



Organizational Structure

RIHN is fundamentally a project-based institute, with projects alternating through a 5-7-year cycle. Identification of ideas for projects happens through public solicitation. Through a process of evaluation and selection that includes “incubation” and “feasibility” stages, these ideas are gradually developed into fully-fledged projects and only get officially underway after evaluation by an international external review committee. At this point, the proponent becomes joins the RIHN community by becoming a staff member of the Institute. In most cases projects run for five years. They include a core team of researchers based at RIHN and a much larger network of partners at research institutions throughout Japan and abroad.

RIHN Programs

RIHN research is organized into Programs and Projects rather than pre-existing academic disciplines or domains. Three Research Programs and one Core Program are each home to multiple projects that carry out research in line with the Program’s broad direction. The bundling and integration of Projects within the Programs facilitates synthesis of research results and allows for strategic planning of research. Programs are subject to annual review by the External Research-Evaluation Committee (see RIHN Project Trajectory on pages 7 & 8). RIHN endeavors to improve its research by making good use of the review results while also respecting the independence of each Program.

Research Programs

Research Programs are organized around three themes identified in the Phase III Medium-Term Plan. In addressing environmental problems, technological and institutional developments are important, but RIHN recognizes that these need to build on the foundation of people's awareness, value systems and culture. The programs collaborate closely with society in developing and proposing options that contribute to the transition of society.

Program 1: Societal transformation under environmental change

This program aims at providing realistic perspectives and options to facilitate the transition to a society that can flexibly respond to environmental changes caused by human activities such as global warming and air pollution, as well as to natural disasters.

Program 2: Fair use and management of diverse resources

Taking tradeoffs into account, this program provides multifaceted options to stakeholders involved in production, distribution, and consumption of resources, in order to realize fair use, optimal management, and wise governance of diverse natural resources including energy, water and ecological resources.

Program 3: Designing lifeworlds of sustainability and wellbeing

Our "lifeworlds" are composed of the physical spaces and socio-cultural spheres of our everyday lives. They are continually reproduced, reimagined, and evolving through an interactive and reflexive relationship with society, culture, and nature. Program 3 proposes research aimed at illuminating reciprocal linkages between diverse rural and urban lifeworlds and contributing to the solution of sustainability problems by working with various societal partners such as governments, companies, and citizen groups. Special emphasis is placed on envisioning sustainable futures that improve wellbeing and gauging their feasibility.

RIHN Project Trajectory : Research Project



Incubation Studies (IS) are proposed by individual researchers to the RIHN Project Review Task Committee. If approved, the researcher is granted seed money to prepare a proposal for Feasibility Study.

Feasibility Studies (FS) allow the study leader a period to develop a proposal for Full Research.

In the transitional **Pre-Research (PR)** period, the project leader formally assembles the team, establishes MOUs necessary for collaboration with other institutions and makes other preparations to enable Full Research.

Full Research (FR) lasts from three to five years. It typically involves a research team at RIHN and concurrent activity with collaborators overseas, several periods of field study, workshops and presentations, and outreach or communication to relevant communities. FR projects are evaluated by the External Research Evaluation Committee at the beginning (selection), mid-term and the end (final evaluation).

Core Program

Based on the mission of RIHN and in order to realize the strategies and policies formulated by the Council for Research Strategy, the Core Program undertakes research on an ongoing basis. During Phase III, the Core Program will develop concepts and methodologies to solve global environmental problems in collaboration with society.

RIHN Project Trajectory : Core Project



RIHN Center

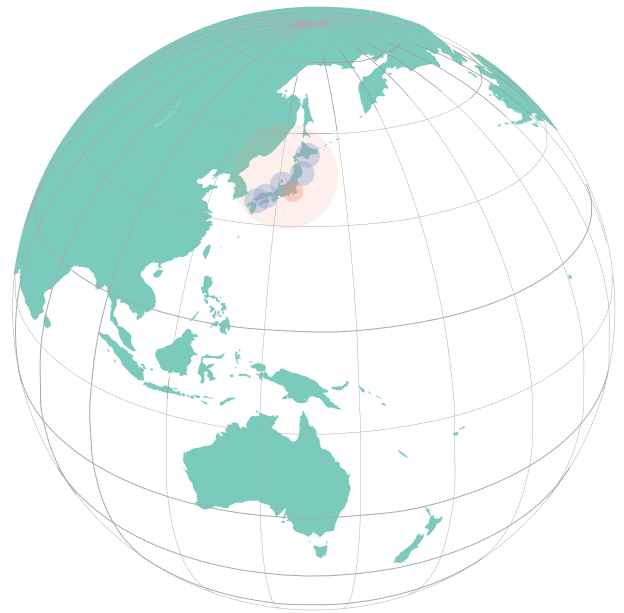
The RIHN Center provides the foundations for collaborative research and activities at RIHN. Its four Divisions manage and operate the laboratories and the information systems of the Institute, and facilitate communication, networking and capacity building (see detailed description on page 42.). Center faculty also engage in research in pursuing the goals of the Center. Collaboration is fundamental to the operation of the RIHN Center: it works closely with the Core Program and Research Programs by providing tools, facilities and methods. It also collaborates with the wider academic community in support of RIHN's role as a joint-use Inter-University Research Institute and engages a broad range of societal stakeholders in problem-solving research processes.

Above: TERAMOTO Shun, Life with a well pump, Los Baños, Philippines

Bottom: HONDA Naomi, Investigating electrical resistance on a beach, Fukushima, Japan



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