



## A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT GRUSS

I was pleased to welcome the first of this year's new graduate students to the campus recently. Our Japanese or Japan-based PhD candidates were able to travel to Okinawa from other parts of the country to commence their program as scheduled. The rest of their class will hopefully join us early in 2021. When they get here, I look forward to our traditional Welcome Ceremony for the entire group and – pandemic measures permitting – will hope to welcome the wider OIST community to celebrate with us.

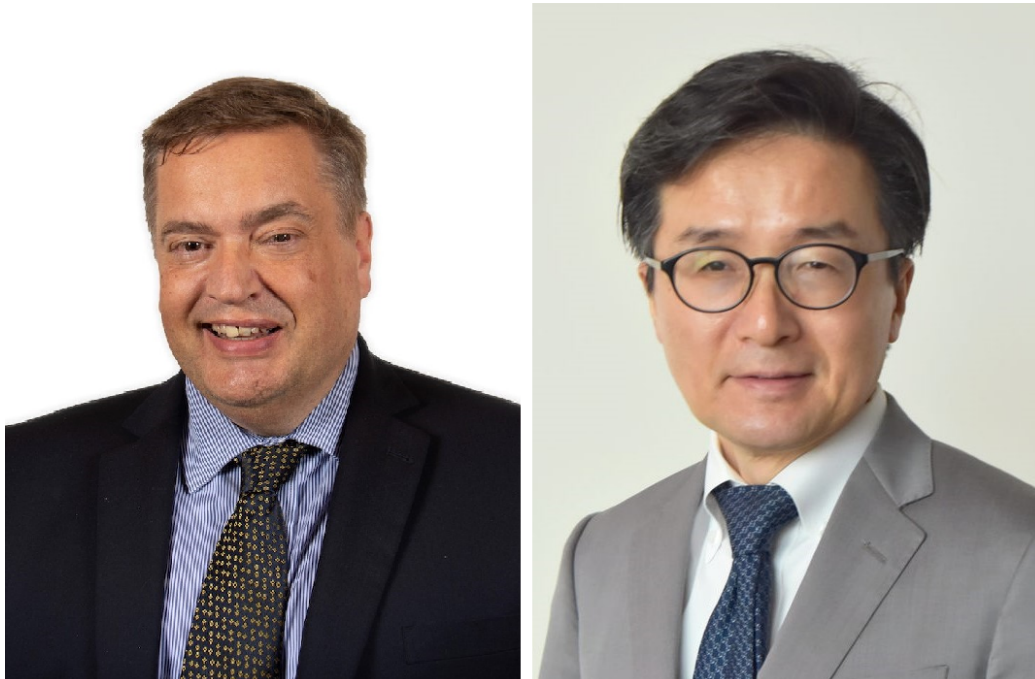


Now that foreign workers holding valid visas are once again permitted to enter Japan, we can expect to see new faces on campus in the weeks and months ahead. Several new faculty will be establishing their research units, and staff who were unable to take up their positions on site in recent months will be able to do so. I am proud of the way in which the OIST community has responded to the serious challenges posed by SARS-CoV-2 and the way in which we have adapted to the new way of living and working.

It is crucial we do our utmost to keep our university safe. We must also do what we can to remain productive, and we are expected to make best possible use of the money entrusted to us by Japanese taxpayers. This funds all our salaries and the university's running costs. It is not always easy to balance two seemingly diverging goals. With the help of Mary Collins, Tomoari Mori and the entire PCR test team we can provide the necessary testing capacity to OIST, and to a large extent support our fellow Okinawans. We can also draw upon our scientific expertise and advise the Okinawa government on how best to deal with future COVID-19 outbreaks.

Despite the vital short-term work we can do for the OIST and the Okinawa community, we should not neglect the main task of our institution: to produce groundbreaking, cutting-edge research for the benefit of all humankind. This demands continuing discourse between researchers, convincing both scientific and public audience of the truth and value of the ideas presented. To my mind that goal cannot be accomplished by remote working. Rather, it needs constant interaction within and outside of the laboratory, hoping for serendipities along the way.

