

Why are there so few women at the University of Tokyo ?

Gender ratio at UTokyo

8 : 2

Male
students

Female
students

9 : 1

Male
professors

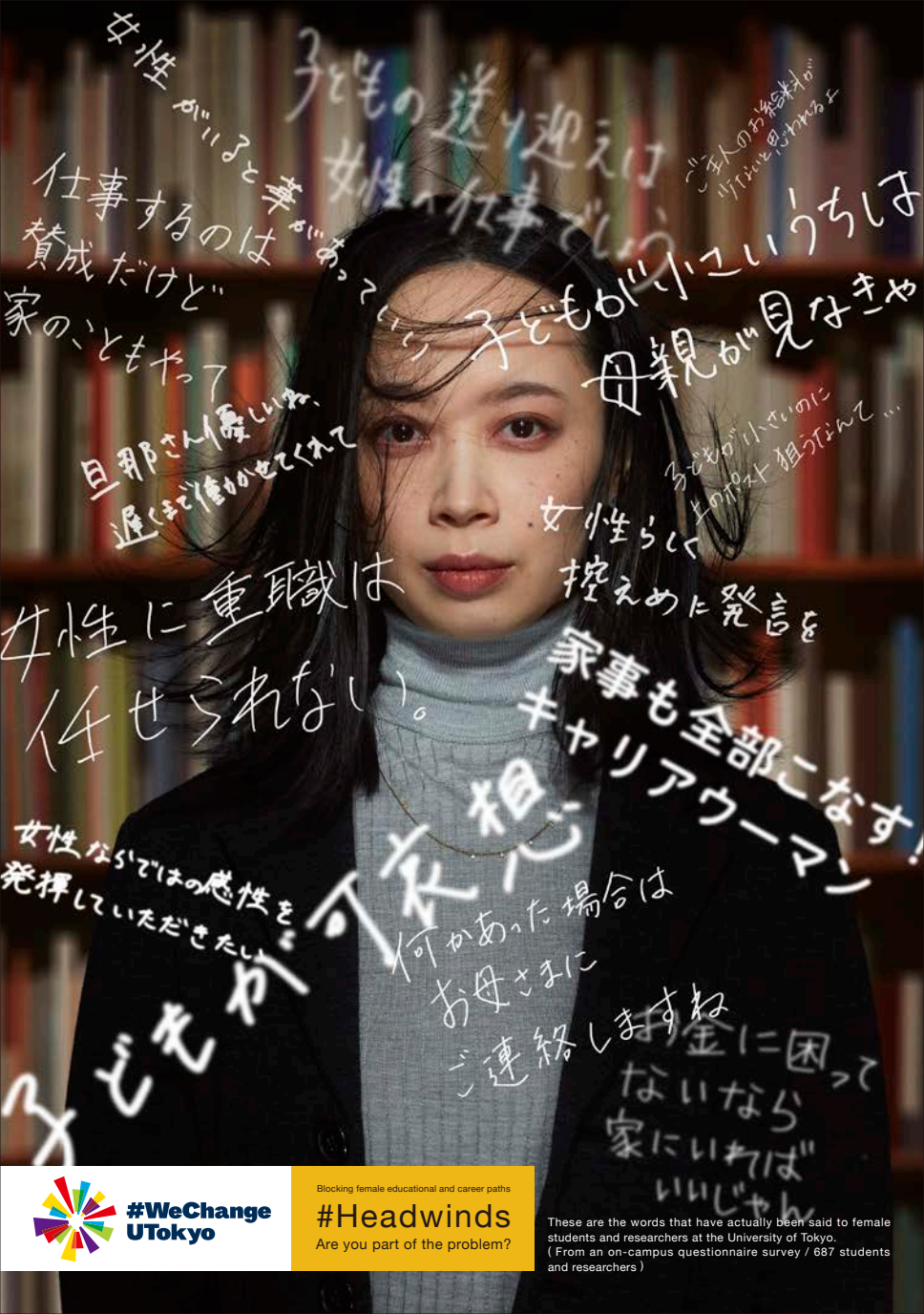
Female
professors

The University of Tokyo
is committed to changing the gender balance on campus,
starting by addressing this long-unresolved question.



This leaflet discusses sensitive topics that might trigger flashbacks,
especially for individuals who have experienced gender discrimination.

Reader discretion is advised.



