

Program for Leading Graduate Schools Forum 2019

November 30, 2019

Masaru Ibuka Auditorium, International Conference Center
Waseda University

Fiscal 2019 is the last year of the financial support for Leading Graduate Schools (LGS) from Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Thus, the Leading Graduate Schools Forum 2019 is considered as a culmination of the Leading Fora, which has taken place annually since 2012.

The Leading Forum 2019 consisted of two sessions: the keynote speeches and the workshop. The keynote speeches were delivered by Mr. Masaya Futamiya (Chair of Keidanren Committee on Responsible Business Conduct & SDGs Promotion of Keidanren) and Prof. Mitsuhiro Arinobu (Executive Director and Vice President of the University of Tokyo). Mr. Futamiya highlighted the importance of multiple stakeholder involvement in realization of the future society, called Society 5.0. Prof. Arinobu delivered an inspiring speech entitled “What we expect for the graduate of Leading Graduate Schools”.

The second session was the workshop. The forum brought together doctoral students and alumni from 62 Leading programs of 33 universities to approach the topic of “**How I will change the world**”. The participants were divided into 17 groups; thus, each group could focus on one theme from the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The forum’s participants discussed and worked together to envision the society in the next ten years, the year of 2030. After that, the participants formulated solutions to achieve those visions. In the end of the workshop, each group presented their visions and solutions.

After the final presentation of the workshop, there was a networking session that enabled the students to meet and discuss with professors and professionals from both academic and private sectors. At the end of the Leading Graduate Schools Forum 2019, all the organizers and participants vowed to reunite in 10 years, to review their visions, and to share their successes.

Impression about the forum:

Maulana A. Empitu (6th year LGS member)

This forum encouraged the participants to think out-of-the-box, and challenged us to envision the future in an innovative but realistic way. We had to work with people of different backgrounds and used each expertise to think about the strategy to achieve Society 5.0, the society where no one left behind. I was assigned to a team that consisted of participants with diverse backgrounds such as medicine, law, anthropology, education, and marine science. Thus, it was a precious opportunity to learn team-work and inter-disciplinary communication. After joining the forum, I became more aware of important issues in the current and future society. More importantly, this forum made me contemplate a question: what is the possible contribution of my research to solve the problem of society?