

Joint Statement for Enhancing the Integrity of Scientific Research

Research institutions in Japan have consistently made significant contributions to their respective academic fields on the global level. The numerous Japanese researchers who have been awarded such internationally illustrious accolades and awards as the Nobel Prize bears testament to this fact.

Japan's universities have also been integral to this effort. They have provided a higher education capable of producing first-rate human resources, as well as functioning as essential centers of outstanding research. The role of universities in Japan will become increasingly important as academic cooperation and competition proliferates globally.

However, research institutions in Japan and around the world are faced with increasing numbers of research misconduct cases including inappropriate use of research fund. Numerous instances of research fund mismanagement, and fabrication as well as falsification and plagiarism of research data in scientific publications are among the offenses that have plagued the entire research community. It is unfortunately true that such cases, which eventually lead to public distrust of academic research, have recently been frequent occurrences in institutions including our universities.

The Science Council of Japan (SCJ), on behalf of the country's scientific community, has been dealing with the issue of research misconduct for years. In January, 2013, they published a revised version of the original 2006 "Code of Conduct for Scientists" which represented the minimum ethical standards which all scientists, regardless of their disciplines, should share. Many universities have been setting up their own systems, such as their research ethics committees to prevent research misconduct or to contend with suspicious cases.

The Japanese government has also been actively involved on several fronts. For example, the Council for Science, Technology and Innovation issued a statement entitled "Addressing Research Misconduct" on September 19, 2014. This statement requested that every scientific and technological research body practice constant vigilance against research misconduct. In addition, various government ministries have tackled the problem within their own jurisdictions. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) recently issued "Guidelines for Responding to Misconduct in Research Activities" on August 26th, 2014 and revised the "Guidelines for Management and Audit of Public Research Funds at Research Institutions (implementation standards)" on February 18th, 2014. The actions of these organizations have raised awareness towards this ongoing issue and have enhanced existing practices to promote proper research activities in the future.

JANU, JAPU, FJPCUA and SCJ recognize the urgent need to restore the trust and

reliability of scientific research not just in Japan, but also around the world. We need to radically raise the level of integrity in day-to-day research activities as well as to encourage greater respect for rules and morals amongst individual researchers. Through the mutual cooperation of our respective scientific research organizations, we declare our intention to take the following actions to raise the level of research integrity:

1. In order to maintain the reputation of Japanese research worldwide, universities and other research institutions shall uphold the highest standards for performing research. They will strictly prohibit inappropriate use of research fund as well as unethical research methods. We accept our organizational responsibility to respond quickly and in an appropriate manner to any questionable cases should they occur.
2. Research institutions and universities will actively refine and implement the preventive measures that are essential to eliminating research misconduct. They will require all personnel to complete specific educational programs and observe basic research ethics. From time to time, they will reevaluate and deliberate on existing processes and guidelines to ensure maximum effectiveness and to accommodate for any necessary changes.
3. Universities and other research institutions, SCJ and all members of the scientific community in Japan will develop and disseminate educational programs designed to tackle and prevent misconduct in research activities and the inappropriate use of research fund through collaborative and mutual cooperation. In sharing best practices, we will endeavor to increase the reliability of scientific research both within and beyond Japan.

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