The University of Tokyo
NEC Corporation

The University of Tokyo and NEC conclude a Strategic Collaboration Agreement to promote a prosperous society where people and AI succeed together

~Advancing AI-native society: from concept development to social implementation~

Tokyo, Japan, March 17, 2026 - The University of Tokyo (UTokyo) and NEC Corporation (NEC) have concluded an strategic collaboration agreement and will establish a new NEC-UTokyo Lab. This initiative is based on the "Future Synergy with AI: Toward Trustworthy Social Implementation" program that promotes a prosperous society where people and AI can succeed together. The NEC-UTokyo Lab will host joint activities under this agreement, driving three integrated initiatives: exploring issues through discussions with diverse stakeholders, advancing social implementation through collaborative programs, and fostering talent development.

This agreement advances efforts to develop an AI-native society, including thought leadership (*1) activities and actual implementation. Both parties will engage not only in technological development but also initiatives that include legal reforms, the formation of ethical and social norms, and the deepening of interdisciplinary research. Through these efforts, both parties will promote a new vision for society based on safety and security within an AI-native society that contributes to a sustainable future.

Responding to the Demanded Rapid Changes of the Era

Rewriting the Social Operating System	Updating Knowledge
AI Transforming Industrial Structures and Decision-Making Mechanisms	The Ability to Envision the Future and Execute It Is a Differentiator
Activating Open Innovation	**The Importance of Real-Time Hypothesis Testing**
The Limits of Innovation by a Single Company	Flexibility to Respond to Rapid Change

Future symbiosis with AI: Toward trustworthy societal implementation Establishing the "NEC-UTokyo Lab"

NEC \Orchestrating a brighter world

- Business creation capabilities in the AI field
- Abundant business development talent
- Proven track record in implementing social infrastructure

UTokyo 150 THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO SINCE 1877

- Talent network centered on the University of Tokyo
- Generation of profound insights as a giant of knowledge
- Expertise across diverse specialized fields

Social Implementation of New Value	Designing Future Society	Formation of Social Norms and Ethics	Human Resource Development
Establishing Foundational Technologies	Exploring "Questions" in Discussion Forums	Cross-Industry Collaborative Activities	Design Talent Development
Demonstration Testing	Thought Leadership Activities	Standardization Activities	Cultivating Transformation Leaders
Social Implementation	White Paper Publication	Rule Making	Cultivating Business Vision

Overview of the collaboration between the UTokyo and NEC

Background

In recent years, AI has been rapidly evolving, and is poised to significantly transform society and industry. At the same time, diverse challenges surrounding AI utilization have become apparent, including ethics, social acceptability, and the relationship between people and AI. During this transition to an AI-native society, it is essential to move beyond isolated technological development and partial institutional reforms. Instead, a framework is needed for the design and implementation of a vision for the future that encompasses the whole of society.

UTokyo and NEC will comprehensively advance efforts under this agreement, encompassing legal framework development, technological innovation, human resource cultivation, and concrete implementation, guided by the vision, "Future Synergy with AI: Toward Trustworthy Social Implementation". Concurrently, the organizations aim to strengthen Japan's industrial competitiveness and to resolve digital divides between regions.

Under this agreement, by combining UTokyo's advanced knowledge with NEC's cutting-edge technologies, the organizations aim to become a powerful driving force for creating a prosperous society, where people and AI succeed together.

NEC-UTokyo Lab Initiatives

1. Creating platforms for leaders and experts to identify challenges and explore resolutions

By bringing together diverse stakeholders, including industry leaders and legal experts, and integrating the knowledge of the University of Tokyo and NEC, the NEC-UTokyo Lab will explore questions centered on coexistence with AI from multiple perspectives. Through this activity, the lab will propose visions for Japan and the world's future alongside possible solutions for critical social challenges. Moreover, in addition to sharing these insights with society, the lab will seek to promote research and talent development within its Social Collaboration Program.

2. Accelerating Social Implementation through the Social Collaboration Program

The NEC-UTokyo Lab's Social Collaboration Program will be dedicated to designing a future where people and AI successfully coexist as new technologies grow throughout society.

The boundaries between digital spaces based on data and AI and physical spaces where people live are gradually blurring. One example of this is the emergence of an agent economy where AI agents are becoming the primary actors in economic activities.

To successfully promote these new social and economic systems, NEC and UTokyo will collaborate to explore the ideal forms of social systems, ethics, and legal frameworks, and promote their implementation. For example, NEC positions "automated negotiation AI" (*2), which facilitates optimal consensus-building among multiple AI agents, as a key technology underpinning the agent economy. Furthermore, we will expand our research themes in the future and accelerate the implementation of AI solutions to build a sustainable and trustworthy AI-native society.

3. Cultivating Next-Generation Leaders to Drive the AI-Native Society

The NEC-UTokyo Lab will work to cultivate talents capable of leading the realization of a prosperous society where people and AI succeed together. As part of this effort, the lab plans to prepare next-generation leaders through long-term

internships and design education programs at the newly established "UTokyo College of Design" (*3).

The lab will also promote flexible personnel exchanges where students and researchers from both UTokyo and NEC can interact. This will further strengthen organic collaboration and accelerate efforts from exploring questions to societal implementation of concepts and technologies.

Comments from Both Parties
"NEC, with its in-house developed generative AI technology and extensive AI implementation experience across various fields, and the University of Tokyo, with its advanced and broad expertise, will take the lead in creating a dialogue platform for diverse stakeholders to identify future societal challenges. We expect this strategic collaboration to become a platform for advancing AI implementation that contributes to building a better AI-native society and for cultivating the next generation of leaders who will drive this forward."

Teruo Fujii, President, The University of Tokyo

"We are delighted to establish the NEC-UTokyo Lab through this industry strategic collaboration agreement with the University of Tokyo. As AI fundamentally reshapes societal foundations, Japan's growth and industrial competitiveness now depend not only on technology but also on reliable, well-governed societal implementation. By combining the diverse knowledge of the University of Tokyo with NEC's implementation capabilities, we will advance the establishment of 'trustworthy AI' and promote its practical application throughout the world."

Takayuki Morita, President and CEO, NEC Corporation

(*1) Thought Leadership: Leading discussions and direction in a specific field with deep expertise and unique insights, presenting a vision for the future and solutions to challenges.
https://www.i-ise.com/en/index.html

(*2) Automatic Negotiation AI: NEC's proprietary AI technology that automates various adjustments and negotiations traditionally performed by humans.

(*3) UTokyo College of Design

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