

Osaka University Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Declaration

Guided by the spirit of citizenship inherited from its founding institutions of Kaitokudo and Tekijuku, Osaka University has continued to address the changing needs of society throughout its history under the motto, “Live Locally, Grow Globally.” Today, we are faced with a crucial need to create an open and broad-minded community and world that champion diversity and inclusion. To meet this need, we must take more revolutionary action than ever.

Osaka University issued the “Osaka University Gender Equality Declaration” in 2016 and the “Osaka University’s Principle on Diversity in Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity” in 2017, which were followed by the announcement of the “Iku-Boss Declaration” and the “SOGI Ally Declaration” by Osaka University’s President, board members and executives in 2020. Under these Declarations and Principle, we have been striving to build an environment where all the students and staff of Osaka University are respected, regardless of their sexual orientations, gender identities, nationalities, cultural backgrounds, ages, values, and disabilities. However, just ensuring the diversity of individuals is not enough if we are to maximize individuals’ abilities and potential and incorporate them into the strength of the University. We believe that in order for the University to enhance its overall vitality, it is crucial to build an environment where openness toward diversity and inclusion is the norm, and different individual identities are valued.

Against this backdrop, we hereby announce the “Osaka University Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Declaration,” to build on and further develop the abovementioned Declarations and Principle, and proclaim our commitment to reinforcing our efforts to nurture an environment where diversity is fully embraced and respected.

Osaka University aspires to realize a society that fosters a sense of purpose in life, namely, a society in which the spirit of diversity and inclusion is firmly embedded. To play a leading role in guiding society to achieve this vision, we are determined to strengthen our efforts toward university reforms, focusing on the following initiatives.

1. Facilitate awareness-raising among all the staff and students of Osaka University and promote learning- and work-style reforms

We will improve and expand university-wide teaching and training programs designed to help all the staff and students of Osaka University overcome unconscious biases, and facilitate learning- and work-style reforms so that diverse lifestyles of students and staff will be respected.

2. Take a multifaceted approach to foster respect for diversity and facilitate inclusion

We recognize all the staff and students of Osaka University as individuals with different abilities and potential, without regard to their sexual orientations, gender identities, nationalities, cultural backgrounds, ages, values, and disabilities. With this recognition, we will build fair learning, research, and work environments by improving both tangible and intangible elements, to ensure that they can use their individual abilities and skills to the fullest.

3. Offer university-wide support to women to achieve gender equality

We will accelerate our efforts to contribute to a gender-equal society through university-wide initiatives to promote the appointment of women to managerial positions and decision-making processes and increase the ratio of female students by making effective use of the quota system, in addition to the affirmative actions we are taking.

Definitions of the terms used in the Osaka University Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Declaration

- Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation means how one is attracted romantically and sexually to other people. To be specific, it includes: being romantically and sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex (heterosexuality); to people of the same sex (homosexuality); to both men and women (bisexuality); to neither men nor women (asexuality); and being attracted romantically but having no sexual desire (non-sexuality).

- Gender identity

Gender identity means how one perceives one's gender, or how one feels inside about one's sexual identity. It is also known as psychological gender. The gender a person identifies with does not necessarily conform to the gender assigned at birth.

- SOGI

SOGI is an acronym for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. To which sex one is attracted (sexual orientation) and how one perceives one's gender (sexual identity) are two different things. While the term LGBT* is often used, it refers to sexual minority people only in a limited manner. In reality, there are variations in sexual orientation and sexual identity, and people cannot simply be divided into sexual majority and minority groups. With the recognition that each person has their own sexual orientation and gender identity, Osaka University has chosen to use the term SOGI, which encompasses people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, whether categorized as a sexual minority or majority.

* In general, LGBT refers to the following.

L: Lesbian

G: Gay

B: Bisexual

T: Transgender; people whose sex assigned at birth (sex registered at birth) does not match their gender identities/expressions, including people with gender identity disorder

Sometimes, the term LGBTQ+ is used to include people who cannot or don't want to decide their sexual orientation or gender identity. Q stands for "questioning" or "queer."

- Iku-boss

Iku-boss is a supervisor/manager who is considerate and understanding of the situations of subordinates or colleagues who need to look after their children, care for family members or balance their work and life.

- Ally

An Ally is a person who seeks to understand and support LGBT people. You don't have to be an LGBT person to become an Ally. Osaka University uses the term "SOGI Ally" to express its respect for the diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity and to foster mutual understanding as a supporter of LGBT people. For this purpose, the term Ally is not used in the context of whether one stands for or against sexual minority people.

- Unconscious bias

Unconscious bias is an implicit bias inherent in all of us, which is embedded in our minds without us even realizing it in our daily lives and becomes a stereotype.

Source: Leaflet "Understanding Unconscious Bias?" published by the Japan Inter-Society Liaison Association Committee for Promoting Equal Participation of Men and Women in Science and Engineering in 2017

URL: https://www.djrenrakukai.org/doc_pdf/2019/UnconsciousBias_leaflet_eng.pdf

- Affirmative action

In general, affirmative action means temporary measures extended to individuals who suffer disadvantages due to social or structural discrimination, with a view to achieve de facto equality. Such measures include offering special opportunities to disadvantaged individuals within certain limits. Affirmative action is also known as positive improvement measures.

- Quota system

This system is a kind of affirmative action, which sets a gender-based quota to increase female participation and reduce gender disparities.