

## **The Hiroshima Conference on the APIKS Project, 4-5 March 2019, Hiroshima Garden Palace, Japan**

As a follow-up to the CAP (Changing Academic profession) Survey (2007-08), the APIKS (Academic Profession in the Knowledge Society) project aims to expand upon key CAP-related issues through an international and comparative study in the so-called STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, also known as the “hard sciences,” in several countries. In recent years, four international workshops took place in Helsinki, Finland in September 2014, Brazil in April 2015, South Korea in April 2016, and Hiroshima, Japan in March 2017. By early 2018, teams from more than 30 countries had expressed interest in implementing national surveys with a similar questionnaire to that which was finalized in Hiroshima, Japan in March 2017.

Throughout the four international workshops to date, the research team has worked through the main topics of the literature review, analysis of the backgrounds of participating teams, organization and administration of the project survey, methodology of survey and data management, and the creation of the questionnaire. Teaching and research activities are recognized to be academics’ core responsibilities, and as a result changes occurring in their teaching and research activities are more significant and evident compared to other more minor academic activities. More importantly, it is generally recognized that the teaching and research nexus perceived by academics varies significantly according to different higher education systems, academics’ employment status, discipline, academic rank, age, etc. Therefore the primary purposes of this year’s Hiroshima conference are to:

- 1) Develop an overview of the preliminary findings based on national surveys with the common questionnaire, focusing on STEM and the teaching and research nexus.
- 2) Discuss and determine prospective publication plans and future collaborative activities.

By early December, more than 50 team members from 21 country teams made official promises to come to Hiroshima to participate in the March conference. Among which, speakers from each country team would address one or more of the following broad research questions based on relevant findings from their national survey:

Q1) What are the most striking characteristics of teaching activities in your country? How could you interpret these features? And how do they vary by sub-groups such as different sectors and types of institutions (e.g. public and private sectors, research-intensive and teaching-centered universities, or university and non-university sectors), disciplines, generations, gender, etc.?

Q2) What are the most striking characteristics of research activities in your country? How could you interpret these features? And how do they vary by sub-groups such as different sectors and types of institutions (e.g. public and private sectors, research-intensive and teaching-centered universities, or university and non-university sectors), disciplines, generations, gender, etc.?

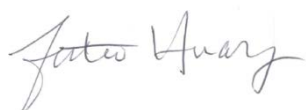
Q3) What is the teaching and research nexus in your country? How could you interpret the nexus? And how does the teaching-research nexus vary by sub-groups such as different sectors and types of institutions (e.g. public and private sectors, research-intensive and teaching-centered universities, or university and non-university sectors), disciplines, generations, gender, etc.?

Q4) What key issues and challenges do academics face in relation to their teaching and research activities and the teaching and research nexus? What are the implications for research, policy and practice from your analysis and discussion of national surveys?

In terms of conference outputs, we shall select a number of research articles from those submitted to the Hiroshima conference and organize a Special Issue in our annually published English language journal *Higher Education Forum* (HEF), indexed by *Scopus*. The tentative title of the Special Issue is “An International and Comparative Study of Academics’ Teaching and Research Activities in the Knowledge Society: Main findings from the APIKS project.” It is to be published in the 2019 issue of HEF by March 2020. More details of publication will be discussed and confirmed in the project meeting on Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> 2019.

I am looking forward to seeing you in Hiroshima in early March 2019.

Yours sincerely,



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