

## Research Enhancement Strategy Office



Director  
UENO, Naoto



Vice-Director (Specially  
Appointed Professor (URA))  
NISHIMURA, Mikio

In order to fulfill two goals, to encourage cutting-edge academic research in the field of natural sciences through international joint research, and to contribute to the enhancement of research capabilities of universities etc. in Japan using the world's most advanced research environment for joint utilization and joint research, NINS started in 2013 a research enhancement project with the following four approaches: 1) Support for the promotion of international advanced research, 2) Support for the promotion of joint utilization and joint research in Japan, 3) Dissemination of information and enhancement of public relations in Japan and abroad, 4) Support for researchers, especially young, female or foreign researchers.

The Research Enhancement Strategy Office is aimed at supporting researchers so that NIBB improves its ability as a collaborative research institution, and was restructured in 2013 from the former Strategic Planning Department, the Office of Public Relations, and the Office of International Cooperation which existed from 2005. The Office's activities are mainly carried out by URAs (University Research Administrators) according to the advice of the group adviser chosen from NIBB's professors and in close collaboration with the NINS's Research Enhancement Promotion Headquarters.

## Evaluation and Information Group

Associate Professor: KODAMA, Ryuji  
Group Adviser: YOSHIDA, Shosei

This group serves as a central office for assisting the Director General in preparing for NIBB's evaluation procedure and in planning long-range strategies for the institute.

### The main activities of the group

#### 1) Management of external evaluation processes

NIBB asks non-NIBB members of the Advisory Committee for Programming and Management to answer a questionnaire on research achievements and collaborative research activities of the institute. Several of the members are further invited to participate in a meeting for the evaluation of these activities and for proposing future directions for the institute. This group manages these processes.

#### 2) Editing of the Annual Report (in collaboration with the Public Relations Group)

This group edits the annual report (this print) which summarizes the annual activities of laboratories and facilities and is used in the evaluation procedures of the institute.

#### 3) Assistance in budget requests and long-range planning of the institute

This group assists the Director General in preparing long-range plans for building the most advanced research facilities, and in budget requests to the government to realize and implement these plans.

#### 4) Assistance in making the plans and reports of the institute

This group assists in drafting NIBB's Medium-term Goals and Plans (for a six-year-period), and in instituting Annual Plans to implement them. The department also assists in preparing Business and Performance Reports for the external evaluation on whether we are meeting the goals set both annually and for the medium-term.

## Public Relations Group

Specially Appointed Assistant Professor (URA):

KURATA, Tomoko

Technical Assistant:

OTA, Kyoko

KAWAGUCHI, Colin

BAN, Misato

Group Adviser:

FUJIMORI, Toshihiko

This group, in order to publicize the activities of NIBB to the widest audience, performs both routine public relations as well as communication with media and scientific organizations worldwide.

### The main activities of the group in 2013

#### 1) Press releases

The office sends news on scientific achievements to newspaper and magazine reporters via leaflets, e-mails and web pages. We also arrange press conferences for some releases.

#### 2) Updating and maintenance of the NIBB web page

#### 3) Editing of publications, production of posters and leaflets

Publication of the pamphlet "An Introduction to the National Institute for Basic Biology". Publication of leaflets introducing the individual researchers of NIBB (in Japanese). Publication of "NIBB News" (Intra-institutional newsletter, in Japanese), "NIBB English News" (Intra-institutional newsletter, in English). Design and distribution of posters for international conferences and advertisements for the graduate school's entrance examination.

#### 4) Producing videos

Creation of videos introducing NIBB and interviews with researchers that are published on the web.

#### 5) Organization of scientific outreach programs

Planning the Summer Program for university students, and coordinating special classes for middle school students.

### International Cooperation Group

*Specially Appointed Assistant Professor (URA):*  
TATEMATSU, Kiyoshi  
*Technical Assistant:*  
TAKAHASHI, Ritsue  
SANJO, Kazuko  
*Group Adviser:*  
UENO, Naoto

This group supports NIBB's activities related to international research collaborations, through organizing various types of international scientific meetings and technical courses, exchanging researchers and students between NIBB and overseas institutions including those with which we exchanged cooperative agreements. This group also supports NIBB's interns visiting from foreign countries.

NIBB has a mission to continually explore the leading-edge of biology and form research communities that link Japan to the world. For this purpose, NIBB holds scientific meetings including NIBB conferences and Okazaki Biology Conferences (OBC), and educational programs such as International Practical Courses. Further, NIBB is tightly interacting with the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL, European member states), the Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research (MPIPZ, Germany), and Temasek Life Sciences Laboratory (TLL, Singapore) on the basis of cooperative agreements, through exchanging people and techniques and holding scientific meetings. This group supports and coordinates these international activities of NIBB.

### The main activities of the group in 2013

#### 1) Coordination of international conferences

This group coordinated the following international conferences hosted by NIBB:

The 61st NIBB Conference "Cellular Community in Mammalian Embryogenesis" Okazaki, Japan, July 10-12, 2013 (p. 86)

The 10th NIBB-EMBL Joint Symposium "Quantitative Bioimaging" Okazaki, Japan, March 17-19, 2013 (p. 87)

#### 2) Support of dispatching researchers and students to international conferences

This group coordinated sending NIBB researchers to the following events (related to the NIBB-EMBL exchange agreement).

The 15th EMBL PhD Symposium "Competition in Biology: The Race for Survival, from Molecules to Systems", EMBL, Heidelberg, Germany, November 21-23, 2013 (p. 90)

EMBL Workshop "Morphogen Gradients" Oxford, UK, June, 26-29, 2013

NIBB investigators' lab visits to EMBL, Heidelberg

#### 3) Support of education-related programs

This group supported the following student-related activities of NIBB.

NIBB Internship Program 2013 (p. 89)

10th Life Science Retreat, Department of Life Science, SOKENDAI. October 30-31, 2013

### Collaborative Research Group

*Specially Appointed Associate Professor (URA):*  
SHIGENOBU, Shuji  
KAMEI, Yasuhiro  
*Technical Assistant:*  
ICHIKAWA, Mariko  
ICHIKAWA, Chiaki  
*Group Adviser:*  
YOSHIDA, Shosei

Specially appointed associate professors of this group also belong to NIBB core research facilities and are responsible in managing collaborative research projects and practical courses using their academic background knowledge and specialties. Based on these experiences, this group explores further promotion of information exchange and collaboration among universities and institutes, both academic and industrial, and supports the development and dissemination of new experimental equipment and methods.

In 2013, this group advised the core research facilities to enhance functionality, and new equipment such as a high-sensitivity EM-DDCP camera system, protein identification software for mass spectrometry, and a spectrophotometer were purchased.

### Gender Equality Promotion Group

*Group Adviser:* TAKADA, Shinji

This group supports the improvement of the research environment for female researchers in both research and livelihood that includes the research support system for the period of childbirth and childcare, etc., aiming at promoting the employment of female researchers.

In 2013, this group assisted in giving publicity to the recruitment of an associate professor from female candidates to NIBB, and contributed to the management of the research support system for the period of childbirth and childcare. This group organized an enlightenment lecture and published a brochure for gender equality promotion in collaboration with other institutes of the NINS.