

It is my great pleasure to be present here today at the degree conferment ceremony of the Nara Institute of Science and Technology for the 2021 academic year and to say a few words.

First, I would like to congratulate all students who are receiving their degrees today even while experiencing the unprecedented trial of the novel coronavirus.

I would also like to extend my sincere congratulations to the families of the graduating students as well as President Kazuhiro Shiozaki and all the faculty and staff of NAIST.

Japan has been in a period of stagnation for a long time, and has not produced innovative products or services.

I believe we can say the cause of this is that we were stuck on our past successes, fearing change and being caught in traditional ways.

In order to change, we must not be guided by our common knowledge and need to notice any odd or unreasonable points in our current lives.

Einstein, the symbol of our support foundation, said, "The important thing is to keep questioning. Don't lose your sacred curiosity."

By looking at what we have taken for granted until now with curiosity we can make new discoveries and questions will then arise.

I think that pursuing further buds of questioning without fear of change will lead to new theories and technologies.

Today's society is full of complex, diverse and difficult problems, but I believe that the cutting-edge knowledge, creativity, and research capabilities that you have accumulated at NAIST will be fully accepted in the world.

I hope that when you go out into society, you will not forget your "sacred curiosity" and will devote yourself to the development of society and the improvement of people's lives, and open up a wonderful future.

To conclude, I would like to express my sincere wishes for the health and happiness of all, and for the further development of NAIST.

Thank you very much.

March 24, 2022

Tetsuya Kobayashi
Chairperson
Foundation for the Nara Institute of Science and Technology