

# 10

## Holding of LINKtopos2021

Public University Student Network, LINKtopos2021 in IWATE, Management team of Iwate Prefectural University

Applicable principle

Principle 6: A commitment to encouraging global citizenship through education

Principle 10: A commitment to promoting inter-cultural dialogue and understanding, and the “unlearning” of intolerance, through education

### 1. LINKtopos

In 2012, students of public universities gathered from all over Japan for volunteer activities in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake and found that there were many friends who shared the same thoughts on reconstruction support and disaster prevention. Then, the Public University Student Network was established to aim for further discussion on their support activities. The national student convention of public universities, LINKtopos is an annual meeting led by the students of public universities nationwide to get together to study and exchange opinions through workshops and other events under the themes of disaster recovery assistance, disaster prevention, community activities, etc. “LINK” means connection in English and “topos” means a place in Greek. With support from the Japan Association of Public Universities, the first convention of LINKtopos was held at Iwate Prefectural University in 2013 under the theme of “Students’ ideas on community future.” Since then, it has been held annually in a public university nationwide in turn. In addition, public universities in the country are divided into six blocks

including the Hokkaido and Tohoku region, and students conduct exchange activities in each block, which has been handed down as a network of students beyond the boundaries of universities.

### 2. Thoughts put into the theme of LINKtopos2021

2021 is the milestone year of the 10th anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake. Elementary school students at the time of the earthquake are now university students and will go out into society soon. This is the first time for Iwate Prefectural University to host the convention for LINKtopos2021 since the first convention was held.

Ten years have passed since the disaster, and the students wanted to make this convention an opportunity for participants to look back on the past ten years and what they had felt and thought and to think of their future. Based on this wish of theirs, they decided on the theme of LINKtopos 2021 to be “Since then and from now on.”

Poster of LINKtopos2021

### 3. Overview of LINKtopos2021

LINKtopos2021 was held online using Zoom for two days from September 15 to 16, 2021. On September 14, 2021, the day before the convention, a poster session was held for applicants using oVice system.

LINKtopos provides workshops as its main program. This time, the workshops had three sub-themes: “Consideration and care,” “Reconstruction and local community revitalization,” and “Community activities in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic.” After listening to lectures given by guest speakers on each theme, participants looked back on the past and worked on making a poster to reflect on what the lessons of the past can teach us about measures against possible future disasters as well as their own activities and lives. The participants were divided into groups by sub-theme to discuss each of the three sub-themes. They used Google Slides, Google Docs, and other services to create solutions and action plans for issues to be considered, and did presentations on them on Day 2. The time schedule for September 15-16 is as follows.

#### <Day 1>

Time	Details
10:00 - 10:25	Opening ceremony
10:25 - 10:55	Ice breaking activity
10:55 - 12:00	Guest speaker lectures
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch break
13:00 - 13:30	Q & A and feedback session
13:30 - 17:50	Workshop
17:50 - 18:00	Housekeeping announcement

#### <Day 2>

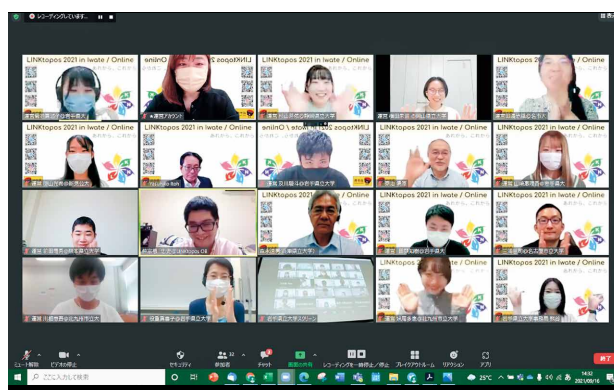
Time	Details
10:00 - 10:05	Housekeeping announcement
10:05 - 12:00	Workshop overview and final presentations (by theme)
12:00 - 13:00	Lunch break
13:00 - 13:55	Workshop presentation at plenary session (one group per theme)
13:55 - 14:00	Break
14:00 - 14:10	Review from alumni
14:10 - 14:40	Closing ceremony

### 4. After finishing LINKtopos2021

LINKtopos2021 was participated in by 92 students and 40 faculty members, and the number of participating universities was 22. We received comments from the participants such as “I had an opportunity to interact with students from across Japan,” “I felt the enthusiasm of the management staff,” and “This convention has broadened my mind on disaster prevention and disaster relief.” However, we also received requests from the participants for deeper interaction and connection with others, such as “I would like to have more time,” and “I wanted to talk more with members outside my workshop group.”

We hope that LINKtopos2021 can give opportunities for each of the participated students to gain new insights by connecting with other students from across Japan and to think about values they receive in their daily lives, the power they can gain by connecting with people and communities, and the continuation and evolution of reconstruction support. We condensed our thoughts on reconstruction that have been handed down by university students across Japan into the theme, “Since then and from now on” and disseminated it across the country. Through this, we could say that we were able to fulfill one of the roles that the university in the disaster-affected area have played until now.

Finally, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all the students, university personnel, and personnel of the Japan Association of Public Universities involved in LINKtopos2021 and wish for continued success and further development of LINKtopos.



Planning team committee members of Public University Student Network, LINKtopos