

OKAYAMA
UNIVERSITY

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT CENTER

グローバルエンゲージメントセンター



About

In April 2025, Okayama University established the Global Engagement Center to plan and coordinate its global engagement strategy, with the aim of promoting Internationalization in Higher Education for Society (IHES). At the same time, the Center was designated as the organization responsible for operating the UNESCO Chair in Research and Education for Sustainable Development, which is accredited by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and hosted by Okayama University.

By accelerating global engagement, advancing institution-wide education and research, and strengthening international collaboration and networks, the Center aims to enhance the University's research capacity as a research university promoting the SDGs. These efforts also contribute to stabilizing the University's management foundation and strengthening its international presence.

Note: The Center was reorganized following the integration of the Global Engagement Office, which operated from April 2020 to March 2025.

Members



Director, Vice President (Global Engagement)
Professor **Atsufumi Yokoi**

Vice Director
Professor **Tatsuya Sakamoto**

Vice Director
Senior Global Administrator (Senior UGA)
Ms. Miki Harada

Division of the Okayama University UNESCO Chair

Director, UNESCO Chairholder
Professor **Atsufumi Yokoi**

Senior Assistant Professor
Fielardh Khalifatulloh

Affiliated Faculty Members

Professor **Tatsuya Sakamoto**
Faculty of Environmental, Life, Natural Science and Technology
Ushimado Marine Institute

Professor **Yasuyuki Nogami**
Faculty of Environmental, Life, Natural Science and Technology

Professor **Mitsunobu Kano**
Faculty of Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering in Health Systems

Associate Professor **Yuko Kataoka**
Medical Development Field
Hearing Health Center, University Hospital

Division of the Global Engagement Office

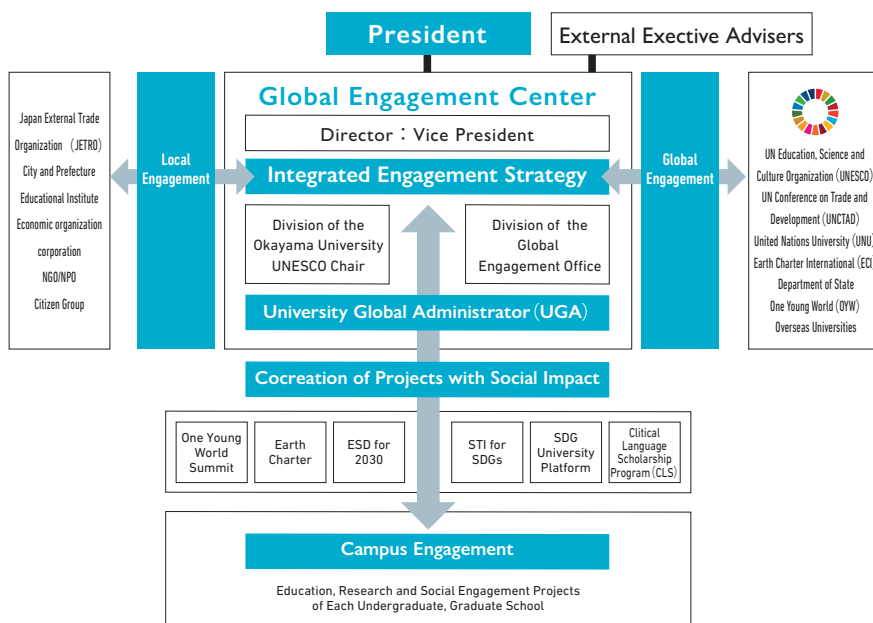
Senior Global Administrator (Senior UGA)
Ms. Miki Harada

