



## CHIBA UNIVERSITY

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### Letter of Motivation

I first attended Cumulus in 2008 at Seika University in Kyoto, Japan. I felt a very free atmosphere from this conference. At that time, my university, Chiba University, was not yet a member of Cumulus. Therefore, I remember that after the conference, I proposed to join Cumulus to the university and became a member. It didn't feel like a conference, nor a meeting of business people. I was impressed by the fact that everyone attending seemed to be having a good time. Almost 15 years have passed since then. This 'freedom' I felt 15 years ago is important for Cumulus.

On the other hand, the number of Cumulus members at Japanese universities is very small. In terms of the number of universities, there should be more. Certainly, the number of design universities is not increasing now, but there are many traditional art universities and design-educating universities in Japan. I hope that more design universities, which are the source of design in Japan, will participate Cumulus and help us to appeal to the world. Chiba University, to which I belong, is a national university. Therefore, it is not possible to speak of the university solely in terms of design. However, it is a unique university. There are quite a few universities like this in Japan.

There are many design-related organisations in the world. The WDO is a group of professional designers and the IASDR is a group of university researchers. Cumulus is different from both of these. Rather, it seems to be a combination of both. It seems to be



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a group of people who are both designers and university faculty. This kind of network seems to have been the very smallest idea of Cumulus.

Student societies have also advanced thanks to the internet. In the past, you had to go abroad to study to build your first network. But nowadays, students just try to connect online and build various networks beyond that. They collaborate on creative activities and sometimes make and sell products. Some students learn in the common field of design and then move on to other genres, while others bring in various talents into the design community. I think it is also an important role of Cumulus to receive the power of these students.

Of course, it is very important to welcome new universities and expand our network globally. We will definitely strive to maintain and further develop our role as a platform for this.

Looking again at the history of Cumulus, I read that the 2008 conference in Kyoto was the first conference to be held outside Europe. I think it was very good timing for me to be able to participate in Cumulus at this memorable time. I would like to cherish this meeting and contribute to the future development of Cumulus in the following three ways

- (1) Maintaining a 'free' Cumulus and exchange of various designs.
- (2) Strengthening of cooperation with design networks in Japan, neighbouring countries and the world.
- (3) Promotion of student network societies.

Thank you very much.

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