

Common indicators and targets

Internationalization

○ Promotion of study abroad opportunities for Japanese students (reopening of study abroad/effective use of online tools)

- Following the relaxation of overseas travel restrictions, the University recommenced suspended study abroad programs. With the addition of new courses, some 140 students participated in the summer overseas short-term program consisting of eight training Courses, and some 190 students in the spring overseas short-term program consisting of 12 training courses.
- Continuing from FY2021, the University offered modules (subject groups) for the COIL educational program as part of the “Forum for Promoting Internationalization of Universities” led by Kansai University. A total of 13 students from the University participated in the program for FY2022.
- The University’s overseas partner institutions have expanded to 239 institutions in 65 countries and regions with the addition of two new counties, Slovenia and Jordan.

○ Enhancing support for international students

- Following the expiration of the term of the agreement on the UNHCR Refugee Higher Education Program (RHEP), a recommendation admission system for refugees, between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Japan, the United Nations Association of UNHCR, and Soka University, the three parties held an agreement signing ceremony for the renewal of the agreement to extend its validity until March 31, 2027.
- In collaboration with Pathways Japan (PJ) and the Japan International Christian University Foundation (JICUF), the University accepted five Ukraine students from the fall semester who wish to continue their studies in Japan as the Ukraine crisis continues.

○ Activities of overseas offices

- The University of Nairobi, Kenya, held a symposium to commemorate 35 years of exchange with Soka University and the 30th anniversary of the honorary doctorate awarded to the founder of the University. A Soka University liaison office was established inside the University of Nairobi in 2021, which greatly contributed to the holding of the symposium.



Commemorative photo at the University of Nairobi

○ Promotion for international students

- An MOU was signed between the University and a high school in Bengaluru, India to start discussions on a study program at the University.

Governance reform

○ Utilization of the cross-appointment system

- The utilization of the cross-appointment system enabled the University to recruit international faculty members and other experts in a more flexible manner. A total of 34 cross-appointment agreements were signed which will take effect from FY2023.

○ Full-fledged activities using BEVI-j

- An MOU was signed between the University and IBAVI (International Beliefs and Values Institute), which promotes activities using BEVI, and the Japan chapter of IBAVI was established at the University.
- In addition to the ongoing use of the BEVI-j test for students studying abroad, the University started utilizing BEVI in measuring the achievement of the Diploma Policy from the incoming students of FY2022. The students will take the BEVI from time to time, and the changes will be analyzed.

○ Enhancement of collaboration with other universities

- A symposium hosted by the Institute of Plankton Eco-engineering was held, where representatives from the University provided an overview of and results from the SARTREPS-COSMOS project, which ended in FY2021, as well as an overview and results to date from the SARTREPS-EARTH project, which started in FY2021. The rostrum was also taken by faculty members from the University of Guanajuato, the Monterrey Institute of Technology, and the Tokyo Institute of Technology.

Educational reform

○ Introduction of a “Minor: SDGs”

- From FY2022, “Relevance to the SDGs” column was added to the syllabus, enabling the students to check the connection between the class contents and the 17 SDGs when deciding the class of their interest. In addition to the main major in which students study the curriculum of their own faculty and department, a minor system will be introduced from FY 2023 that allows students to study specialized courses related to the SDGs across the humanities and sciences.
- A new system “SDGs Good Practice” was launched to honor and subsidize initiatives with a high degree of contribution and ideas with high feasibility toward the achievement of the SDGs.

○ Initiatives to foster global perspectives

- Continuing from FY2021, Soka Global Perspectives, a series of lectures that aim to provide opportunities to develop global knowledge and perspectives was held. To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Look East Policy, an associate professor from the University of Malaya, Malaysia and Soka University faculty gave lecture sessions. Also invited to the lecture series were Singapore’s Ambassador to Japan, the Executive Director of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Cuba’s Ambassador to Japan, an associate professor from the Kyiv School of Economics, and other global intellectuals.



Olga Kupets
Associate Professor,
Kyiv School of Economics

○ Lectures by the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

- SADC special lecture course started in the 2022 Spring semester which invited SADC member countries’ ambassadors and diplomats as lecturers for each class. By popular demand, the course will also be held in FY2023.

University's own indicators and targets

○ The number of students advancing to overseas graduate schools

- There were 57 students admitted to overseas graduate schools. Major graduate schools include the State University of New York (U.S.), Soka University of America (U.S.), Public Policy & Management at the University of Glasgow (UK), and Aarhus University (Denmark).