女性がいいると華が...あ...
 子どもの送り迎え
 女性の仕事は
 仕事するのは賛成だけど
 家のこともやって
 旦那さん優しいから
 遅くまで働かされて
 子どもが小さいうちに
 上の子は頑張らなくて...
 母親が見なきゃ
 女性らしい
 控えめに発言を
 家事も全部になす!
 キャリアウーマン
 女性ならではの感性を
 発揮していただきたい
 何かあった場合は
 お母さんに
 連絡しますね
 お金に困って
 ないなら
 家にいけば
 いいじゃん



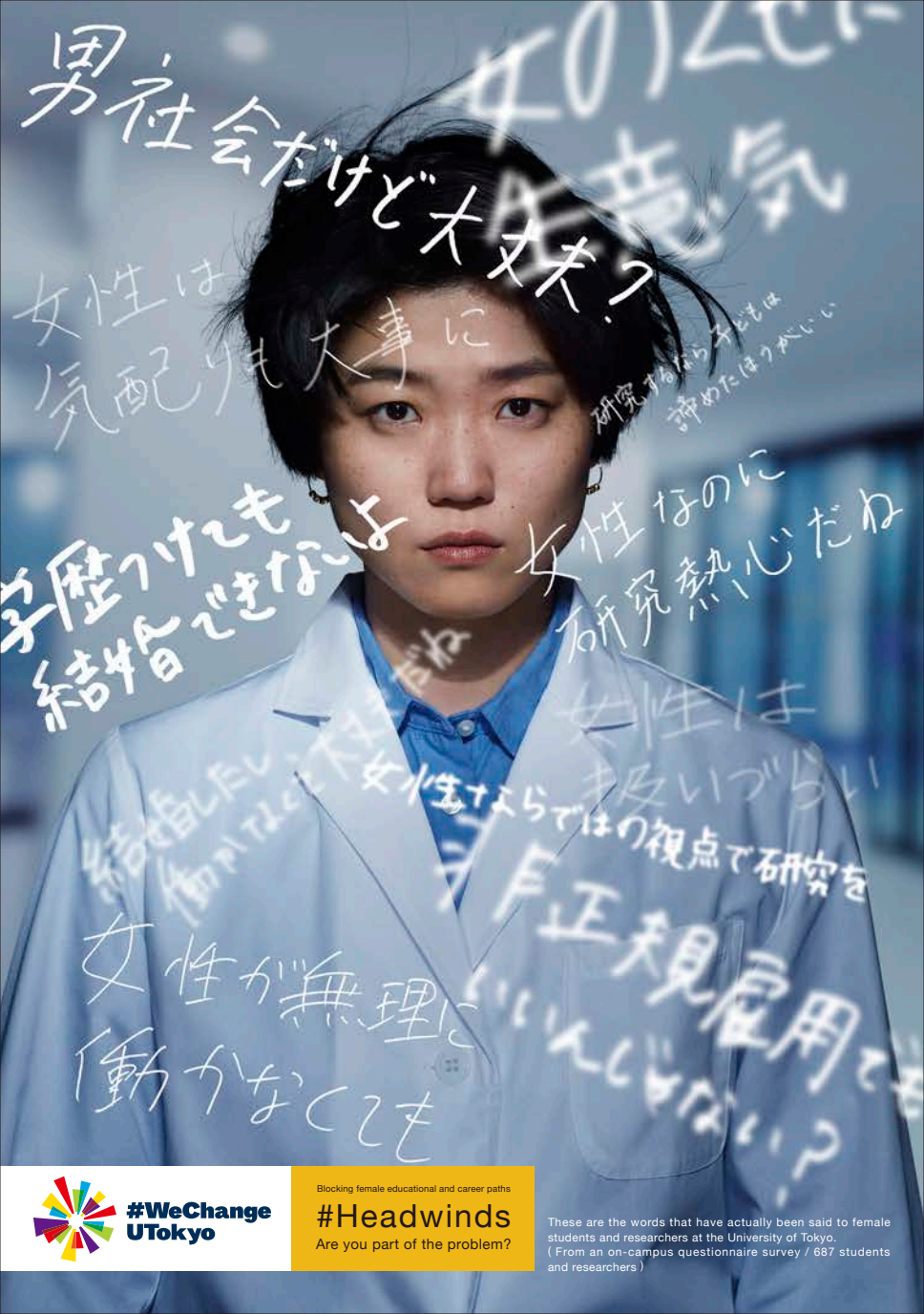
**#WeChange
UTokyo**

Blocking female educational and career paths

#Headwinds

Are you part of the problem?

