

September 20, 2016

Official Launch of the GakuNin Cloud Support Service

Encouraging the spread of cloud use at universities and research institutions

On September 20, the National Institute of Informatics, the Research Organization of Information and Systems, an Inter-University Research Institute Corporation (NII; Director General, Masaru Kitsuregawa; Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo), officially launched the GakuNin Cloud Support Service to encourage the spread of cloud use at universities and research institutions in Japan.

The GakuNin Cloud Support Service is a service in which both universities/research institutions introducing cloud services and providers offering cloud services can participate. NII has created a checklist of all items that a university or research institution should verify when introducing cloud services, and NII examines and verifies the content of services offered by each cloud provider based on this checklist. It offers the results of this examination/verification to universities and research institutions that are considering introducing cloud services. Also, NII will systematically offer universities and research institutions information such as specific methods for using cloud services in the fields of research and education. At the same time, by identifying the cloud service needs of universities and research institutions and sharing this with cloud providers, NII will work to further expand the cloud services aimed at universities and research institutions in Japan.

[Background to launch of GakuNin Cloud Support Service]

There are high expectations regarding cloud computing in terms of speed, flexibility, economy, and reducing operational load, including at universities and research institutions, and the use of cloud computing in Japan is increasing. However, the information, knowledge, and expertise required for universities and research institutions in Japan to use cloud services is currently insufficient. At the same time, cloud service products aimed at universities and research institutions are not yet widespread. The aim of the GakuNin Cloud Support Service is to facilitate the introduction and use of cloud services at universities and research institutions by

resolving these problems, and in doing so, to establish advanced cloud-based academic information infrastructure. In preparation for the official provision of this GakuNin Cloud Support Service, NII has been hearing opinions from both universities/research institutions and cloud service providers through demonstration experiment^(*1).

[Future initiatives]

Built and operated by NII, “Science Information NETwork (SINET)” connects Japanese universities and research institutions and supports the academic infrastructure within Japan. Through SINET, NII has supported the efficient use of the cloud as an ICT platform in universities and research institutions by providing an environment that can connect directly with cloud services aimed at private academic organizations. Hereafter, to further encourage cloud use, NII, with extensive cooperation from cloud service providers, will gather information, knowledge, and expertise for the use of cloud services at universities and research institutions, and will use it to support the introduction and utilization of cloud services by universities and research institutions. NII will also hold seminars and conduct other educational activities aimed at encouraging the introduction and utilization of cloud services. NII also intends to provide opportunities for the exchange of information between participating institutions and participating providers. Over the next year, NII aims to have 100 universities and research institutions participating in the GakuNin Cloud Support Service.

[Participation in GakuNin Cloud Support Service]

For details about regulations concerning this service and how to participate, please visit the following webpage:

<http://cloud.gakunin.jp/form/>

Through initiatives such as providing the GakuNin Cloud Support Service, NII will help to implement more innovative research and education and promote the advancement and optimization of management and administrative services at universities and research institutions.

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(*1) Demonstration experiment: Carried out between September 2015 and March 2016 by NII with 14 organizations using cloud services (universities, inter-university research institutes, etc.) and 15 cloud service providers.