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Tottori Sand Dune

***Do you think the program and the educational environment helped promote your research?***

As double degree students, we are doing the Master's program as any other student at Tohoku University would do. In that regard, the research is important. We only have nine courses to do. They correspond to about 2 hours of class per week for one semester. Usually, people complete them in a semester or two. As foreign students, the number of classes available is somewhat restricted since most are available in Japanese only, but there is more than enough to get all the credits. After you are done with the class, you will focus on your research only. With all the departments and labs available, it is not that hard to find something you will like.

My lab deals with Human-Computer Interaction and Interactive content, so there were many topics to choose from. For the research, I do not know how it works for other labs, but in my case, it is the students that help themselves, and the teachers act more as supervisors to guide the direction of your research. I prefer to work by myself and reach out for help when I need it, so it was working fine for me. My lab has mostly Japanese students but we have many events where everyone can participate and get to know each other. I think it helps to speak Japanese to some extent for daily life in the lab. We have weekly meetings, where students present their work, most of the presentations are in Japanese, so it is not always easy to get everything. I think the working environment was great with a good atmosphere and a lot of resources, if you ever need something for your research you can order and receive it in a few days. Students also can travel to attend conferences either to present or as volunteers. I went to Korea for a conference. I think my lab is a suitable educational environment and, consequently, promotes good research.

### ***Suggestions and/or criticisms for space of improvement***

For the research, it depends on the lab and your research topic. It seems difficult to know if you will like your lab or research before coming to Japan. For that purpose, Japanese students have the advantage of visiting the lab to get a better idea. For foreign students, it would be

nice if they could hold some event like an online demo for the works in the lab or a discussion with the students to make it easier to get a good idea. Usually, the only way to see what a lab is doing is through their website, but most of the ones I saw while looking for mine were in Japanese and not up to date.

## ***Living in Sendai : Experience and Advice***

### ***Tips for new arrivals.***

The food and traffic are more expensive than the cost in France, especially for veggies and fruits. However, it is more affordable to eat outside, and the bentos you can buy are quite good too. For the traffic, there are shuttle buses from the school you can take to go to the different campuses for free. If you live in Aobayama you can use it to go to Katahira, which is in Sendai. Otherwise, you need to take the train or subway that is always on time which is nice but can be a bit expensive if used daily. The commuter path for only one of the two subway lines is about 7000 yen per month. For the phone subscription, depending on your usage, I would recommend Ahamo, an online subscription from Docomo. It costs around 3000 yens per month for 20 Gb of data.

### ***What is the monthly cost of maintenance in Sendai beyond the dormitory?***

The rent at the UH Aobayama dormitory is about 40000 yens per month. I think that with the food and other expenses, without travel, I would spend around 100000 yen (700 euros) per month for everything. I am lucky to have the JASSO scholarship that pays for most of it. I used to eat at the canteen most of the time, but they increased the prices recently so it is not as worth it as it used to be.

### ***Preparation for essential items for maintenance before arrival: living accessories, manuals of various kinds, etc.***

Preparing some yens before departure can help, you pay with cash for most expenses even if you can use your card depending on the situation. You can always retrieve from Konbini, and there are everywhere but you may have a fee depending on your bank. You can probably buy anything you may need after arriving so I do not think there are many essential items.

### ***Difficulties you may encounter after arriving in Japan. (e.g., shopping, hospitality) If any.***

Japanese people are nice and helpful. However, it is most likely that they will not speak English so speaking Japanese a bit can help. I did not have many difficulties, the people at the international desk were always super helpful when we have questions about things we could not understand like important mail in Japanese.



## *Leisure*

Living as a student in Japan is a great experience, and Sendai is a wonderful place to live at. You can rent time slots at the different gyms of Tohoku University. I did Badminton once a week with another French student. There are many good foods in Japan, so if you like to eat you will be delighted.



I had the opportunity to go on a few trips with friends or my family, that came to visit me. I could go to many different places it was great! I recommend motivating yourself to travel while studying in Japan. It is probably the best time to do so. Here are some pictures of my travels.



