



Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology Promotion Corporation

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- PRESS RELEASE -

Final steps towards new University at OIST

Okinawa, Japan, June 17, 2011 — The Board of Governors of the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology (OIST) Promotion Corporation, and the Establishing Members of the future OIST School Corporation, held meetings in Okinawa on June 16 and 17, 2011. The two groups, which consist of world-renowned scientists, including Nobel Laureates, oversee the project. This meeting had particular significance, as it was the first to be held on the OIST campus and also marked the last meeting of the Members, which will no longer convene on the creation of the OIST School Corporation, planned for November 2011.

Progress towards Accreditation

OIST President-elect Jonathan Dorfan presented an overview of progress towards school opening in November 2011. Complete accreditation documentation was submitted to Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science & Technology in Japan (MEXT) in March 2011 and he commended the OIST staff for producing an outstanding set of coherent documents. Feedback from the MEXT Council has been positive with some requests for clarification and expansion on some items. Part of the accreditation procedure is Faculty Qualification. All 30 OIST faculty were judged as qualified to teach the proposed courses and 26 were judged as qualified to supervise PhDs. Executive Assistant to the President Mr. Shinya Takeuchi from MEXT reported that MEXT officials had commented that the examination of faculty seldom runs so smoothly as this case.

Faculty Recruitment

Dr. Dorfan underlined the outstanding success of recruiting world-class international faculty for the university. A recruitment campaign with the aim of employing at least 15 new faculty was launched in Summer 2010. OIST set the appointment standard very high asking for scientists who had a demonstrated a record of outstanding scholastic accomplishment and leadership and who are acknowledged as being in the top 5-10% of their worldwide peer group. Currently 19 new Principal Investigators have agreed to join OIST and will become faculty when the university opens, several more are expected to sign contracts in the near future. As a result of this recruitment the faculty balance between Life Sciences and Physical Sciences has also been much improved. Dr. Dorfan commented, *"Results of recruitment process demonstrate that OIST Graduate University can compete successfully against the best worldwide institutions for the highest caliber faculty."*

Board member Dr. Jerome Friedman from MIT, congratulated OIST on the successful recruitment. *"I am very impressed by the candidates and the high quality of the institutes they come from. This is an excellent beginning."* Board Member Lord Martin Rees congratulated the OIST team stating, *"I hugely admire what has been achieved, it is a wonderful start for the university."*

Dr. Dorfan also announced that Professor Hirotaka Sugawara, currently Director of Japan Society

for the Promotion of Science, Washington DC, has accepted an appointment in the OIST School Corporation as a Special Advisor to the President. Dr. Sugarawa brings unique experience of scientific statesmanship both within Japan and internationally. He is also very much involved in cutting edge research.

Site progress

The OIST campus grows as the Lab 2 building and the 500-seat Auditorium take shape. Both construction sites change daily as approximately 170 construction workers piece together the next additions to the OIST campus. Lab 2 is on schedule for completion in Spring 2012, and the auditorium will be completed in February of 2012. The Village Zone, which includes student housing and facilities will be built using a Public, Private Partnership and the first phase is expected to be completed by the start of the first academic year in September 2012.

The Establishing Members unanimously passed a motion to press for the construction of the next laboratory building –Lab 3. This building will be vital to give research space to OIST professors but also for the large number of visiting academics that will come to OIST. Dr. Dorfan commented. *“Without Lab 3, we will restrict the scientific promise of OIST.”*

Board of Governors and Board of Councilors

Two bodies will advise and oversee OIST management and the scientific program, the Board of Governors and the Board of Councilors. Dr. Dorfan welcomed new members to the Board of Governors and pointed out the depth of experience in university management that the Board Members bring to OIST. He also announced the names of the members of the Board of Councilors, which will have its first meeting in November 2011. See attached lists of membership of both Boards.

Rules and Regulations

To provide a sound and efficient management platform for the university, effective Rules and Regulations must be established. As part of accreditation, MEXT will examine OIST progress in September towards a set of appropriate Policies, Rules and Regulations. To this end, OIST has assembled a Task Force of highly experienced and capable subject matter experts to drive the preparation of the Rules and Regulations. Dr. Dorfan stressed. *“It is very important that OIST staff, scientists and students feel supported by the university’s Policies, Rules and Regulations.”*

Collaboration with the University of the Ryukyus

A program of cooperative initiatives has been set up with the University of Ryukyus. A four-point plan was adopted in a meeting held in April 2011 at OIST concentrating on:

- Scientific Collaboration
- Undergraduate Education
- Employment Opportunities
- Cultural Enrichment

Inaugural Event

A special Inaugural Celebration will be held on Saturday 19th November to celebrate the establishment of the university. In the morning there will be a symposium marking the outstanding contribution of Dr. Sydney Brenner to the creation of OIST, followed by the Inaugural

Celebration in the afternoon. Dr. Dorfan announced that Dr. Charles Vest, former President of MIT, has agreed to be the Keynote speaker.

For photos of OIST and the meetings please go to:

<http://www.oist.jp/en/pressarchive/150-2011/747-bog12-mem5-report.html>

The Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology (OIST) is a new graduate university.

The purpose of OIST is to conduct world-class research and education in science and technology in Okinawa, to contribute to the self-sustaining development of Okinawa and to the advancement of science and technology worldwide. OIST currently has 30 research units (more than 180 researchers) carrying out multi-disciplinary research in neuroscience, molecular sciences, mathematical and computational biology, and environmental science. It has launched a program of international courses and workshops that have already achieved worldwide recognition. Full accreditation as a new graduate university is expected in November 2011.