

Internal regulations on the mentors of the Frontier Research Institute for Interdisciplinary Sciences, Tohoku University

Established on July 22, 2014  
Revised on June 28, 2021  
Revised on June 20, 2022

(Purpose)

Article 1. These regulations are intended to support the promotion of world-class research by early-career researchers in an independent research environment, through cooperation between the departments of Tohoku University and the Frontier Research Institute for Interdisciplinary Sciences (hereafter “the Institute”), as part of the initiatives by Tohoku University to foster early-career researchers.

(Assignment)

Article 2. The Director of the Institute shall allocate a mentor to each Assistant Professor and fixed-term Associate Professor affiliated to the Institute.

(Responsibilities)

Article 3. Mentors shall carry out the following responsibilities, the details of which shall be stipulated separately. (See Appendix “Responsibilities of and Request to Mentors”)

- i. Provide an independent research environment and research support
- ii. Provide career-path-related support
- iii. Provide support for health and safety, and research ethics, etc.
- iv. Provide support for educational opportunities
- v. Any other tasks requested by the Director of the Institute, as necessary

(Appointment)

Article 4. Mentors shall be appointed from among full-time Professors and Associate Professors of Tohoku University.

4-2 A mentor shall be appointed by the Director of the Institute based on a request to the Director of the Institute from a mentee after having sought the approval of the mentor candidate.

(Term)

Article 5. The mentor’s term of appointment shall be for the duration of the mentee’s affiliation to the Institute.

(Change)

Article 6. If it becomes necessary to change a mentor during the mentor’s term of appointment, the mentee shall make a request to the Director of the Institute after having sought the approval of the new mentor candidate.

Supplementary Provision:

These regulations shall enter into force on July 22, 2014 and are applicable as of April 1, 2014.

Supplementary Provision:

These regulations shall enter into force on June 28, 2021 and are applicable as of April 1, 2021.

Supplementary Provision:

These regulations shall enter into force on June 20, 2022 and are applicable as of April 1, 2022.

## Responsibilities of and Request to Mentors

When appointing early-career researchers as fix-term faculty members of the Creative Interdisciplinary Research Division, Frontier Research Institute for Interdisciplinary Sciences (FRIS), FRIS requests full-time Professors or Associate Professors at the university to serve as mentors for the faculty members. This request is made as part of a university-wide effort to support the promotion of world-class research by early-career researchers in an independent research environment through cooperation between the departments and FRIS, following the internal regulations on the mentors of FRIS, and with the approval of the heads of the mentors' departments.

Early-career faculty members of FRIS are expected to proactively promote international interdisciplinary research in all research fields as Principal Investigators (PIs), pioneer new academic fields, and actively promote collaborative research with researchers and research institutions in Japan and abroad. The definition of PI for early-career faculty members of FRIS corresponds to that of "Tohoku University Prominent Research Fellows" established by Tohoku University, and many of the assistant professors of FRIS are certified as Fellows as assistant professors who conduct research and education in an independent research environment. The activities of early-career faculty members include regular interdisciplinary research exchanges and interdisciplinary collaborative research at FRIS, as well as conducting their own research in their mentors' laboratories on a daily basis.

We sincerely ask the mentors, who understand and support early-career researchers, to agree to the following responsibilities before accepting a mentor position.

### **1. Provide an independent research environment and research support**

Mentors are responsible for providing an independent research environment and research support for their mentees in the mentors' laboratories.

While we understand that the concept of an independent research environment varies from department to department and laboratory to laboratory, at the very least, the mentees should be able to secure an environment and research space where they can conduct research and present results under their own responsibility as a PI, and an environment where they can execute their research expenses. When conducting collaborative research with or assigning administrative duties at your laboratory or department to the mentees, we sincerely ask you to consider the above-mentioned roles and positions of them in the university and to consult and agree with them. If it becomes difficult for an early-career faculty

member to secure the research space he/she needs in the mentor's laboratory due to the progress of his/her research, FRIS may provide the missing research space.

For research support, we would appreciate it if you would consider the use of laboratory equipment and supplies by the mentees. Please consult and agree with them on the use of the equipment and supplies. In addition, please provide advice and counsel to them from the standpoint of a mentor as necessary.

## **2. Provide carrier-path-related support**

Since April 2021, FRIS has been implementing a tenure-track system so that talented early-career researchers devote themselves to challenging research for a long time in an independent environment to improve their careers. In addition, as a career path for the faculty members of FRIS, the existing liaison with departments is still being implemented.

Tenure Track System at FRIS:

<http://www.fris.tohoku.ac.jp/en/about/tenure-track.html>

We sincerely ask mentors to provide support and advice to the mentees about their career paths, including this system.

## **3. Provide support for health and safety, research ethics, etc.**

While FRIS will provide the early-career faculty members appropriate guidance on health and safety, research misconduct, etc. at monthly staff meetings and other opportunities, we would appreciate your specific guidance at your department, workplace, and research site.

In addition, an order for dual duties shall be required for the faculty members' activities in the working departments. We sincerely ask the heads of the departments to send the request for the dual duties to FRIS.

## **4. Provide support for educational opportunities**

From the perspective of the career paths, we sincerely ask the mentors to provide educational opportunities for relevant undergraduate and graduate students of the department to the mentees. When assigning education duties to the mentees, we sincerely ask you to consider the above-mentioned roles and positions of them in the university and to consult and agree with them.

In such a case, an order for dual duties shall be necessary for the educational activities at the departments. We sincerely ask the heads of the departments to send the request for the dual duties to FRIS.

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