Chief Global Administrator (Chief UGA)
Ms. Yu Tsuha, PhD

Director
Mr. Naoki Honjo
Institutional Planning Department

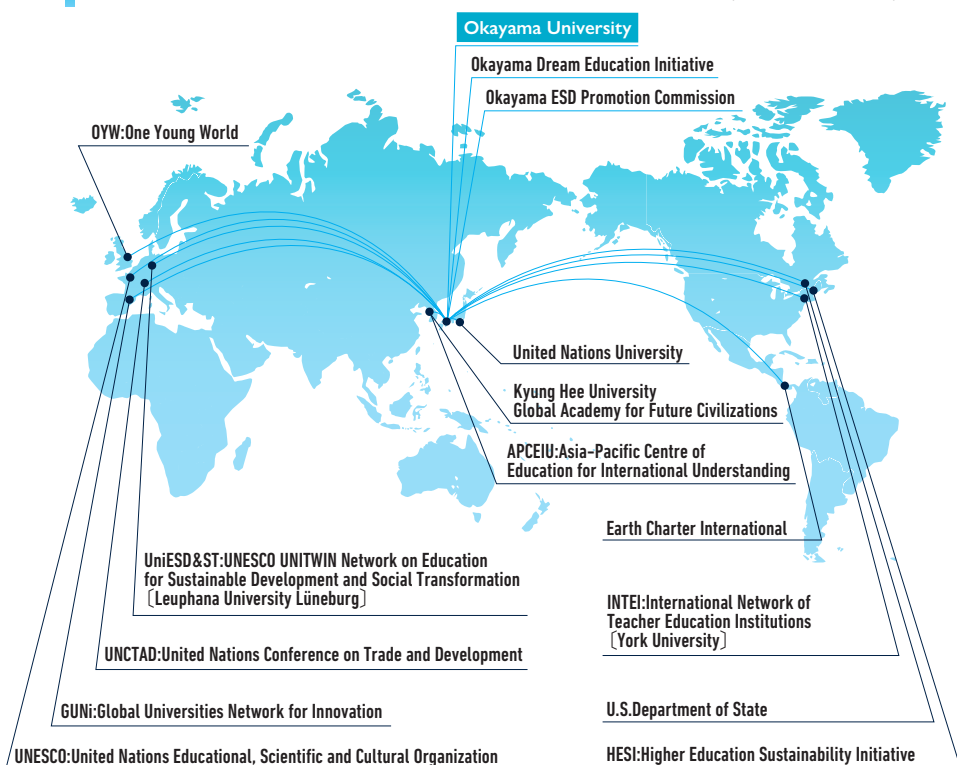
Director
Ms. Megumi Tamura
International Affairs Division,
Institutional Planning Department

Organizational Structure



Partnerships

Okayama University × International Organizations
(as of October 2025)





UNESCO Chair in Research and Education for Sustainable Development, Okayama University, Japan

From Okayama to the World – Leading the Way in ESD

The UNESCO Chairs Programme, launched in 1992 by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), is an initiative that aims to strengthen the capacity of higher education institutions through the exchange and sharing of knowledge. Our University was designated as the UNESCO Chair in Research and Education for Sustainable Development in 2007, becoming the only UNESCO Chair in Asia focused on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). In 2005, prior to the establishment of the UNESCO Chair, Okayama City was recognized by the United Nations University as the world's first Regional Centre of Expertise on ESD (RCE). After receiving the UNESCO Chair designation, the University signed an agreement with Okayama City to promote ESD. Acting as a regional think tank, the University works with local government, schools, NGOs, and NPOs to support ESD through knowledge sharing, policy advice, and networking, and to advance ESD together with the local community.

As a result of these efforts, the "Okayama ESD Project," in which the University participates, received the UNESCO–Japan Prize on ESD in 2016. In 2017, the University, the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability, and RCE Okayama jointly organized the 1st Global RCE Conference in Okayama City, focusing on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Later that year, in December, the initiative received the Special Award (SDGs Partnership Award) at the first Japan SDGs Award, gaining high recognition from the Government of Japan.

Promoting Direct Collaboration with the United Nations and a Whole-Institution Approach

The Okayama University UNESCO Chair continues to function as a hub connecting community-based practice with international networks. In 2024, it was selected as one of the 20 UNESCO Chairs representing the world from among 950 UNESCO Chairs in 120 countries, and was the only institution selected from Japan. At the meeting, the University presented its university-wide framework for education, research, and social engagement centered on the SDGs. In particular, initiatives promoting gender equality and youth participation were highly praised, including the world's first "UNESCO Chair Youth Ambassador Programme," which reflects young people's voices, and the Young Female Scientist Programme implemented in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

These initiatives at Okayama University have attracted international attention as a successful example of a whole-institution approach, in which education, research, and practice related to ESD are implemented in an integrated manner. As a result, the University's role as a model for UNESCO Chair activities has been reaffirmed.

