

5. FY2017 Progress

■ Common indicators and targets

Internationalization

○ Increase in the number of international students and enhancement of support programs

- The number of international students has increased about 2.66 times, from 313 students in FY2013, before being selected for the Top Global University Project, to 833 students in FY2017. In FY2017, in addition to schools in China, Soka University began preparations to conclude an agreement with high schools in Brazil regarding entrance examinations for recommended students from partner schools. In addition, the university also began preparing to implement student exchange programs with the national governments of Cuba and Egypt.
- Due to the increasing number of international students, Soka University started preparations to establish an “International Students Support Center (tentative name),” which will be a core facility for the provision of a more enriched education and living environment. Staffs such as mental health counselors who can speak foreign languages are stationed at the center.

○ Promotion of study abroad to Japanese students

- In FY2017, Soka University concluded partnership agreements with 11 new universities, expanding the total number of international exchange partners to 196 universities in 58 countries and regions.
- In addition, the Faculty of Law, Nursing, and International Liberal Arts have developed new faculty-hosted study abroad programs which are synchronized to their specific curricula, while the graduate program in International Language Education (ILE): TESOL has launched exchange student programs with universities in Thailand and the United States.
- The university has organized coordinators to assist students locally in countries and regions in which many students study abroad.

○ International student dormitories

- The international student dormitories (for both Japanese and international students) established in March 2017 have the capacity to house 400 male students and 144 female students, increasing the total admission capacity of the international student dormitories to 744 students in total (500 male students/244 female students). “Resident Assistants (RAs)” comprising both international students and graduate students are present in each dormitory.

○ Research exchange programs with international exchange partners

- In FY2017, Soka University was selected for the “Private University Research Branding Project” by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Following the selection, joint research projects with 3 Ethiopian universities started as well as faculty member exchanges between the universities and Soka University Graduate School of Engineering and Economics, Faculty of Economics, Business Administration, Education, Law, International Liberal Arts, and Nursing. In May 2018, Soka University hosted a kick-off symposium for the project.
- On the graduate school and research center level, the university launched new research exchange programs with 5 overseas universities (Graduate School of Engineering with universities in Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand and the Graduate School of Teacher Education and International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology (IRIAB) with universities in China).



Private University Research Branding Project Symposium

○ Activities of overseas liaison offices

- The Liaison Office in Thailand held a joint seminar with Thammasat University (Thailand) in August 2017, which had about 200 participants.
- As the secretariat of the “JunThai” association of Japanese universities with Thailand offices, the “Thammasat University-Soka University Liaison Office” is mainly engaged in activities focusing on planning and operation of various activities.
- Soka University has decided the location for its fourth overseas liaison office in the Philippines and has started preparing for its opening in FY2018.

○ Outcomes in language education

- As a result of the extra-curricular programs for linguistic ability training at the Learning Commons on campus, various language programs, faculty major courses in English, and overseas language training programs, the number of students who achieved the foreign language standard set by Soka University (equivalent to a score of 80 in TOEFL iBT®) have increased from 296 students in FY2013 (before the project launch) to 1,106 students in FY2017 (14.0% of all students).
- The number of courses offered in foreign languages increased 4.55 times from FY2013 (120 courses) to FY2017 (534 courses).

University reform

○ Function of the Global Core Center

- The Global Core Center was established in 2016 as an organization to constantly promote the Top Global University Project and the globalization of the university itself. The center has been cooperating with faculties, graduate schools, research institutes, and various departments, establishing a structure to concretely facilitate the project and university globalization through deliberation at the “Global Core Center Meeting” (held twice a month).

○ Increase of international faculty members

- The university internationally recruited 4 full-time faculty members who will be in charge of the graduate courses at the new “Graduate School of International Peace Studies” established in April 2018. The number of international faculty members increased to 182 out of the total 356 faculty members (51.1%; 43.3% in FY2013 before project launch). Meanwhile, the number of international staff has increased to 26 people out of the total of 224 (11.6%; 2.4% in FY2013).

Education reform

○ Expansion of the English Medium Program (EMP)

- The EMP, through which students can earn degrees in English, was expanded from 1 course in FY2013 to 7 courses in FY2017. The university will open 4 additional courses in FY2018 at the Graduate School of International Peace Studies and Faculty of Business Administration, Law, and Letters.

○ Introduction of the International Baccalaureate entrance examination system

- As a means to utilize external exams for faculty enrollment, the university has introduced the International Baccalaureate entrance examination system and has also established a system to accept students from partner schools in Japan, starting from the entrance examinations scheduled to be held in FY2018.