○ The number of students reaching the standards of proficiency in a foreign language other than English

- A decision has been made to subsidize the expense for proficiency tests of foreign languages other than English and Japanese for students who have reached a given level of language proficiency. The subsidization program will be implemented in FY2023 and its preparations are underway.

○ Raising the motivation of students, faculty, and staff through the campaign for the project's final year

- As the Top Global University Project approaches its final year, the University has organized a campaign to promote the project's initiatives, particularly those affected by COVID-19, in cooperation with relevant divisions and departments. Various initiatives to increase the number of students studying abroad and that of students achieving foreign language proficiency standards as well as special courses and events will be held under the campaign.

Featured initiatives based on the characteristics of the University

○ Enhancement of collaborative research and partnership with exchange universities and institutions in Japan and overseas

- The first International Symposium on Global Citizenship Education was held to mark the latter half of Soka University's 50th-anniversary project, which aims to build a hub for global citizenship education. The theme of the symposium was "Restoring Learning to Daily Living: Global Citizenship and John Dewey." Keynote speeches and parallel presentations were delivered for the symposium, attended by about 170 participants from 25 countries and regions around the world.
- To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China, the University and Tsinghua University jointly held the Commemorative Forum for the 50th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations - Japan-China Exchange and the Mission of Universities. The forum was attended by some 250 students on both campuses connected online.

○ International conference on policy recommendations for G7 Hiroshima Summit

- In March 2023, for the G7 Summit to be held in Hiroshima in May 2023, an international conference on policy recommendations was held at the University under the theme "Advancing Security and Sustainability." Researchers and representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) gathered at the conference to propose recommendations for the forthcoming summit, especially on aggravating crises, such as nuclear proliferation, climate change, and pandemics, that threaten the life of humanity. The recommendations were submitted to Japan's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as the G7 Hiroshima Summit Secretariat.



International conference on policy recommendations for G7 Hiroshima Summit

○ Ranks in global and national rankings

- In the Times Higher Education (THE) Japan University Rankings 2023, the University was ranked 6th in the Internationality category, maintaining its top 10 position for four consecutive years.
- In the QS Asia University Rankings 2023 announced in November 2022, the University ranked as follows: International faculty: 68th (6th in Japan), Outbound exchange students: 96th (7th in Japan), Inbound exchange students: 116th (14th in Japan), and International students: 143rd (21st in Japan).



Keynote speech by Mr. Richard Munang

○ 50th Anniversary Commemorative Event: "Value Creation x SDGs" series

- As part of the 50th-anniversary commemorative project, the fourth "Value Creation x SDGs" event was held under the theme "The Role of Universities in Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection." With distinguished guests invited from various fields, including Mr. Richard Munang, Africa Regional Climate Change Programme Coordinator, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), who gave a keynote speech, this event provided an opportunity for each one of us to think about and take actions toward achieving the SDGs.



"Value Creation x SDGs" symposium

○ Soka University President appointed a board member of ASAIHL

- In November, Soka University President Masashi Suzuki was appointed as a board member of the Association of Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning (ASAIHL), which is currently an international academic institution with some 230 universities in 25 countries and regions around the world, including not only Southeast Asia but also Europe and North America.
- The association's general conference was held at the University in 2018 for the first time in Japan and will be held at the University for the second time in 2023.

Others

○ Student activities

- In the "RoboCup Japan Open 2022 @Home Simulation OPL" held in October 2022 jointly with the global-scale "IROS2022 Interactive Service Robot Competition in Cyberspace," SOBITS, composed of members from the Faculty of Science and Engineering Prof. Choi's seminar, took home the overall victory. Furthermore, the team won the overall championship in the most difficult league of robotics competitions in Japan—the RoboCup Japan Open 2022 @Home OPL held in March 2023 by taking first place in all competitions, earning its second overall OPL championship in a row.



SOBITS winning 2nd championship in a row

- At the 8th Sumitomo Riko SDGs Student Essay Award, a student of the University was chosen for the runner-up prize. The essay contest has been held every year since 2014. This year, with increased importance placed on SDGs, decarbonization, and biodiversity preservation, the essay theme was "Changing business starting with a 'Purpose' - Why do we need a reason to exist."