

# Okayama University

## Support for UNESCO Associated Schools

### 1. Activities in UNESCO Associated Schools Project University Network (ASPUnivNet)

Since the UNESCO Associated Schools Project University Network (ASPUnivNet) was organized in 2008, Okayama University has supported the ESD practices of UNESCO Associated Schools as a member university of the network, and has overseen the executive office of the network from FY



The 6th National Meeting of UNESCO Associated Schools

2013 to 2015. Okayama University has played a role as a leader in design, implementation, evaluation, and improvement for supporting UNESCO Associated Schools, applying the Japan-UNESCO Partnership Project, and conferring with the secretariat of UNESCO Associated Schools under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT).

In 2014, “The UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development 2014 World Conference,” including Kominkan-CLC International Conference on ESD, The 9th Global RCE Conference, UNESCO ASPnet International ESD Events for Students and Teachers, UNESCO ESD Youth Conference, and 8th Biennial Meeting of the International Network of Teacher Education Institutions Associated with the UNESCO Chair on Reorienting Teacher Education to Address Sustainability, was held in Okayama City. Okayama University contributed to the organization of these meetings; it organized a university students’ team to support high school students who managed UNESCO ASPnet International ESD Events for Students and Teachers, and was the site of the National Meeting of UNESCO Associated Schools in Japan.

### 2. Support for UNESCO Associated Schools centered in the Okayama area

In support of UNESCO Associated Schools centered in the Okayama area, Okayama University has held the “UNESCO Associated Schools Seminar” once every year. In the 2016 seminar, best practices of ESD were reported and shared among elementary schools and junior/senior high schools, with the theme “Toward sustainability of ESD in schools”.

Furthermore, Okayama University participates in “The Consortium of ESD promotion for growing global human resources,” centering on the board of education in Okayama City, and supports ESD practices of UNESCO Associated Schools in Okayama City. The Okayama University ESD Promotion Center, which was established in the Graduate School of Education at Okayama University, supports ESD practices intensively, such as delivering lecturers to in-service training in preschool, elementary school, and junior/senior high school, and dispatching volunteer university students to support ESD practices.

# Research and Education for Sustainable Development

## **1. Establishment of the UNESCO Chair and ESD network in higher education**

The Okayama area was one of the first seven areas in the world to be registered as a “Regional Centre of Expertise on ESD (RCE),” authorized by the United Nations University, in June 2005. In order to meet ESD challenges as a higher education institution and to expand ESD activities in cooperation with many institutions related with RCE Okayama, Okayama University applied for and was certified as the “UNESCO Chair in Research and Education for Sustainable Development at Okayama University” in April 2007.

## **2. Teacher training incorporating the ideas of ESD**

The diploma policy of the teacher training curriculum at Okayama University is to cultivate reflective and creative teachers who possess ideas about ESD and well-balanced educational competencies. With the purpose of realizing the diploma policy, the Graduate School of Education incorporates contents regarding a basic understanding of ESD into the core curriculum, and offers a course entitled “Theory and Practice of ESD” to promote educational competencies in ESD.