English discussion at an extra-curricular program

■ The university's own indicators and targets

○ Expansion of exchanges with African universities

- Injibara University and Bahir Dar University in Ethiopia, with which Soka University started the joint research project under the "Private University Branding Project" of MEXT, have been added to the list of overseas partner institutions, and it is expected to have active exchanges of students such as graduate students. As a result, Soka University now has exchange agreements with 11 universities in 9 countries in Africa. Furthermore, in March 2018, the university welcomed 13 members of the University of Nairobi and held a commemorative event to mark the 30th anniversary of the exchanges between the two universities.

○ Number of students joining global companies

- The number of Soka University students who received job offers from or got employed by global companies listed in the US economic magazine "Fortune Global 500" increased 1.56 times, from 103 students in FY2013 to 161 students in FY2017.

○ Increase in the number of students advancing to overseas graduate schools

- The number of Soka University students admitted to overseas graduate schools increased from 30 students in FY2013 to 44 students in FY2017. Major universities include Cornell University (Public Affairs), the University of California San Diego (International Affairs), Soka University of America (Education) in the US; the University of Sussex and the University of Leeds in the UK; and the National University of Singapore (Public Policy).



Conclusion of exchange agreements with Injibara University and Bahir Dar University

○ Increase in the number of nurses with overseas training experience

- Currently, the Faculty of Nursing offers overseas short-term training programs with international exchange partners in South Korea, the US, and the Philippines. In FY2017, 38 students participated in the program, in comparison with the target number of the year of 50 (achieved 76%). So far, 82 graduates out of 160 (51%) have participated in overseas training programs.

■ Featured initiatives based on the characteristics of the university

○ Opening of the "Graduate School of International Peace Studies"

- To realize education and research on "establishing a peaceful and sustainable international society" and to foster individuals who can contribute in the global society, the Graduate School of International Peace Studies was launched in FY2018. Through international recruitments, 8 full-time faculty members of whom 7 are foreign faculty members were employed. All classes and research at the graduate school are conducted in English.

○ Collaboration with international organizations

- Following the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with which the university concluded an agreement for admitting refugee students in FY2016, Soka University also concluded agreements with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) in FY2017. The university has scheduled to start exchange programs such as student internships, volunteer activities, and participation in international meetings. Moreover, the university has hosted special lectures (3 times) by the representatives of the organizations, as well as exchange events with the students.

○ Regional contributions

- Soka University was selected from all universities with comprehensive agreements with Hachioji City, to cooperate for the "JICA Grassroots Technical Cooperation Project." This is a joint collaboration project with Hachioji City and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and all three parties concluded the project contract. To date, faculty members and students of Soka University have been sent 3 times to the Federated States of Micronesia, where the project is being implemented, to conduct public awareness activities aimed at reducing and reusing a large amount of trash in order to reduce the volume of solid waste.



Hosting of a Holocaust exhibition to consider peace and human rights (open to the public)



Hosting of an exhibition commemorating the 130th anniversary of Japan-Thailand Diplomatic Relations (open to the public)

○ Hosting of a Holocaust exhibition and a photo exhibition commemorating the 130th anniversary of Japan-Thailand Diplomatic Relations

- In April 2018, Soka University and the Simon Wiesenthal Center (US) co-hosted the "The Courage to Remember: The Holocaust 1939-1945 -The Bravery of Anne Frank and Chiune Sugihara" at the university campus to look back on the history of the genocide of the Jews by Nazi Germany and to consider peace and human rights. This exhibition was sponsored by 10 organizations including the French Embassy and the UN Information Center in Tokyo (the exhibition was held in Fukushima, Gunma, Kagoshima, Yamagata, and Gifu Prefectures in FY2017).
- In May 2017, "Exhibition on the 130th Anniversary of Thailand-Japan Diplomatic Relations: A Memorable Tribute to H.M. King Bhumibol Adulyadej" was held at the Soka University campus. The exhibition was co-hosted by Soka University, the Ministry of Culture (Thailand), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Thailand), and the Embassy of Thailand in Tokyo. About 200 guests including the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, the Minister of Culture of Thailand, and the Ambassador of Thailand to Japan attended the opening ceremony.

○ Launch of a donation project to promote Top Global University Project

- The university launched a donation project in April 2018 to promote the project and ensure the continuation of the "Top Global University Project".

■ Free description

○ Student participation in international conferences and contests (major events)

- Soka University students participated in "The World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates," the "Global Social Business Summit 2017" (as a representative of Japan) in Paris, the "G(irls)20 Summit 2017" in Munich (participated as a representative of Japan for the third consecutive year), and the "International Development Youth Forum."
- Soka University hosted the annual conference of the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning (ASAIHL) in March 2018, in which about 200 researchers from Southeast Asia, Europe, North America, and Japan participated.



Hosting of the annual ASAIHL conference for the first time in Japan