

Feb 15, 2023  
30% Club Japan

Activity Report

**30% Club Japan University Group:**

**A dialogue between Yuko Takahashi, President of Tsuda University,  
and Teruo Fujii, President of the University of Tokyo**

**Make a Difference at Universities:  
Pioneering a Landscape for Women Leaders**

On December 5, 2022, a dialogue was held at the University of Tokyo between President Yuko Takahashi of Tsuda University and President Teruo Fujii of the University of Tokyo as a project of the 30% Club Japan University Group.

With the aim of discussing efforts on how to reach having 30% of top positions filled by women at universities, we invited President Yuko Takahashi of Tsuda University, who has written several books, including *How Can the Number of Women University Presidents Be Increased?*; President Teruo Fujii of the University of Tokyo, who made half of the board members women when he took office; and Haruko Nagayama, Chair of the Board of Deloitte Tohmatsu Group, to moderate a discussion on how universities

**The Significance of Promoting Women's Activities**

the statues are all of men. I think it is important to have women participate in higher positions to create a place everyone wants to come to.

### **Women Leaders Do Not Arise Spontaneously**

**President Takahashi:** University presidents have also had very limited opportunities to be educated by women faculty members. As for myself, probably 60% or 70% of the credits I earned at Tsuda University were from courses taught by women. I believe that the experience of taking classes from these women, who had been going through

**Ms. Nagayama:** The University of Tokyo has a different “landscape” than Tsuda University, with a lower percentage of women in its pipeline of students. Other than that, are there any other factors that are shaping the “landscape” of the University of Tokyo?

**President Fujii:** As President Takahashi mentioned, I think the influence of people who can be seen as role models in becoming researchers is significant. There is still a situation where the percentage of women professors has not reached 10%. This needs to change. In this sense, I believe that increasing the number of women in higher positions is very important; it is a major point. As was recently reported, the goal is to increase the percentage of women faculty members by making approximately 300 of the 1,200 new professors and associate professors scheduled to be appointed over the next six years women.

### **Ban Men-only “Manels”**

**Ms. Nagayama:** Has increasing the number of women on the board had an impact?

**President Fujii:** The structure has changed, including that of the presidency, so of course there have been major changes. I also wanted to make the meetings among the board members a forum for lively discussion. It’s not about whether the previous situation was better or worse, but there was a change. Some of the board members have also been in management in outside companies or have worked extensively for international organizations. In this sense, different

perspectives are added to the discussion, even from those who have been at the university for a long time.

**Executive VP Hayashi The University of Tokyo, Executive Vice President / Vice President):** Manels were practically banned among the board members. I feel that the point that “there are no female panelists” has been properly raised at recent meetings.

**President Fujii:** The nehave aladjusted.

4-4-2. Through changing the cut-off point, for example, by bringing in women from a slightly younger demographic, the panel has gained a reputation for producing content more easily understood by the listeners. The “manel ban” works for any organization.

**President Takahashi:** Whenever a university president has been the main speaker, or

School of Medicine (“Diagnosis, Treatment, and Prevention in Medicine” by Takezo Shinkai) and an elegant woman in a classical Greek-like costume in a mural above the stage in the Yasuda Auditorium (“Spring Water” and “Harvest Fruits” by Miaki Kosugi). However, there is no prize bearing a woman’s name, is there? There is a prize bearing a man’s name (the Shigeru Nanbara Award).

**President Takahashi:** Through awards we can show that women can accomplish anything. Isn’t it important to **set up the infrastructure to create an environment that welcomes, empowers, and includes women?** The award is just one example, but it is important to make inroads to honor women in such a way.

Women came late to institutions of higher education. While Tohoku Imperial University started accepting women students in 1913, Tokyo Imperial University did not do so until 1946. Shouldn’t we examine the history of the University of Tokyo to date by asking the question why it lagged behind Tohoku University for 33 years?

At Tsuda University, we tell students about how women overcame difficulties to get to where they are today. Historically, how have Tsuda graduates been involved in overcoming various hurdles? For example, we are actively communicating the fact that Tsuda University alumnus Ryoko Akamatsu and former president Taki Fujita were involved in the passage of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law.

An environment where women are placed in the center and told their stories is something that is hard to find later in life, and I believe this is possible only at a women’s college. President Fujii, I don’t think you can talk only about women, but I think it would be empowering if you could create an opportunity to talk to women by placing women students at the center. Developing the infrastructure needed to create a comfortable environment for women, examining of how universities that are members of the 30% Club treat women in their university histories – there are many things that need to be reviewed.



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This dialogue was observed by approximately 30 people, including the presidents of the 30% Club Japan university groups\* and other 30% Club Japan members, and was followed by a question-and-answer session. We closed the meeting by confirming that, based on the learnings from the dialogue, we will report on progress at each university at the next plenary meeting of the university group, scheduled to be held in 2023.

\*Participating universities in the University Group (in alphabetical order): Doshisha University, Keio University, Niigata University, Ochanomizu University, Osaka University, Showa Women's University, Sophia University, Tsuda University, University of Tokyo (Chair)