

Ohtsura Niwa

Education and degree:

Dr. Niwa received BS in 1997 and MSc in 1999 from the Kyoto University, and Ph.D. in 1975 from the Stanford University under the mentorship of Professor Henry S. Kaplan.

Positions served:

Ohtsura Niwa, retired from the chairman's position of the Radiation Effects Research Foundation in June, 2023 after serving eight years since 2015. He started his professional life in 1975 as the Assistant Professor at the Department of Radiological Medicine, Kyoto University Medical School. He then moved in 1984 to the Research Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Biology of Hiroshima University as the associate professor where he was promoted to professor in 1991. He then moved to Kyoto University Radiation Biology Center as Professor in 1997. Thereafter, he was hired as the Vice Chair of the Heavy Ion Therapy Center of the National Institute of Radiological Sciences for two years till 2009. After the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactor accident in 2011, he moved to Fukushima and later he was hired as the Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Fukushima Medical University in 2012 where he periodically organized dialogue seminar with local people to discuss the issues of radiation health effects as well as to secure integrity of the local community, until he was offers the Chairman position from the Radiation Effects Research Foundation in 2015.

Research:

Niwa's research field covers a wide range of life science, but the main he studied was radiation biology. In any case, since he worked under Professor Henry S. Kaplan who discovered radiation induced leukemia virus, Niwa studied the mechanisms of radiation activation of the endogenous retrovirus gene and its silencing in embryonic stem cells. He was also interested in untarget indirect mutagenesis by radiation. Altogether he published 131 papers during his laboratory research life since 1971 till 2007.

