

4. FY 2016 Progress

■ Common indicators and targets

Internationalization

○ Increase in the number of foreign students with enhancing support

The number of foreign students enrolled has increased 2.6 times from 313 students in 2014 (the start of the TGU project) to 834 students in 2016 (the target number of year 2016 was 600). In 2016, we introduced new entrance examination systems such as inter-college transfer system and recommendation entrance examination from Chinese high schools. We opened new international dormitories (one for each men and women) in which foreign students live together with Japanese students and introduced the RA (Residence Assistant) system, appointing foreign undergraduate and graduate school students. We also fulfilled financial support such as reduction of tuition and beneficial scholarships targeting for all undergraduate and graduate students (302 students in FY 2016).

○ Promotion of study-abroad to Japanese students

905 students experienced accredited study-abroad in FY 2016 (target number was 868), which is 1.6 times higher than at the beginning where we had 557 students. We newly developed 19 unique study-abroad programs associated with the University's curriculum, and also started 10 new exchange programs with overseas partner universities. Also, Faculty of International Liberal Arts started a student exchange program with Thammasat University in Thailand.

○ Expansion of the network with foreign universities

The number of countries and territories has increased from 47 with 148 universities to 58 with 186 universities as of May 2017. We aim to expand the network to 60 countries and territories with 200 universities by FY 2023.

○ Establishment of overseas offices

We established satellite offices in Thailand (Thammasat University, Bangkok City) in June 2016 and South Korea (Seoul City) in September 2016. Together with the previously founded satellite office in China (Beijing City), in total, we have developed three overseas bases.

○ Outcomes of language education

In FY 2016, total of more than 34,000 students have used the extracurricular programs offered at our learning commons, such as English and other foreign language conversation, writing center, and TOEFL iBT® speaking training, etc. Furthermore, through our unique undergraduate curriculum and various study abroad programs, the number of students who exceed the target language proficiency level of Soka University (equivalent to or higher than TOEFL iBT® 80) increased largely from 296 students at the start of TGU program to 1,035 (13.1% of total students) in FY 2016.



〈Opening of Soka University Thailand Office〉

University reform

○ Establishment of Global Core Center

In June 2016, we established “Global Core Center” under the Internationalization Strategy Committee in order to achieve the goals of this project and to keep enhancing the globalization of our university. By the establishment of the center, decision making process has become short and prompt. In addition, it will also serve as the preparation committee for the “Graduate School of International Peace Studies” that will newly open in 2018.

○ Increase in foreign faculty and staff members

We have accepted applications from overseas, and as a result, the number of foreign faculty members increased to 49.2% (175 faculties out of 356 in total) and that of staff members increased to 9.9% (22 staff members out of 222 in total).

○ Improvement of staff's foreign language skills

We conducted English training courses and promoted to take TOEIC® Listening & Reading Test (TOEIC® L&R) to administrative staff members. As a result, the total staff who acquired the English level equivalent to or higher than TOEIC® L&R score of 730 increased from 24 (at the start of TGU project) to 49 in FY 2016.

○ faculty meetings in English.

In addition, by making documents in English for meetings that affect the whole university, such as the University Education and Research Council, it is able to hold faculty meetings in English.



〈English Track to be extended to 11 courses〉

Education reform

○ Extension of classes taught in foreign languages and English Track

Classes taught in foreign languages (excluding language classes) increased from 112 in FY 2014, to 392 in FY 2016. English Track, which students can take all required classes in English and graduate, extended from 1 course in FY 2014 to 7 courses in FY 2016. It will further develop to 11 courses in FY 2018 by adding courses from 3 faculties and 1 graduate program.

○ Introduction of external tests (TOEFL, TOEIC® L&R, etc) to entrance exam for undergraduate programs

In addition to public application entrance exam, we introduced a new system for entrance examination by which the applicants is allowed to submit the official scores of external language proficiency tests such as TOEFL iBT® and TOEIC® L&R instead of taking the university English exam.

■ University's own indicators and targets

【Soka University】

○ Expansion of countries and territories of exchange programs

As of May 2017, our network of partner universities has extended to 56 countries and territories with 186 universities (52 countries and territories in FY 2016). We newly built relationships with the following 8 countries; Myanmar, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Lithuania, Morocco, Papua New Guinea and Macedonia. We now aim to expand to 60 countries and territories, 200 universities by FY 2023.

○ Increase of study abroad to African countries

While 11 students studied abroad to Africa in FY 2014, the number increased to 32 in FY 2016 due to expanding network and building new internship programs. Although we temporarily stopped two programs due risk management for safety issues, they will restart in 2017 as we confirmed the safety by actually visiting. Our aim is to send 50 students to study abroad to African countries by FY 2023.

○ Increase in the student number who are proficient in foreign languages

The number of students who achieved certain foreign language levels increased from 59 (FY 2015) to 245 in FY 2016. For example, 50 students for Chinese (HSK Level 5 and above), 9 for Korean (The Korean Language Proficiency Test Level 2 and above), 5 for German (Diplom Deutsch in Japan Level 2 and above), 4 for Russian (Russian Language Proficiency Test Level 2 and above), and Japanese (JLPT N1) also.

○ Increase in participants of overseas internships and volunteers

We newly built short term study abroad programs in Kenya, India and Myanmar in FY 2016, and the participants of overseas internships and volunteers reached 100 and 111 respectively. The target in FY 2023 is 150 student participants for both internships and volunteers.



〈Study abroad programs to Africa〉

■ Featured initiatives based on the characteristics of the university

○ Establishment of Graduate School of International Peace Studies

A new graduate school, School of International Peace Studies will start from 2018. This school will be mainly research about international relations and peace studies. All courses will also be provided in English, and will be one of the English Tracks provided. For that, 4 teaching staff out of 8, were employed by internationally opened recruitment.



○ Promotion of English-written documents on campus

“English Translation Team” was formed in FY 2016, being responsible for the translations of conference materials and documents toward the public, as well as for interpretation for on-campus events. It also aims to create a database for English expressions for the words related to our university, such as facility and office names.

○ Concluding exchange agreement with UNHCR

In May 2016, we concluded an agreement with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Tokyo to accept one refugee student every year, and prepared their learning environment.

○ Establishment of the “Russian Center”

The first “Russian Center” at a university opened on Soka University's campus in June 2016 by receiving in-kind support from Russkiy Mir Foundation. The center will be in charge of promoting Russian language and culture by cooperating with the Foundation and the Embassy of the Russian Federation to Japan.

■ Free description

Soka University encourages Undergraduate students to participate in academic conferences and symposiums held overseas. The following are some participation examples of FY 2016.

○ Participation in World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates

In February 2017, four students attended the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates held in Columbia, South America. They had discussions upon challenging topics such as “peace and education” and “peace and sustainable development” with youth representatives, gathered from throughout the world. One of the Soka students had a chance to get involved in making the “Declaration of Youth” and contributed as a presenter.



〈With Nobel laureate Mr. Kailash Satyarthi〉

○ Participation in G(irls)20 Summit 2016

One girl student was selected as a delegate of Japan to attend the G(irls)20 Summit 2016, and participated in the summit taken place in Beijing, China, in August. This summit is a part of the Clinton Global Initiative founded by former U.S. president Bill Clinton, aiming to foster female leading figures of the next generation. Through the discussions and workshops with youth delegates from G20 countries, the participants issued a joint statement regarding “how to create 100 million new jobs for women by 2025” and submitted to the leaders of G20.