One Young World X Okayama University

Empowering Young Leaders to Address Global Challenges

One Young World Summit annually brings together young leaders representing 190+ countries and 250+ organisations, to confront the biggest challenges facing humanity. Delegates spend four life-changing days of networking, and knowledge-sharing. Together we raise the bar for what social impact we can make individually and as a community.

Throughout the Summit, Delegates are counselled by influential political, business, and humanitarian leaders such as Justin Trudeau, Ariana Huffington and Professor Muhammad Yunus, among many other global figures. But this is just the start. Every leader who attends our Summit becomes a One Young World Ambassador and a lifelong member of our global community. This lifelong membership grants access to mentorship, events, speaking engagements and funding opportunities.



President Nasu attending a United Nations conference



Global Engagement Center Unveiling Ceremony, April 2025

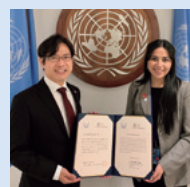


Vice President Yokoi delivering a speech at the United Nations Office at Geneva

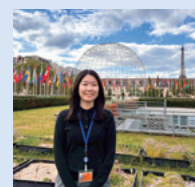
Together with Youth

Okayama University has established a system to appoint outstanding young leaders active on the global stage as UNESCO Chair Youth Ambassadors, recognizing their contributions as frontrunners in the United Nations youth network. As the first ambassador, Ms. Sofia Bermúdez, who presented the "Youth Declaration" to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in 2022, was appointed and has been actively promoting Okayama University internationally as an influencer.

As participants in the UNESCO Traineeship Programme established by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in 2023, Ms. Mizumo Ohara, a doctoral student at Okayama University, completed a one-year traineeship programme in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris as a member of the first cohort, while Ms. Shion Natsuyama, a master's student at Okayama University, is currently training in the ESD Section at UNESCO Headquarters as a member of the fourth cohort.



Youth Ambassador Ms. Sofia Bermúdez



Ms. Shion Natsuyama

Human Resource Development Programmes for Africa, ASEAN region, Latin America and the Caribbean in collaboration with CSTD

On January 9, 2020, Okayama University and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) concluded a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for comprehensive cooperation on the development of human resources in Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI for SDGs), the first of its kind among universities around the world. The university introduced two human resource development programmes based on this MoU.

1. UNCTAD Young Female Scientist Programme in Japan



Joint Research and Training Course for Young Female Researchers from Developing Countries

This programme is also known as the "Young Female Scientist Programme in Japan," which targets Young Female Scientists from the CSTD member states, mainly in Africa, the ASEAN region, Latin America and the Caribbean. For a minimum of 14 to 30 days, we have accepted 27 young female scientists into the comprehensive research fields, such as medicine, environmental science, and education.

Accepted Researchers

1st batch:2021	Two from the Republic of Botswana and one each from Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Madagascar, and Thailand 1st batch conducted their research online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2nd batch:2022	Eight from South Africa, two from the Gambia, and one each from Egypt, Tanzania, and the Philippines
3rd batch:2023	Two from South Africa and one from the Philippines
4th batch:2024	Two from Botswana, and one each from South Africa, and the Philippines
5th batch:2025	One each from Ecuador, Guatemala, Peru, the Philippines, and Tanzania

2. UNCTAD Doctoral Degree Programme

Doctoral Degree Programme for Young Researchers from Developing Countries

This programme targets Master's degree holders from the CSTD member states, mainly in Africa, the ASEAN region, Latin America and the Caribbean. Based on their interests, Okayama University will help match the applicants with Okayama University professors from eight different Graduate Schools. The successful candidates will engage in cutting-edge research for three years to obtain a doctoral degree.

