

[Participants wanted: Sendai Aoba Festival “Yamaboko(traditional float) Parade” on Sunday, May 17th]

****This is NOT part of the Suzume odori (sparrow dance) class****

Dear international students,

This year, the Sendai Aoba Festival will be held on Saturday, May 16th and Sunday, May 17th. Sunday, May 17th is the main day of the festival and the portable shrine (Mikoshi) of Aoba shrine and twelve 6-meter-tall wheeled festival floats called “Yamaboko” parade in the city center area. The parade extends over 2 km in length and warriors in historical armor will march as part of the parade.

About the festival: <https://www.aoba-matsuri.com/en/>

Article about Tohoku University students’ participation in the float Yamaboko parade in the past:

https://www.tohoku.ac.jp/en/news/university_news/aoba_matsuri_2024_suzume_odori_and_the_yamaboko_parade.html

Fujisaki department store owns one of the Yamaboko floats and they have kindly invited 30 Tohoku University international students to participate in the Yamaboko parade. Together with staff members from the Fujisaki department store, students will pull the 6-meter high and 6-ton Yamaboko. This is a very special opportunity to be able to take part in the historical event held in Sendai.

Sendai Aoba Festival Yamaboko Parade

Date: Sunday, May 17, 2026

Time: 11:00a.m. – 4:00p.m.

Meeting point: TBA (location will be in Aobadori ichibancho area)

Other information:

1. Fujisaki department store will provide lunch to participants.
2. Fujisaki department store will provide traditional “Happi” coats to the participants. After the festival, Fujisaki department will give you the Happi as a souvenir. Students will need to wear a white T-shirt.
3. The parade is scheduled to start around 12:30p.m. and ends around 3:30p.m. Students will need to participate from 11:00a.m. to 4p.m.
4. Students must be enrolled in Tohoku University.
5. In order to participate in the festival, students must be enrolled in the insurance called Personal Accident Insurance for Student Pursuing Education and Research “GAKKENSAI.” All Tohoku University international students are required to enroll in this insurance.
<https://sup.bureau.tohoku.ac.jp/en/after-arrival-e/student-insurance-e/>
6. In case of rain: The Aoba Matsuri Headquarters will decide whether to hold or cancel the festival depending on the weather conditions on the day of the main festival. If the Yamaboko procession is canceled due to bad weather, a ceremony will be held around the Yamaboko floats displayed in the arcade around Fujisaki department store. Participants will be asked to attend this ceremony.
7. Students may be interviewed, photographed, and videotaped by Fujisaki and Tohoku University staff. Students’ photos, video, and comments will be used in the

university's website and social media platforms and Fujisaki's website or social media.
(You will be asked to submit a consent form.)

If you are interested in taking part in this event, please read the information (PDF) prepared by the Fujisaki department store and apply through the Google form. The spots are limited to 30 students and applicants are accepted on a first-come, first-served sign-up basis. You will need to log in with your Tohoku University account in order to complete the application form.

Please be advised that the information entered in the application form will be shared with Fujisaki department store staff who are in charge of the Yamaboko parade. This opportunity was provided by Fujisaki department store in cooperation with Tohoku University Fund office. Therefore, participants will be asked to complete a survey after participating in the festival on Sunday, May 17th.

Application URL: <https://forms.gle/AcdTKvAkNNz48DDM6>

Application deadline: Sunday, April 26, 2026

You will be notified of the result of your participation during the week of April 27th.

Should you have any questions, please contact the following staff:

Tohoku University Global Learning Center

Yuka Sakamoto (Ms.), Specially Appointed Associate Professor

Email: yuka.sakamoto.a3@tohoku.ac.jp

Sincerely yours,

Yuka Sakamoto
Global Learning Center
Tohoku University