

◆ **EMBARGO:** For release in the morning of Friday, Aug 21, 2026.

○ Online Release: From 9:00 AM, on Thursday, Aug 20, 2026

PRESS RELEASE Aug 20, 2026(Thu)	 한국대학교육협의회 Korean Council for University Education
	http://www.kcue.or.kr

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KCUE Announces Results of 2026 Survey of University Presidents (II)

University AX : Shifting from Awareness to Action
Key Needs for Structural Funding & Inter-University Collaboration

- The Korean Council for University Education (KCUE, Chairman Lee Ki-jeong, President of Hanyang University, hereinafter KCUE) released the results of the “2026 KCUE Survey of University Presidents (II): Higher Education in the Era of AI Transformation,” conducted to mark the 2026 Summer University Presidents Seminar.
- The survey was held from June 2 to July 10, 2026, targeting presidents of 192 member universities, with 144 universities participating (75.0% response rate).
 - * Of the 197 member universities, five institutions established under special laws (Korea Armed Forces Nursing Academy, Korea Air Force Academy, Korea Military Academy, Korea Naval Academy, and Korean National Police University) were excluded from the survey due to the specific nature of the questions.
- The following are the key findings from the survey:

[Key Findings]

▶ Primary Areas of Interest of University Presidents

- Top Interests: **Financial support projects (government, local governments, etc.)** ranked first at 79.9% (115 schools), followed by international student recruitment and education at 60.4% (87 schools).
- Interest in “Development Fund Raising” surged by 5.6%p compared to the previous year (rising from 10th to 8th place), reflecting a growing trend toward **diversifying methods for securing financial resources**.

► Investment Plans and Funding for AX Transformation

- Regarding AX transformation within the next three years, 41.0% (59 schools) of universities are “establishing and implementing concrete plans,” whereas a larger proportion, 55.5% (80 schools), “recognize the necessity but have not yet reached the stage of establishing or implementing plans due to insufficient funding or ongoing review.” *3 schools maintaining current response levels, and 2 schools with no plans for AX transition.
- Over 93.7% of respondents acknowledged the need to expand investment across all six AX areas, led by “building AI infrastructure and platforms” (4.29 points), followed by “developing AI-based curricula/content” and “enhancing faculty AI competencies” (4.21 points each).
- No university was capable of fully self-funding its investment needs (0 institutions), while 89.4% (127 institutions) required substantial or greater government support (N=142*). Responses indicating implementation is unfeasible without government aid were highest among national/public (65.6%) and small universities (63.6%).

* Excludes 2 universities with no AX plans out of 144 respondents / 12 able to self-fund over half, and 3 unable to determine.

► Inter-University Collaboration and Data-Driven Innovation

- An overwhelming 88.2% (127 institutions) responded that inter-university joint development and sharing is necessary for higher education innovation in the AX era.
- For joint development, “education-specialized AI systems” ranked 1st (weighted total 230 points), followed by “AI-based LMS, learning data platforms & standard frameworks” (176 points), and “joint computing infrastructure” (120 points).
- For data-driven innovation priorities, “personalized learning support and curriculum improvement via learning history and performance data” ranked 1st across all groups (weighted total 289 points).

► AX On-Site Response and Talent Development

- Perceived change exceeded response levels across all areas, with the widest gaps in “funding for AI infrastructure establishment/operation” (perceived 2.76 vs. response 1.62) and “Securing faculty in AI/advanced fields and industry experts” (2.66 vs. 1.63).

- In talent development, “interdisciplinary talent integrating AI into major fields” was the top priority (weighted total 233 points). For basic and pure sciences, “difficulty in maintaining programs due to declining student demand” was the most common response (36.8%, 53 institutions), highlighting the challenge of balancing interdisciplinary goals with foundational discipline support.

► Financial Expansion Measures for AX Transformation

- The top priority for financial expansion was “expanding government contributions to the Special Account for Higher and Lifelong Education Support” (weighted total 289 points), followed by “reallocation of higher education funding via Local Education Finance Grants” (177 points), and “Establishing Statutory Funding Structures (e.g., Higher Education Tax) for Stable Financing” (171 points).
- All top three priorities involve structural and statutory government funding, showing that universities demand stable structural mechanisms for AX rather than one-time project budgets.

□ Chairman Lee Ki-Jeong stated, “While universities broadly agree on the need for AX, executing it solely with internal resources is difficult. Because higher education financing is a strategic investment in national competitiveness, securing stable, structural funding—such as expanding government contributions to the Special Account for Higher and Lifelong Education Support—is essential. Simultaneously, establishing a collaborative framework to jointly develop and share complex AI platforms and systems remains a critical challenge.”

Attachment

1. Response Status - 2026 KCUE Survey of University Presidents (II) (1 copy)
2. Survey Results - 2026 KCUE Survey of University Presidents (II) (Attached separately)
3. Questionnaire - 2026 KCUE Survey of University Presidents (II) (Attached separately)

[Attachment 1]

2026 KCUE Survey of University Presidents (II) Response Status

1. Purpose: Collecting field opinions from presidents of 4-year universities nationwide through a survey
2. Period: June 2 (Tue) – July 10 (Fri), 2026
3. Method: Web-based survey
4. Target and Response Rate: 192 member universities* ⇒ 144 universities responded (75.0%)

* Of the 197 total member universities, five institutions established under special laws (Korea Armed Forces Nursing Academy, Korea Air Force Academy, Korea Military Academy, Korea Naval Academy, and Korean National Police University) were excluded from the survey due to the specific nature of the questions.

〈2026 Survey of University Presidents (II) Response Status〉

Category		Member Univ. Status*		Respondent Profile	
		No. of Univ.	Composition (%)	No. of respondents	Response rate (%)
Total		192	100.0	144	75.0
Founding Type	National / Public	41	22.2	32	78.0
	Private	151	77.8	112	74.2
Region	Seoul Metro Area	74	37.5	54	73.0
	Metropolitan Cities	38	19.4	28	73.7
	Provinces/Cities	80	43.1	62	77.5
Size**	Large	52	25.7	37	71.2
	Medium	58	34.7	50	86.2
	Small	82	39.6	57	69.5

* Excludes 5 universities established under special laws.

** Note: Small (under 5,000), Medium (5,000–10,000), and Large (10,000 and above) based on undergraduate enrollment.