Home office work can of course complement these efforts, but it cannot replace them. This is why we are working very carefully on a solution that is transparent, and which takes advantage of the positive effects while removing the negative ones. I hope very much that we can soon present you with a convincing concept.



Unfortunately, COVID-19 has had an especially significant and unforeseen impact on the professional and family lives which some of our colleagues were expecting to lead. As you know, Jonathan Ray, our Vice President for Communication and Public Relations, has chosen to return to his home and family in the United Kingdom at the end of the year. I will miss him, and consider him the most talented communications professional I have worked with in my career. Since 2019 Jonathan and his team have made a fresh and very positive impact on OIST.

I would also like very much to thank Masayuki Shibata, Vice President for Financial Management, who will be returning home to Tokyo at the end of this fiscal year. The lack of travel from Okinawa to Tokyo for many months has also impaired Masayuki's family life in an unacceptable way. Shibata-san's deep knowledge of the sector in Japan, and his international experience in government, have proved highly valuable to OIST. I am grateful that we will retain his expertise and insight for the duration of the ongoing budget bidding and planning cycle.

Roles leading Finance and CPR will be advertised in the period ahead.



This week I am looking forward to meeting candidates for senior roles we have already advertised. Ali Ganjehlou will retire early next year but we are fortunate now to have excellent candidates to fill this position. Tim Dyce will be relocating with his young family to live and work in Cambridge after nine years at OIST. Once we have appointed new people I will write to you all to introduce them.

I wish to conclude by saying that in these difficult times I am grateful to all of you for your commitment and dedication to OIST, which is the bedrock for our success.



**Peter Gruss**  
President and CEO

The President's Office





**Timothy Ravasi Begins Adjunct Professorship at the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies**

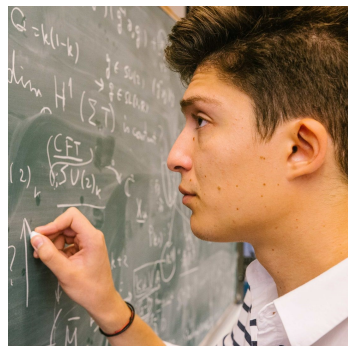
This month Prof. Timothy Ravasi became an Adjunct Professor at the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, a prestigious research center headquartered at James Cook University with 5 major partnerships within Australia and 24 more in 9 other countries. The ARC Centre of Excellence is the largest single institutional contributor to the Global Coral Reef Targeted Research Program, funded by The World Bank. Congratulations Prof. Ravasi.

**OISTNet 2.0 Upgrade Starts on Friday**

At the end of this week, the Networks and Connectivity Team will begin upgrading the entire OIST network. This change is major and will involve every part of the OIST network. The Network and Connectivity Team is dedicated to reducing the impact of these changes on all members of OIST; there will however be some unavoidable outages and interruptions to network connectivity. We ask for your patience and support during these changes, and the team will inform the OIST community of all changes using TIDA announcements.

[More News](#)

**Essential Events**



**PhD Thesis Presentation - Adrian David**

Mon., Sept. 14, 8pm

Zoom

Higher-spin holography in de Sitter space: horizon modes, black holes, and the boundary partition function

**Delivering Your Presentation Remotely**

Tues., Sept. 15, 12pm

Zoom

Dr. Jean-luc Doumont will discuss and demonstrate the necessary adaptations to your tools, your environment, and your delivery so as to focus the attention of the audience, minimize distractions, and get your message across optimally.

**Oceans, Climate, Cholera, and the Corona Virus**

Wed., Sept. 16, 8am

Zoom

Dr. Rita Colwell will share her insights into global challenges facing the planet today, ranging the health of oceans to climate change to disease, as well as the challenges women face in the field of science and how this can be changed.

[More Events](#)

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## COVID-19 Guidance for Staff and Students

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