



【NEWS RELEASE】

April 17, 2025

The University of Tokyo
Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, Inc.

Partnership Agreement for Social Value Creation Between The University of Tokyo and Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group

TOKYO, April 17, 2025 --- The University of Tokyo (President: Teruo Fujii, hereinafter "UTokyo") and Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, Inc. (President and Group CEO: Toru Nakashima, hereinafter collectively referred to as "SMBC Group") have signed a partnership agreement (hereinafter "this Agreement"). The purpose of this Agreement is to establish mechanisms to valorize the diverse assets of UTokyo, return this value to society, as well as to lead and pioneer initiatives for "Japan's Regrowth" through these efforts.

1. Background

In recent years, various social issues such as environmental problems, human rights, poverty and inequality, etc. have emerged, expanded, and become more serious. By overcoming the boundaries between the humanities and sciences, we are increasingly expected to share and contribute universities' diverse expertise with society. Additionally, addressing these social issues has become a significant theme in corporate management. Increasingly, the creation of social value is becoming a prerequisite for corporate competitiveness.

Against this backdrop, UTokyo, under its basic policy "UTokyo Compass" published in 2021, is working to create value that contributes to the future of humanity and the planet through research, education, and social collaboration. Additionally, SMBC Group, which has placed Creation of Social Value as a pillar of its management policies in its current Medium-Term Management Plan "Plan for Fulfilled Growth," is actively addressing social issues by fostering the flow of funds in society towards solving these issues.

2. Initiatives Based on This Agreement

Under this Agreement, UTokyo and SMBC Group will collaborate on the following themes. This Agreement is not a traditional industry-academia collaboration in which private companies provide funding and universities contribute knowledge. Instead, it aims for both parties to commit to providing funds and human resources toward creating social value and to realize open knowledge together. SMBC Group plans to contribute over JPY 3 billion over three years, primarily focusing on the Forest GX Project (see 3. below), and

UTokyo also plans to make proportionate contributions.

(*Examples of assets to be utilized and returned to society are listed in parentheses at the end of each item.)

(1) Formulating and Practicing the New Green Transformation (GX) Strategy

UTokyo, centered around the Center for Strategic Promotion of Green Transformation established in April 2025 (*1), integrates the knowledge of advanced and diverse researchers within the university across different fields to propose a new GX strategy. Additionally, together with SMBC Group, it will launch the Forest GX Project to enhance the value of forests and promote comprehensive utilization of forest systems.

(Knowledge and insights from diverse researchers involved in GX, university forests)

(2) Establishing the Philanthropy Fund Brokering Scheme

SMBC Group launched the Philanthropy Advisory Services (*2) to support customer donation activities that contribute to solving social issues and promoting social contribution. This time, we aim to clarify the value of various initiatives at UTokyo that are eligible for donations and to establish a mediation scheme for university donations, in which funds from high-net-worth individuals and others are channeled through the university to solve social issues.

(University values as donation targets)

(3) Discovering, Developing, and Supporting Startup Businesses

Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (President & CEO: Akihiro Fukutome, hereinafter "SMBC"), a subsidiary of SMBC Group, supports activities for the nationwide and cross-sectional creation and nurturing of university-originated startups, while forming an ecosystem where the necessary talent and funding circulate to support these startups (*3). UTokyo has created the largest number of startups among universities in Japan, and we will accelerate these initiatives by strengthening our collaboration.

(Startups and on-campus entrepreneurs)

(4) A Scientific Approach to Achieving Balances Between Work, Studies, and Sports

SMBC is focused on balancing work, academics, and sports through initiatives such as its women's basketball team's participation in the W-League (*4) and supporting university athletic teams and sports clubs through the "University Sports Support Program" (*5). Taking this opportunity, we will partner with the UTokyo Sports Science Initiative (UTSSI) to explore optimal training methods for achieving these balances and to visualize the multifaceted value of sports.

(Visualize the multifaceted value of sports, drawing on the insights from diverse researchers, as well as accumulated data and research findings)

(5) Systems to Support Student Activities and Develop Talent Capable of Playing Active Roles in the Business World

UTokyo conducts initiatives such as the Field Study Typed Policy Collaboration Program (*6), in which students engage in activities aimed at solving issues in various regions and propose solutions. Taking this opportunity, SMBC assists the matching of municipalities to participate in this program and is working on developing leaders who can formulate and implement policies. Additionally, we are focusing on helping doctoral students acquire skills beneficial for corporate success and are promoting personnel exchanges.

(Students participating in the Policy Collaboration Program)

3. Launch of the Forest GX Project

As the first initiative under this Agreement, UTokyo and SMBC Group will launch the "Forest GX Project" (hereinafter "the Project") to enhance the value of forests using The University of Tokyo Forests and other sites as demonstration fields.

Japan is one of the world's leading forest nations, with forests covering 65% of its land area, and UTokyo possesses experimental forests equivalent to 1/1000 of the nation's land area. The Project aims to realize innovations encompassing upstream, midstream, and downstream processes of forest systems in order to fully utilize the significant potential of forests owned by Japan and UTokyo. Specific initiatives include: (1) Developing a digital twin to accurately measure forest CO₂ absorption and biodiversity through data-driven digital transformation of forestry using remote sensing and AI. (2) Developing biomass resources into building materials for wooden high-rise buildings, biomass plastics, biodegradable plastics, wood-based new materials, and bioenergy, aiming to realize environmentally symbiotic biomass cities and establish certification systems for biomass utilization in urban areas.

*1 Center for Strategic Promotion of Green Transformation (GX)

The Center for Strategic Promotion of GX is a university-wide organization established on April 1, 2025, to play the central role in UTokyo's promotion of GX based on carbon neutrality, nature positivity, and circular economy, with the aim of presenting models for a sustainable future society.

*2 Philanthropy Advisory Services

Please refer to the press release from Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group dated November 5, 2024, titled "Launch of Philanthropy Advisory Services" (https://www.smfg.co.jp/news_e/pdf/e20241105_01.pdf)

*3 Activities to Create and Nurture University-Originated Startups and Form an Ecosystem to Support These Startups

Please refer to the press release from Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation dated November 7, 2024, titled "Participation in WE AT to Create Innovation for Solving Social Issues through Industry-Academia-Government Collaboration" (https://www.smbc.co.jp/news/pdf/j20241107_02.pdf)

Please refer to the press release from Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation dated January 28, 2025, titled "Support for Building a Nationwide Network of Startup Ecosystem Co-Creation Programs" (https://www.smbc.co.jp/news/pdf/j20250128_01.pdf)

*4 Participation in the W-League

Please refer to the press release from Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation dated April 23, 2024, titled "Women's Basketball Team Joins W-League" (https://www.smbc.co.jp/news_e/pdf/e20240423_01.pdf)

*5 University Sports Support Program

Please refer to the press release from Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking

Corporation dated May 8, 2024, titled "Launch of the University Sports Support Program"
(https://www.smfg.co.jp/news_e/pdf/e20240508_01.pdf)

*6 Field Study Typed Policy Collaboration Program (FS)

Please refer to the University of Tokyo website: "Field Study Typed Policy Collaboration Program (FS)"
(<https://www.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ja/students/special-activities/h002.html>)

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