of Letters, Kobe University and the Faculty of Philosophy, Jagiellonian University in 1998. This initial arrangement was developed into an inter-university cooperative agreement in 2013 to encourage further mutual exchange of students and researchers. Subsequently, our universities have been developing multiple exchange programs such as the Master's level Double Degree Programs in Political Science (Kobe University) and European studies (Jagiellonian University). Kobe and Jagiellonian have also collaborated on the Joint Lecture Series Programme, whereby faculty members and Ph.D. students visit each other's institutions to give lectures and presentations on their research.



The memorandum of understanding signed during the Vice-Rector's visit is a two-year extension of the Joint Lecture Series on Japanese and European Studies.

Furthermore, Kobe University established a Liaison Office in Kraków in October 2015, and we are actively involved in exchange activities such as Erasmus+ with Jagiellonian University.

The anniversary event began with a signing ceremony for a memorandum of understanding. This memorandum between our institutions is a two-year extension of the Joint Lecture Series on Japanese and European Studies. During the opening of this ceremony, the Executive Vice President in charge of International Exchange Prof. Masahiko Yoshii introduced our strong partnership and his vision for broader exchange involving many more faculty members and students.

Vice-Rector Edigarian gave a lecture entitled "Development of European International Cooperation - based on the example of Jagiellonian University" to an audience of over 120 faculty staff and students. He explained how European Universities have become more internationalized through Jagiellonian University's initiatives. These included improving faculty staff and student mobility via the Erasmus+ exchange program and the creation of an inter-university network.

After the lecture, Vice-Rector Edigarian paid a formal visit to President Hiroshi Takeda. They exchanged information regarding university reforms resulting from the changing circumstances in Europe, including Brexit, and agreed to deepen the exchange between our institutions.

The anniversary event attracted over 100 staff and students. This is a testament to both the partnership between our universities and the strong interest in Central and Eastern Europe among our members.

Europe

Academic Events jointly held with Japan Foundation Budapest

On February 2nd and 3rd, the Network Meeting for Japanese Studies in Central-Eastern Europe took place in Budapest. It was co-organized by Kobe University and Japan Foundation Budapest. The event provided an opportunity for faculty heads from key universities representing the field of Japanese studies in Central and Eastern Europe to discuss current trends in research and education in Japan. On February 4th, Kobe University and Japan Foundation Budapest jointly held a lecture for the general public titled "The Way to Preserve Historical Documents in the Community". It attracted approximately 80 attendees from universities and governmental organizations in Central and Eastern Europe.



Asia

The Fourth Kobe University – Beijing Foreign Studies University Joint Symposium Held

The Fourth Kobe University – Beijing Foreign Studies University Joint Symposium took place at Kobe University's Takigawa Memorial Hall on July 6th and 7th as a part of the activities of the Kobe University and Beijing Foreign Studies University International Collaborative Research Base. This year's symposium was held on the theme of "China, Japan and East Asia 1989-2019: Inside and Outside the Heisei Era". The symposium looked back over the 30 years of the Heisei era, which ended on April 30th. The fifth symposium will take place at Beijing Foreign Studies University in the next year.



Americas

Visit from the University of Southern California for Joint Short Course

Kobe University and the University of Southern California (USC) held joint short course titled 'Business Japanese Course' again this year. For two weeks from May 25 to June 9, Undergraduate students from USC visited Kobe University as part of a two-week educational course in Japan to obtain practical knowledge of Japanese business and society. They also learned about the differences between Japanese and American cultural and business customs through company visits. The students gained an insight into various Japanese industries and experienced Japanese culture and sport through museum visits and watching a baseball game. These activities made for a fruitful two-week stay in Japan.



The Japan Summer Program in Sustainable Development Launched

Kobe University launched a new joint educational program with the Georgia Institute of Technology entitled 'Japan Summer Program in Sustainable Development (JSPSD)'. JSPSD is a problem based learning program in English that aims to equip students of both Kobe University and the Georgia Institute of Technology with the tools to understand multifaceted issues relating to sustainable development. The inaugural JSPSD took place at Kobe University this June and July and attracted over 70 students. The participants took part in lively debates concerning sustainable development. Future JSPSD will be held in the following years.



KOBE UNIVERSITY

Founded in 1902

4 campuses | 10 faculties | 15 graduate schools



RIEB 100th Anniversary

~pioneering inter-disciplinary economics and business administration research~

This year Kobe University's RIEB (Research Institute for Economics and Business Administration) celebrates 100 years since its foundation. Originally established as the Commercial Research Institute (as part of the Kobe Higher Commercial School) in 1919, RIEB boasts the longest history of all social science research institutes affiliated with universities in Japan. The Institute focusses on conducting cutting edge, interdisciplinary research into economics and business administration. RIEB has conducted particularly notable research into the development of a diverse global economy and the international competitiveness of Japanese companies, among other areas. The Institute has also established various international exchanges with world-leading research institutions and continues to welcome visitors and guest researchers from overseas.



Based in the Kanematsu Memorial Hall (built in 1934) and the modern RIEB annex building, it is possible to feel both the Institute's rich history and tradition, as well as its commitment to pushing the envelope with its research. Other facilities include the Integrated Center for Corporate Archives where a wide range of important historic materials relating to business administration can be accessed.

Anniversary lectures and a commemorative ceremony will be held on the afternoon of Sunday October 13 in the Idemitsu Sazo Memorial Rokkodai Auditorium on Rokkodai 1st Campus. All anniversary events are supported by donations from alumni, local communities, private companies and our former/current staff. In the next 100 years, RIEB will continue to contribute towards the betterment of society through its collaborative research projects.



*We hope you enjoyed reading Kobe University Magazine "Kaze" Vol. 7 (October 2019)
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For back issues, visit office.kobe-u.ac.jp/ipiep/publication/index_en.html*