



A monthly newsletter featuring updates and highlights related to J-PEAKS.

2026
February
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Niigata Univ. J-PEAKS NOW Vol.4

LEADERSHIP

Opening New Frontiers for People and Society through Life Innovation — From Vision to Implementation —



President
SOMEYA Toshiyuki,
(President's Message)

Effective February 1, 2026, President Toshiyuki Someya and the [new Executive Officers](#) assumed office. Under the new structure, Niigata University will carry forward its vision of “opening up the future for people and society through life innovation,” while moving into an implementation phase. To address increasingly complex challenges, we will work with society to turn integrative knowledge into practical solutions. Driven by J-PEAKS, we will strengthen research capacity and link human resource development with the social implementation of research outcomes. Faculty, University Administrators (UAs), and administrative staff will lead strategy and delivery, connecting local fields with the wider world to accelerate co-creation.

HIGHLIGHT

A New Chapter Begins: Three Ways to Explore What's Happening at the Brain Research Institute Today

In the priority area “Brain and Life,” we integrate strengths across the life sciences—including medicine and the biomedical sciences—and collaborate with humanities and social science fields such as education and psychology. Serving as a key hub, the Brain Research Institute works with partners in Japan and abroad to link basic and clinical research and to better understand and overcome diseases of the human brain. In this feature, we share the latest on “Brain and Life” from three perspectives: the new leadership structure, next-generation development, and international collaboration.

1 BRI announces new Director and Deputy Director (Feb.1, 2026)

BRI is pleased to announce the appointment of Prof Hideaki Matsui as the new Director of BRI effective February 1, 2026. Prof Kazuki Tainaka will serve as the Deputy Director. ([BRI Website: News](#))

Hideaki Matsui, M.D., Ph.D.
Director, Professor (Dept of Neuroscience of Disease)
• [Message from the Director](#)



Kazuki Tainaka, Ph.D.
Deputy Director, Professor (Dept of System Pathology for Neurological Disorders)

2 The 16th BRI International Symposium (Mar. 2, 2026)

Registration
Open

BRI has hosted an annual international symposium since FY2010 as part of our joint usage/research event. We invite you to join our BRI International Symposium on March 2, 2026. For this 16th session, the theme is “Evolutionary Genomics: From Biodiversity to Human Disease,” featuring talks and discussions by leading researchers in the field from Japan and abroad. We warmly invite you to join us and encourage broad participation.

3 Lecture & Tour for High School and University Students “Let's Explore the Human Brain and Mind”

As part of Brain Awareness Week, the Brain Research Institute will host a lecture-and-lab-tour event for high school and university students on the theme “The Wonders of the Human Brain.”

Date Thu 26 March 2026
Lab Tour (Morning Session): 10:30~12:00
Lecture: 13:30~15:00
Lab Tour (Afternoon Session): 15:30~17:00

Venue Brain Research Institute, Niigata University

Format In person (Zoom viewing available for the lecture only)

Audience High school and university students

Fee Free

Registration Feb 10 (Tue)-Feb 27 (Fri) First come, first served

Details & Registration [BRI Website: Events](#)
(Available in Japanese only)

Deadline:
Feb 27

Date Mon 2 March 2026, 10:00-17:35
Venue Nakada Memorial Hall
Brain Research Institute, Niigata University
Language English
Fee Free
Details & Registration [BRI Website: Events](#)

The 16th BRI International Symposium
第16回新潟大学脳研究所共同研究拠点国際シンポジウム

Evolutionary Genomics:

From Biodiversity to Human Disease

Mon 2 March 2026, 10:00-17:35

高校生および大学生対象 講演・見学イベント

見てみよう ヒトの脳と心

令和8年 3月26日(木)

参加費 無料

REPORT

Research Exchange Meeting Held with Chubu University, Our Partner University (Dec. 26, 2025)

Under Niigata University's J-PEAKS initiative, we are strengthening links across three areas—AI, mathematical sciences, and big data—and preparing to establish the AI and Big Data Science Integration Research Core (AB-Core). AB-Core will advance cross-cutting research in the J-PEAKS priority areas of “Brain and Life” and “Food and Health.”

As a step toward full-scale launch, we held a research exchange meeting on December 26, 2025. Researchers and University Administrators (UAs/URAs) from Niigata University and Chubu University, a J-PEAKS partner university, discussed future collaboration and directions for joint research.



In the morning session, President Tatsuo Ushiki of Niigata University, Executive Vice President Kuni Sueyoshi (Research and Postgraduate Studies), Executive Vice President Toshiyuki Someya (Global Affairs), and Professor Yutaka Hirata, Director of the Center for Mathematical Sciences and Artificial Intelligence at Chubu University, met for discussions. They confirmed their intention to further strengthen collaboration between the two universities, with AB-Core as a key pillar.

In the afternoon exchange meeting, 19 participants (11 from Niigata University and 8 from Chubu University), including researchers and University Administrators (UAs/URAs), shared advanced research and education initiatives across AI and mathematical sciences, as well as medicine and the natural sciences. Researchers from both universities actively exchanged views on potential joint research, and group discussions on creating new research domains also helped build networks among participants.

The meeting clarified concrete directions and goals toward the full-scale launch of AB-Core, and is expected to support deeper collaboration and continued development in AI and big data science.



UPDATE

University-wide “Strategic Leap Program”: Two Tracks (Opens in Apr. 2026)

In this call, the four-year period starting in FY2026 is divided into two stages, with phased strategic investment based on research progress.

- Stage I (FY26–27): Core Type - several million yen/project × 2 yrs
 - Stage II (FY28–29): Leap Type - around ten million yen/project × 2 yrs
- Transition to the Leap Type will be determined through a stage-gate review (plus a limited call), with priority support for promising projects to accelerate research advances and social implementation.

Main Symposium Date Set for “Niigata University J-PEAKS WEEK” (Sept. 7–11, 2026)

The main symposium for “Niigata University J-PEAKS WEEK,” which will bring together a series of J-PEAKS-related events, has been set for Monday, September 7. It will be held in a hybrid format (in person and online) at ANA Crowne Plaza Niigata.

Further details on the symposium and the full program for J-PEAKS WEEK will be announced in upcoming issues.

● J-PEAKS Mini Column—Voices from the Field ●

Since being appointed Director of the AB-Core Promotion Office last October, the research exchange meeting with Chubu University was my first major task. Although it was our first time meeting, we prepared carefully to make it a springboard for future collaboration, and I was relieved that we held the event successfully despite Niigata's characteristically harsh weather. Even in a limited time, the research presentations, discussions, and group sessions helped lay a foundation for joint research. We are now building an online environment to support exchange beyond distance, and are also planning metaverse-based activities and an in-person symposium. AI, data science, and the mathematical sciences have strong potential to advance through integration with many fields, and AB-Core will continue supporting new research ideas across the university. (SE)

● Contact & Website ●

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○ Niigata Univ. J-PEAKS Website

<https://www.niigata-u.ac.jp/j-peaks/>

Updates on J-PEAKS-related events and activities are available here.



○ Niigata Univ. J-PEAKS Internal Website

<https://app.cais.niigata-u.ac.jp/shurl/fw/2PLWiy>

To support timely information sharing and ensure transparency, materials such as the program's overall design, budget allocations, and meeting documents are available to internal users. For more detailed information, please scan the QR code.