These are the words that have actually been said to female students and researchers at the University of Tokyo.
 (From an on-campus questionnaire survey / 687 students and researchers)



男社会だけど大丈夫？

女性は
気配りも大事に

研究するから子どもは
諦めたほうがいい

学歴ついても
結婚できない

女性なのに
研究熱心だね

女性から扱いつらい
正規の研究を

女性が無理に
働かなくて

正規雇用で
いいじゃない？



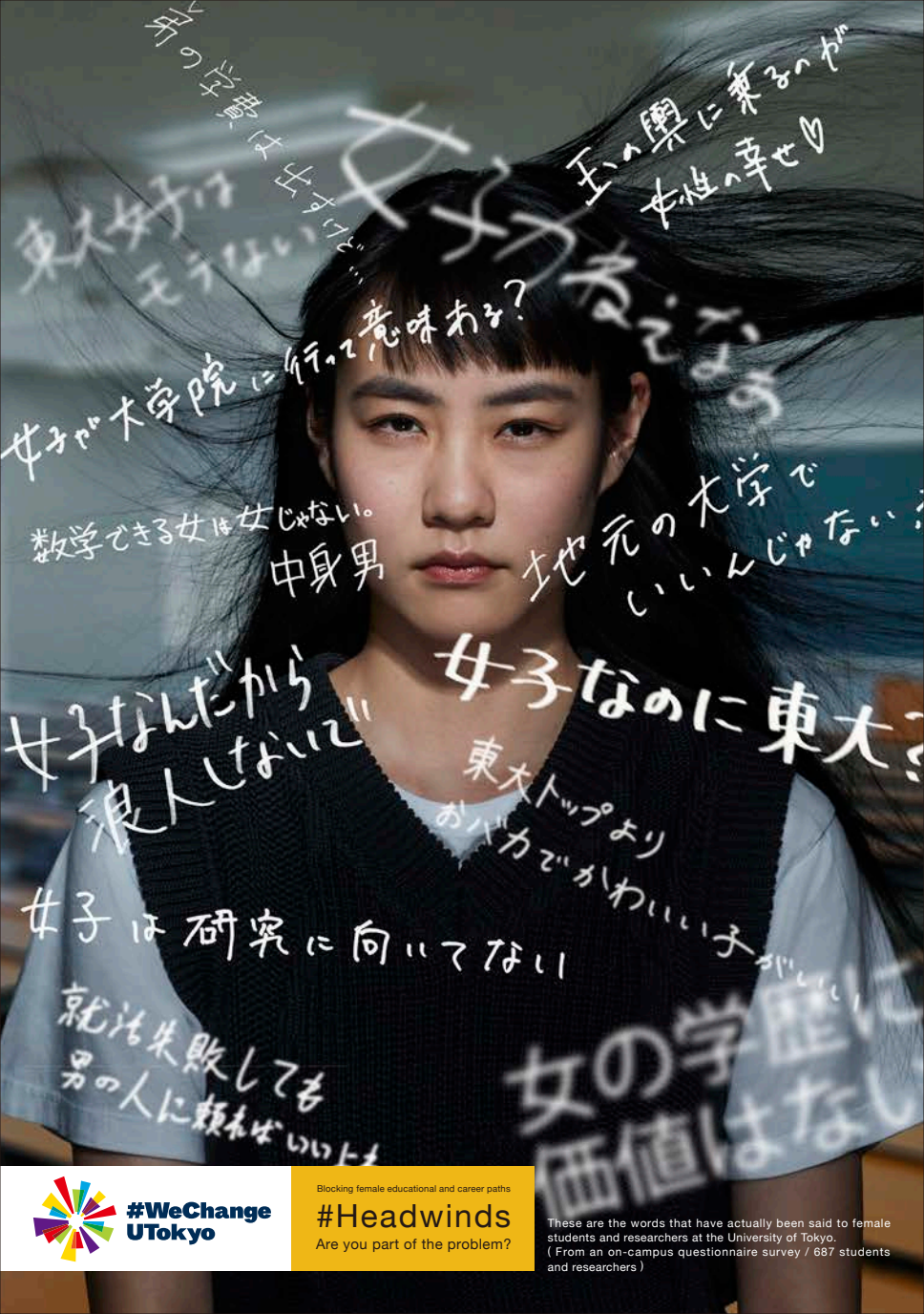
#WeChange
UTokyo

Blocking female educational and career paths

#Headwinds

Are you part of the problem?

