

# IEEE Sendai Section WIE AG Kick-off Meeting Report

IEEE Sendai WIE AG Officers

## WIE (Women-in –Engineering) in TOHOKU

IEEE Sendai section WIE AG (Women in engineering affinity group) had been officially formed on April 21, 2017. In Japan, Sendai WIE becomes the fourth WIE affinity group following WIE affinity groups under Japan Council, Sapporo section and Kansai section. The inaugural event of Sendai WIE was held on 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2017 in RIEC (Research Institute of Electrical Communication), Katahira Campus, Tohoku University. 27 persons attended the event.

In opening message, Prof. Nakazawa, IEEE Sendai section chair, expressed his delight and his well wishes for the future success of Sendai WIE affinity group. Prof. Nishihara, R10 Director Elect, in his guest message, congratulated Sendai section officers and members for their hard work in establishing Sendai WIE. After a brief presentation about the establishment of Sendai WIE by Sendai WIE interim chair, a video message welcoming Sendai WIE from Dr. Jing Dong, R10 WIE coordinator was shown. The opening meeting was concluded by a short presentation of plan of activities by Mr. Hitoshi Kikuchi, interim Secretary of Sendai WIE.

A panel discussion was held on the theme “Current status and future of female engineers and researchers in the field of technology”. Prof. Akinori Nishihara, R10 Director Elect, Mrs. Emi Yano, WIE JC Chair, Dr. Fumi Seto of Tohoku University Gender Promotion Center and Prof. Basabi Chakraborty, Iwate Prefectural University and interim chair Sendai WIE, joined as panelists. Prof. Qiaowei Yuan, Sendai National College of Technology and interim Vice-chair of Sendai WIE was in charge of moderating the panel discussion.

In the panel lecture Prof. Nishihara presented current gender gap situation in Japan in comparison to USA among IEEE officers and University faculties and talked about establishments of WIE affinity groups in Japan. He emphasized that the inclusion of women in any group activities enhances success and urged the need to improve the poor gender gap situation in Japan proactively. In her lecture Mrs. Yano presented an account of the activities and measures taken in her company to allow more women to continue their work. She also presented the details of various WIE JC activities to fulfil the objectives of WIE. Dr. Seto described in detail the various measures taken by Tohoku University to help female scientists and researchers to continue their career. After the lectures, there was a lively discussion among participants with the panelists about the challenges and problems of how to improve gender gap. The motivation for girls in joining science and technology career, childhood training at home and school, mind set of society, abundance of role model came out to be the important factors as the conclusion.

