



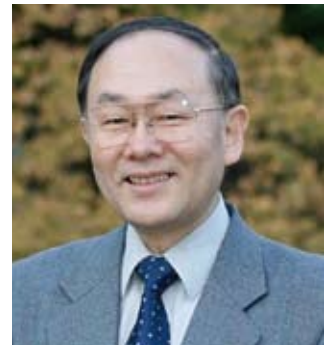
WASEDA University

Waseda University's Relationship with the ITU

Mitsuji Matsumoto

Professor

Department of Electronic and Photonic Systems
School of Fundamental Science and Engineering
Waseda University



1. Introduction

Nowadays, the environments of our daily lives are shaped by diverse rules and standards that are the same all over the world. Standards are now as ubiquitous as the air we breathe. At the same time, the global environment is also changing year by year, and there is a need for the construction of diverse new frameworks.

The ITU is an international organization that promotes international standards for networks, systems and services that make it easier for people to use telecommunications. However, now that the world is facing various problems due to global changes in the environment, it is seeking out new alliances with academia, especially universities.

The first such opportunity arose at a consultation meeting on cooperation between ITU-T and universities, which was held in Geneva in January 2007. For ITU-T, the purpose of this meeting was to explore the policy of reflecting the wisdom of universities in the process of international standardization, while the universities also wanted to discuss the details of their contributions and the benefits of an alliance with the ITU. At this meeting, it was decided that an international Kaleidoscope academic conference would be held jointly by the ITU and academia. The first of several Kaleidoscope conferences was held in May 2008, and the sixth was held in June 2014.

2. Setting up an academic membership system

The ITU also reviewed its membership system and introduced a new academia membership category with reduced annual fees. The first 17 academic members were admitted in January 2011 and their number has now increased to 87. The activities of academia members in the ITU can be broadly summarized as follows:

- (1) Participation in ITU standardization meetings
- (2) Participation in Kaleidoscope academic conferences
- (3) Education about standardization

In particular, the participation in Kaleidoscope academic conferences has from the beginning involved the submission of many academic papers, which are submitted and presented in the same way as at conferences held by international academic societies. The name Kaleidoscope was chosen to reflect how current issues are explored from a multitude of different viewpoints at these conferences. In addition to basic ICT technologies, Kaleidoscope conferences also invite papers on applied technologies including aspects of media design, systems theory, and social environment issues.

3. Examples of Waseda University's activities

Waseda University joined in response to the first call for academia members in January 2011. This decision was made partly because there were many people at the university with experience in international standardization activities in telecommunications and partly because Waseda University had signed a memorandum of understanding with ITU headquarters, ITU-T, ITU-R and ITU-D.

Since the university offers courses about standardization, we were also involved in ITU standardization activities and recognized the need for education about standardization.

(1) Participation in standardization activities by specialists in ITU-T activities

Since we took up academia membership, our faculty staff and students have participated in SG meetings and have submitted written contributions on ITU standardization

Due to the growing number of faculty staff participating in ITU Study Group meetings, we recently set up an on-campus ITU standardization liaison committee to exchange information between the related parties.

In the future, the attendance and written contributions of academia members are likely to increase if Web meetings are held more widely.

(2) The importance of education about standardization at the ITU

At the ITU, the contents, syllabuses and model examples of standardization courses are discussed in workshops and in ad hoc groups that are under the direct control of the standardization director. Education and research are the university's basic activities, of which education about standardization forms a part. Education about standardization is provided at many Japanese universities. Here at Waseda University (both independently and in partnership with Osaka University) we have introduced courses by standardization specialists in the field of ICT, with lectures covering the viewpoints of standard technology, fields of application, systems and communication policy. Academic societies (IEICE, IEEEJ, etc.) in Japan are also exploring how to implement standardized education in conjunction with ITU activities, but Waseda University has also taken the initiative in this field.

(3) Participation in Kaleidoscope conferences

Japan has from the very beginning submitted many written contributions to the Kaleidoscope international conferences. In the past, papers submitted from Japan have featured among the awards for the top three papers and young scientist encouragement awards every year. Waseda University has featured three times in the top 3 paper awards, and three times in the young scientist encouragement awards. We are also supporting international activities by holding internships at the ITU headquarters.

4. Conclusion

We have discussed our involvement in the ITU as an academia member, from the viewpoint of education and research.

Amid calls for more internationalization in Japan, the system of academia membership is highly effective as a forum for research into various issues on a global scale, and for providing an educational setting for active involvement in the international community by the next generation of young scientists.