

## Thank you very much for your participation in EJEA Conference 2021 in Kagawa

The 'EJEA Conference 2021 in Kagawa' was held online for three days from October 22nd (Friday) to 24th (Sunday), 2021. This conference, held in part to commemorate the 160th anniversary of Japan-Germany diplomatic relations, was co-organized by Europe Japan Experts Association (EJEA), Kagawa University, Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Information Technology (FIT) and Institute for Security Development Policy (ISDP).

We are grateful to the following 13 institutions which kindly sponsored and supported us; Toshiba International Foundation (TIFO), Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence, Kagawa Industry Support Foundation (KISF), Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research, Japanese German Center Berlin (JDZB), EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation, German Research Ambassadors Network for Industrial Technology Endeavors (GRANITE), Japan-German Society Kagawa (JGSK), Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Kagawa, Kagawa Prefecture, Modular Management Group, Takamatsu City and Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA).

Although it was held online due to the COVID-19 outbreak, there was a total of 196 participants. Fifty-one participants joined from 12 countries (eight European countries, three Asian countries and the United States of America). Within Japan, 105 participants hailed from Kagawa Prefecture while the remaining 40 participants attended from other prefectures.

There was a total of 80 presentations: comprising seven keynote lectures, one invited presentation, 60 oral presentations (held in 8 Workshops), and 12 poster presentations (including four by high school students). The number of both participants and presentations exceeded our anticipation. Specifically, we expanded our scope to include regions/countries other than EU and Japan. Of special mention is the positive assessment on the large number of participants from the Asian region.

The theme was "International Conference on "Human-centered Sustainability and Innovation for an AI-assisted Future: New Interdisciplinary Education & Research for the Next Stages in Japan and Europe". During the conference, participants discussed a wide range of issues in fields such as medical care, cities, environment, disaster prevention, agriculture, and education. One of the primary issues discussed was how to develop projects from a "human-centered" perspective. This discussion encompassed keywords such as Society 5.0 (Industry 4.0) and SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), areas which the university is currently focusing on.

Many cases focusing on high efficiency and high performance through technological innovation by AI were presented. Efforts and ideas that reflect the philosophy of “Human-centered Sustainability” were also probed. Participants were stimulated by the presentations, which subsequently led to robust and vigorous discussions. Presenters were highly conscious, making attempts to propose and share ideas that may lead to innovation.

On a cautionary note, it was pointed out that it is important to deal with the inherent risks that come with improving efficiency and performance, and to consider the vulnerability of digitization. Furthermore, discussions were held on how to link up the conference content with education. Along this line, Kagawa University has started introducing and implementing the concept of DRI (Design thinking, Risk management and resilience, and Informatics) Education for the entire student body.

The conference was conducted very smoothly throughout the three days. Participants from Japan and overseas offered many accolades for the richness of the academic content and the splendor of its operation.

We would like to thank all parties for the exceptional cooperation and support in hosting this international conference at Kagawa University. We will make effective use of this achievement and connect it to the creation of future networks. The next EJEJA Conference is due to be held in Berlin in 2022.

All the best,

27 October 2021

The Organizing Committee of EJEJA Conference 2021 in Kagawa  
Official HP: <https://www.kagawa-u.ac.jp/kuio/circ/event/ejeaconf/>