

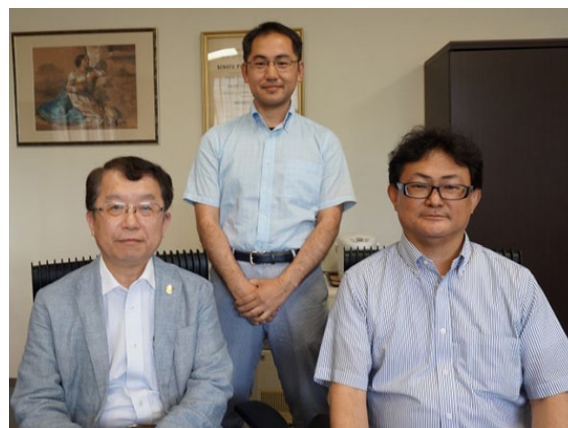
## ■ News

### Selection as a Center for Excellence

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On June 27, 2014, Okayama University was selected as a Center of Excellence for the Innovative Technology Promotion Project (Interdisciplinary Research) by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and food industries have various research areas which border other academic fields, including medical science, engineering and science. As such, the project aims to create innovative technology through an interdisciplinary approach.



From left to right: Executive Director Yamamoto (CPD), URA Satoh (CPM) Prof. Sera (Research Representative)

Okayama University is working to form a consortium with a number of companies. The theme of this joint initiative will be the “establishment and implementation of leading, innovative technology which inhibits virus replication with the use of artificial nucleic-acid-binding proteins”. Prof. Takashi Sera of the Graduate School of Natural Science and Technology, Okayama University, has been appointed as the project’s research representative. The project targets i) the development of a novel design method of artificial RNA-binding proteins which recognize RNA viruses, ii) the development of protein-based anti-influenza drugs, iii) the creation of virus-resistant wheat, and iv) the establishment of high-sensitive detection technology based on immunochromatography which is often used as a rapid virus test kit.

Okayama University Executive Director and Vice President in charge of research, Professor Shinichi Yamamoto, acts as a Consortium Program Director (CPD: Project head). Norito Satoh, research administrator, serves as Consortium Program Manager (CPM: Management of Research Administration). The university collaborates closely with the Program Officer at the Bio-oriented Technology Research Advancement Institution (BRAIN) which is one of the National Agriculture and Food Research Organization (NARO)’s research centers. The university will proceed with research and implementation strategically.

Okayama University has an excellent record with regard to interdisciplinary research and operates a research core for interdisciplinary sciences. In addition, it is one of the institutions chosen to receive support under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)’s program for promoting enhanced research universities. Furthermore, it has a university hospital, which has

been chosen as a ‘clinical study core hospital’ by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW). Similarly, the Institute of Plant Science and Resources (IPSR) has been selected as a joint usage / research center by the MEXT. Okayama University is the only research institution in Japan which has these three strongholds in fields of agriculture and plants. Okayama University aims to utilize this strength to a maximum extent so that it can create innovative technologies.

[Enquires]

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