Kanazawa Japanese Garden



Toyama Glass Museum





Nara Park



Okayama Castle



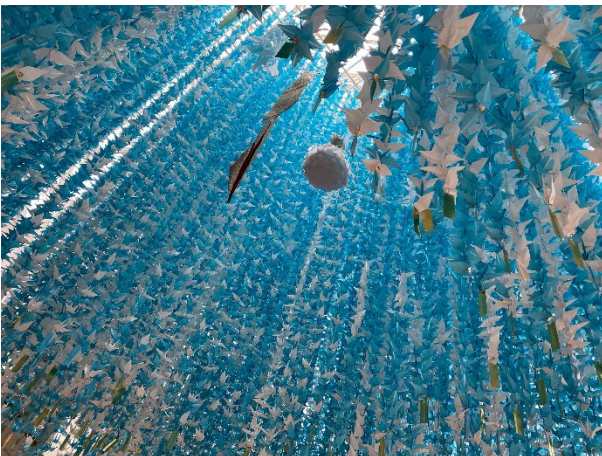
Kyoto Fushimi Inari Shrine



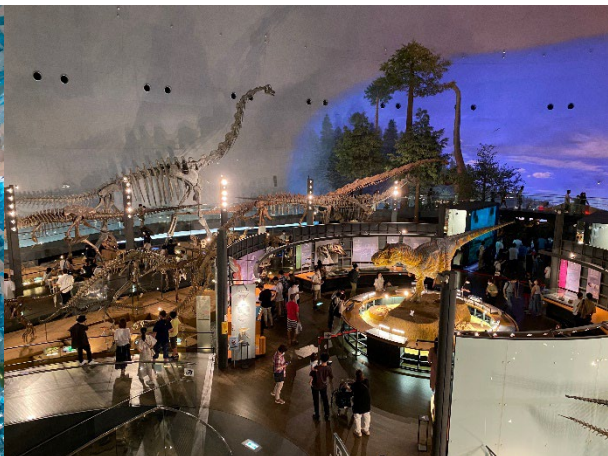
Yamadera Temple



Himeji Castle



Sendai Tanabata Matsuri



Fukui Dinosaur Museum





Sado Island

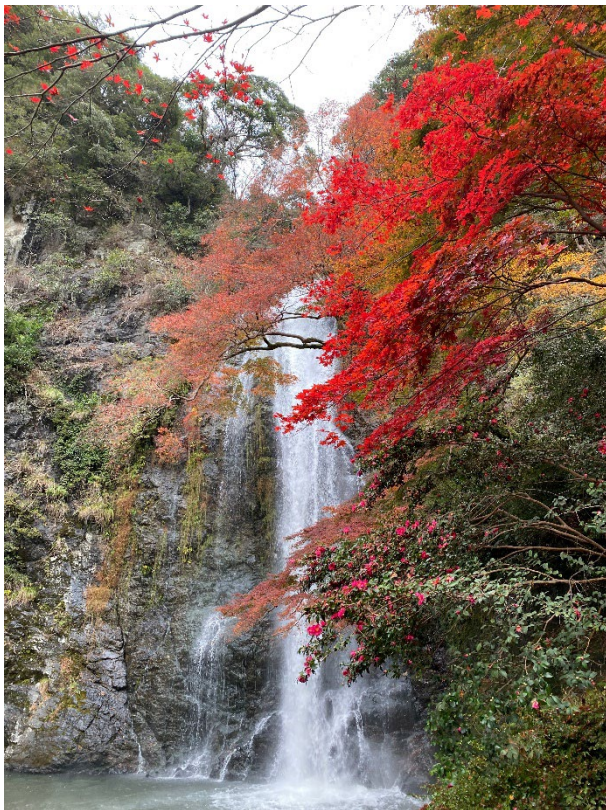


Eiheiji Temple



Nagoya Port

## *Career Paths*



Osaka Minoh Waterfall

### *Pursuing graduate school degree (including Ph.D.) at home university or Tohoku University*

I am not planning to continue my studies after graduation. I prefer to work. Yet, if you want to do Ph.D. at Tohoku University, you can totally do so, and there are many scholarships to help students to pursue this path.

### *Professional career outside of academia*

From now on, I plan to return to Europe to work there for a bit and maybe come back to Japan afterward. If you plan to work in Japan, be careful that usually, the recruitment begins super early, more than one year before your graduation.