

August 30, 2025

Report on the Summer School for Girls 2025

The Summer School for Junior and Senior High School Girls 2025 (hereafter referred to as “Natsu-gaku”) is a three-day, two-night residential program where female students engage with researchers, engineers, university students, and graduate students in science and technology fields. Through these interactions, participants deepen their interest in science and engineering, while also exploring their future academic and career paths.

This year’s theme is Prism — From a Single Ray of Light to Infinite Adventures. Just as a prism disperses a single beam of light into a spectrum of colors, the program aspires to help students—who may carry uncertainties or concerns—discover new possibilities through diverse encounters at Natsu-gaku.

Starting from Natsu-gaku 2025, the venue was moved to the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center (3-1 Yoyogi Kamizono-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo; hereafter referred to as NYC) and the program was held from Saturday, August 9 to Monday, August 11. The program was organized by 34 university and graduate student teaching assistants (hereafter student “TAs”) together with more than 250 staff members from academic societies and companies in science and engineering fields. They conveyed the appeal of science and engineering to 90 female junior and senior high school students from 29 prefectures across Japan.



<Natsu-gaku Day 1>

After the opening ceremony, the tension was eased through an icebreaker activity (introducing each other) organized by the TAs (hereafter referred to as student-led activities).



In the career lecture program, Mr. Osamu Kawasaki (JAXA, Space Exploration Innovation Hub Center) delivered a video message titled “Beyond Kibo.” In his talk, he emphasized the importance of “scientific thinking” and “communicating and working together in cooperation.”



From Ms. Kotomi Kinoshita (IBM Japan), the students received words of encouragement drawn from her study abroad experiences and her time at university: “Try anything you want to try!” “There’s no need to shape your dream perfectly right now.” “It’s fine to gain a variety of experiences first and then move forward in the direction you truly want.”

From Ms. Kana Komatsu (Technical Specialist at a major food manufacturer × Profit Improvement Consultant as an independent side business), the students heard insights based on her experiences both as a company employee and as a self-employed professional: “Even when you hit a wall, there is never just one path.” “The core of science and engineering becomes a foundation for living true to yourself.”

During the Q&A session, Slido was also used, and many questions were submitted.



In the subsequent student-led activity, “STEM Choice Bingo,” groups, guided by the TAs, enjoyed a lively session and deepened their friendships.



After dinner, in the program “Step! Up! Together!” participants deepened their connections and broadened their interests through activities that focused on shared backgrounds such as hometowns and school years, as well as exchanges that delved into fields of interest.



<Natsu-gaku Day 2>

On the second day, researchers and engineers from various academic societies and companies introduced the breadth, excitement, and enjoyment of science and technology to the students through hands-on experiments and poster presentations.

In the morning, 18 academic societies and companies offered a variety of experiments, allowing students to explore the fascination of science.



In the afternoon, 44 organizations presented posters (40 booths in total). Students received direct explanations from researchers and engineers, deepening their understanding of science and technology.

In the latter half of the poster session, a parallel “Career Counseling Cafe” was held, with booths covering topics such as “How to study difficult subjects,” “Working in a company,” and “Choosing between humanities and sciences / selecting a faculty or department.” A wide range of consultations took place.





The following session, “Self-Discovery Career Planning: Expanding the Future Through a Prism,” focused on reflecting on the experiences and emotions of the past two days. With support from TAs, the participants carried out self-analysis and developed concrete career plans.



In the evening networking session after dinner, students interacted with the organizing committee members, external evaluation committee, and researchers and engineers who took part in the experiments and poster presentations. Tables were arranged by field, creating opportunities for consultation and advice that transcended positions, which further deepened the students’ understanding of science and engineering.



<Natsu-gaku Day 3>

On the final day, students presented the career plans they had developed on the second day during the session “Self-Discovery Career Planning: Expanding the Future Through a Prism.” They received advice and encouragement not only from fellow participants, but also from TAs, researchers, and engineers.



In the following program, “Beyond the Prism,” each group’s TAs shared video messages reflecting on the three days. The participants listened with deep emotion.

At the closing ceremony, completion certificates were awarded to all students, and the conclusion of the Summer School was officially declared. Although many students began the first day with some anxiety, they quickly opened up to one another. By the final day, they were taking commemorative photos with their certificates, exchanging contact information, and saying their goodbyes with reluctance as they departed for home.



Feedback from the students included many heartfelt comments, such as:

- “By listening detail to people who are actively working in science and engineering, I was able to form a much clearer image of my future.”
- “I learned concretely what people in STEM actually do, and through experiments and posters I could see whether it suited me.”
- “I’m glad I joined because I was able to learn things I didn’t know before, and also because I made new friends who were easy to talk to.”

Although only three days and two nights, the program provided opportunities to interact with

researchers and engineers active in STEM fields. This experience helped participants reduce anxieties about the future and envision a more concrete image of their own paths ahead.

In addition, on the final day a special program for parents was held, addressing issues such as unconscious bias, introducing role models, and providing workshops.



This year marked the first time the Summer School was held at NYC. Moving from the National Women's Education Center, where it had been hosted until last year for 20 years, brought many uncertainties, including changes in operational methods. However, thanks to the cooperation and flexibility of everyone involved, the event was successfully realized.

Looking ahead, we intend to build upon this year's experiences and, together with all of you, further develop and sustain the Natsu-gaku in the coming years. We deeply appreciate your continued support.



Executive Committee and Supporting Organizations of Natsu-gaku 2025