These are the words that have actually been said to female students and researchers at the University of Tokyo.
(From an on-campus questionnaire survey / 687 students and researchers)



男の学費は出すけど

玉の輿に乗るのが
女性の幸せ♡

東大の
玉手はいらない

意味ある?

女子が大学院に行く

数学できる女は女じゃない。
中身男

地元の大学で
いいんじゃない?

女子なんだから
浪人しない

女子なのに東大
東大トップより
おバカでかわいい子がいい

女子は研究に向いてない

就活失敗しても
男の人に頼む方がいいよ

女の学歴に
価値はない



**#WeChange
UTokyo**

Blocking female educational and career paths

#Headwinds

Are you part of the problem?

These are the words that have actually been said to female students and researchers at the University of Tokyo.
(From an on-campus questionnaire survey / 687 students and researchers)

Innocuous comments can become formidable headwinds.

“You are a girl. You don’t need to push yourself so hard.” “Isn’t it tough to juggle research with raising a child?” Imagine having to endure such comments throughout your entire life. No matter how trivial they may appear, such words can accumulate to become formidable headwinds that impede one’s progress. Such language can demotivate women exploring future paths and can even influence their choices for the future. The fact that women represent only about 20% of the student body and 10% of the full professors at UTokyo is telling. Women in Japan face powerful headwinds even now. To change this, we need to inspire changes in how we all think. That’s why UTokyo is committed to fostering an awareness of unconscious discrimination and to eliminating gender bias.

Blocking female educational
and career paths

#Headwinds

Are you part of the problem?



#WeChange UTokyo

UTokyo Gender Equity Initiative #WeChange aimed at boosting female leadership

Double the growth rate of female professors and associate professors.

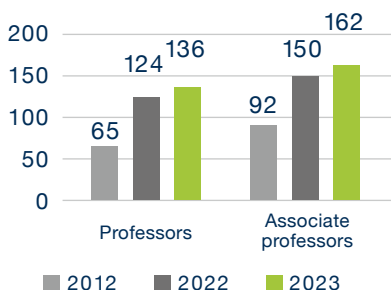
Appoint around 300 new female faculty by 2027.

Under the leadership of President Teruo Fujii, the University of Tokyo is actively pursuing the UTokyo Gender Equity Initiative #WeChange with the goal of fostering more female leaders. The initiative is dedicated to raising awareness among all members of the UTokyo community. The university has set a target of approximately 300 women among the 1,200 new professors and associate professors to be appointed between 2022 and 2027. We also seek to boost the ratio of female students (both undergraduate and graduate) from 25% to 30%.

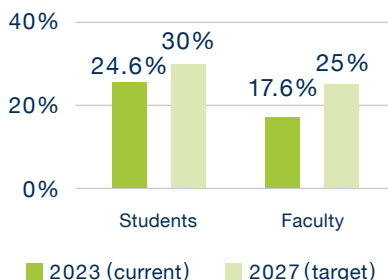
Current status and goals at the University of Tokyo

We plan to appoint around 300 new female professors and associate professors, aiming to achieve a 25% female faculty ratio.

Number of female professors and associate professors, by year 2012 – 2023



Ratios of female students and faculty 2023 (current) vs. 2027 (target)



Our biggest step toward 2027 is changing how we all think.

The #Headwinds project, detailed on the back of this leaflet, is an important component of the UTokyo Gender Equity Initiative #WeChange. It focuses on addressing gender bias, one of the underlying causes of the current disparities, and works to enhance awareness among members of the UTokyo community.

Target III

Rapid increase in the number of female faculty members

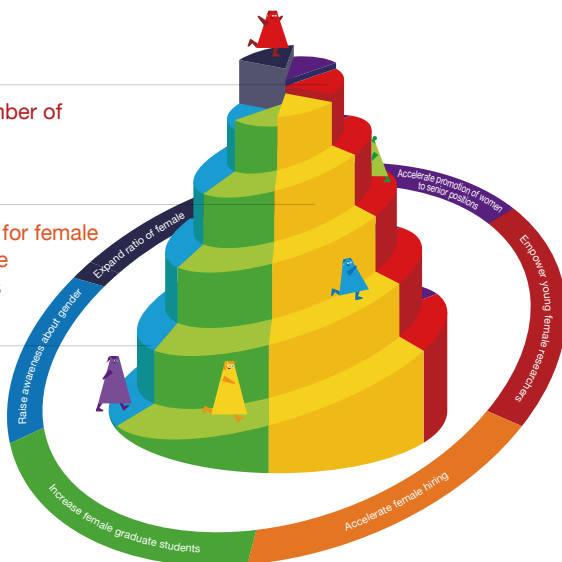
Target II

Seamless career pathway for female researchers from graduate school to senior positions

Target I

Laying the foundations for gender equity

– Raising awareness among the majority –



What are the #Headwinds blocking educational and career paths for women?