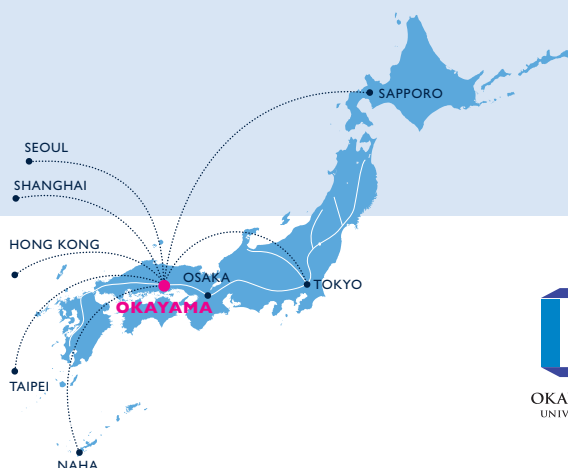
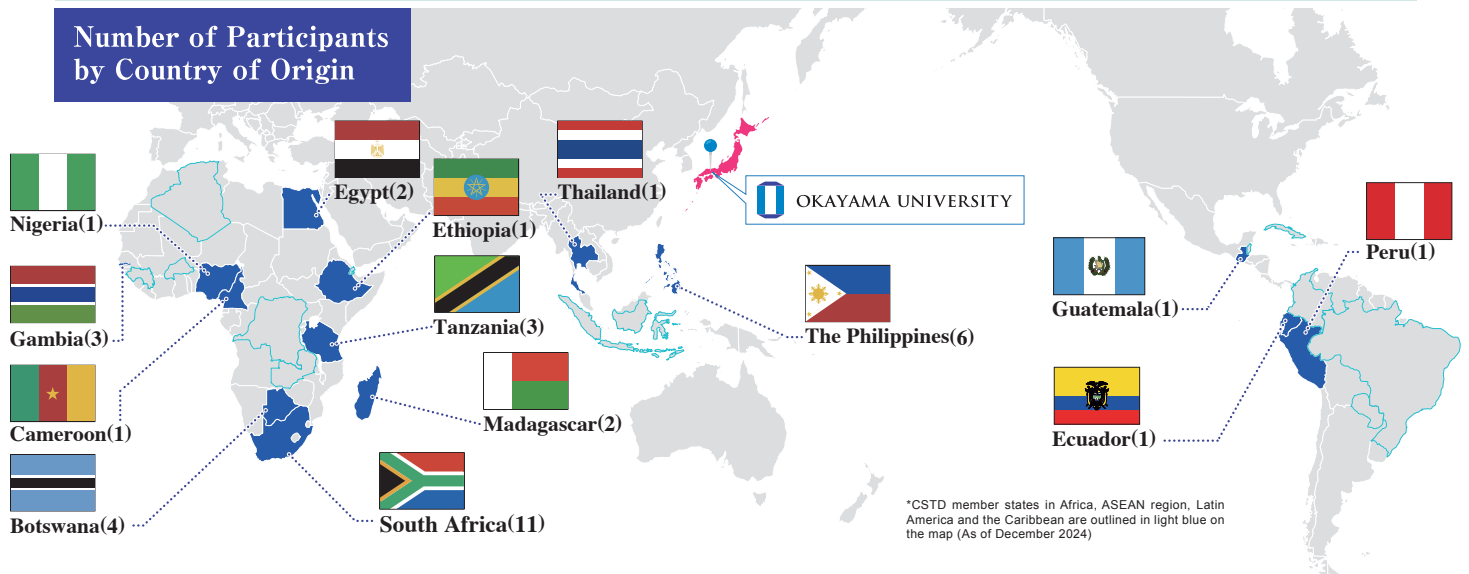
Examples of ongoing research themes

Development of a Control System and Value Addition Through Hydroponic Wastewater Treatment

Internet Protocol Fast Recovery for Multiple Network Component Failures

Assessment of the Local Adaptation Strategies to Farming Risks

Number of Participants by Country of Origin



TOKYO ✈️ OKAYAMA

✈️ from Haneda Airport: 1h20min
 🚄 by Nozomi Shinkansen: 3h20min

OSAKA ✈️ OKAYAMA

🚄 by Nozomi Shinkansen: 45min

TSUSHIMA CAMPUS

25min, by bus from Okayama Airport
 7min, by bus from Okayama Station

SHIKATA CAMPUS

5min, by bus from Okayama Station



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