

# Purpose of Establishment

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In the future, we will see a shift in the way people communicate, from the telecommunications of today (sharing of information by transmission) toward “universal communications,” with an emphasis on mutual understanding and interactions over networks. Among the various means of achieving universal communications, so-called “ultra-realistic” communications will be of particular significance, allowing people at great distances to feel as if they are in the same place at the same time, engaging in real, natural communications. Given our aging population, we believe these communications will help establish an information society in which everyone can enjoy fuller, more convenient lives.

The “final report on a research study of universal communications technology” announced by the Japanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications in 2005 stressed the importance of establishing a communication-intensive society, one that will accommodate high-reality communications that will act directly on the human senses to stimulate the imagination, feelings, and thoughts.

Ultra-realistic communication technology consists of a number of elemental technologies, including (1) super-high-resolution three-dimensional image technology, (2) ultra-realistic sound reproduction, and (3) full-sensory communications, including haptic and olfactory perceptions. Research and development in these technical areas require not only significant facilities and system resources, but also the cooperation of experts and specialists in a broad range of fields: image and sound data input, image display and sound reproduction, optical equipment, image and sound signal processing, data transmission and communication, content production, human interfaces, psychological analysis, and cognitive dynamics, to cite a few. Accordingly, it is essential that industrial organizations, universities, and governmental institutions combine their expertise and knowledge in collaborative research and development activities, taking standardization of technologies into full consideration along the way.

In view of these technological trends, the Ultra-Realistic Communications Forum has been established to solicit the participation of researchers, business owners, users and others involved in ultra-realistic communications in the exchange of information and interdisciplinary efforts in communications. The aim of these efforts is ultimately to promote efficient and effective industry-academia-governmental collaboration in research, development, verification experiments, and standardization. The Forum provides a place for discussion and investigation among researchers and engineers, hosts verification experiments based on interdisciplinary content, and presents a series of technical reports at exhibitions and symposia. Through these activities, I believe that the Forum will increase societal awareness of the importance of ultra-realistic communications, and contribute significantly to the revitalization of research and development activities among industry, academia, and the government, as well as to the practical application of research results throughout society.

The Ultra-Realistic Communications Forum will conduct various strategic activities aimed at ultra-realistic communications, with the cooperation of people from a broad range of industrial, academic, and governmental fields: communications companies, vendors, scholars, researchers, content producers, and more.