Despite a growing awareness of gender discrimination, outdated gender roles deeply rooted in gender biases still prevail in Japan. With its predominantly male faculty and student body, UTokyo mirrors those ongoing gender biases, which can be cloaked by seemingly innocuous remarks. Such words have the potential to impact all stages of a woman's life, including her childhood, educational paths, and career decisions. At UTokyo, we label this type of language—words that can undermine women's ambitions and impact their future opportunities—as #Headwinds. Our goal is to call attention to such comments in order to confront and eliminate gender biases.

Let us recognize the gender inequities around us. Let us think about those inequities together as a university community.

“Why are there so few women at the University of Tokyo?” This question concerns every member of the UTokyo community. We have displayed posters across the campus to raise this question and to challenge the headwinds of discouraging language. Our goal is to increase awareness of gender disparities and to stimulate conversation about this issue.



Question poster



#Headwinds poster

The #Headwinds poster displays actual comments heard by students and researchers at UTokyo.

The comments featured on the #Headwinds poster highlight the educational and career barriers faced by women. They were compiled from responses to a survey of 687 students and researchers at UTokyo who shared their experiences. When asked “Why are there so few female undergraduate students at the University of Tokyo?,” many responders noted issues such as “the lack of female researchers in academia and among the faculty at the university,” “a society that does not value education for women,” and “biases against female students and alumni of the University of Tokyo.” To foster a change in how we all think, we must each address the inequities around us and recognize the critical role of the #WeChange initiative. Let us work together to make UTokyo a university that anyone in the world would want to come to.

.....

Some of the responses to the question “Why do you think there are so few female undergraduate students at the University of Tokyo?”



Female undergraduate student

The university often feels dominated by males due to the low number of female students. That can deter prospective female students from enrolling. Media reports also suggest that high academic achievements are seen as a plus for men in the dating scene; they might be a disadvantage for women.



Female graduate student / researcher

Japanese society still tends to undervalue women's education. At the University of Tokyo, the prevalent culture favors the male majority. There are limited opportunities for females to come together and build solidarity.

With the launch of the #Headwinds project, we are cheering everyone on!

At the University of Tokyo, we strive to create a welcoming environment that anyone would want to join, and we are dedicated to transforming the mindset of the entire UTokyo community. Each person on our campuses experiences precious moments that are pivotal in enriching their lives. However, the valuable time and opportunity for personal growth can be easily compromised by verbal headwinds. Many members of our community have recognized the struggles of women and minorities, and they are actively trying to make a difference by working to address the inequities around us. Why not join us so that we can think about this issue together?



Kaori Hayashi
Executive Vice President
University of Tokyo

To all who have endured #Headwinds

The headwinds you have encountered are not something you should ever tolerate. You bear no blame for what has been directed at you—it is a shared issue that concerns us all. Remember, you are not alone. Many have experienced similar headwinds. Let us come together to support each other, foster understanding, and move forward as one.

To all those who have noticed #Headwinds and taken action

Thank you to everyone who has already recognized these issues and shown support in various ways. Headwinds obstructing gender equity continue to blow across our campus. Let us collaborate to build a sturdy forest as a windbreak against those stubborn headwinds. As allies united in support and action, let us generate tailwinds for gender equity.

To all members of the campus community

Taking action requires courage. I know, as I have been there myself. But your understanding and support can transform our campus for the better. Why not start by making small improvements to your immediate surroundings? Your first step will empower the voiceless and the underrepresented and spark a chain reaction of positive changes across our campuses.

Stand together as one against #Headwinds

Every single person's courage is essential to spark change. The #Headwinds project will foster activities to enhance awareness across the university, transforming all our voices and actions into powerful tailwinds for gender equity.

It's time for a change



#WeChange UTokyo

#WeChange
ウェブサイト



日本語

#WeChange
Website



English



IncluDE

UTokyo Center for Coproduction of Inclusion,
Diversity and Equity

Office for Gender Equity

Please start with the question on the cover page