

JSPS Quarterly

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science



FEATURE: JSPS Bottom-up International Joint Research Program

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JSPS BOTTOM-UP INTERNATIONAL JOINT RESEARCH PROGRAM

JSPS Bottom-up International Joint Research Program —Newly Initiated Program for Supporting International Joint Research—

Advancing scientific research is essential to creating and configuring superb human knowledge. Over recent years, networks have been forged among researchers. High expectation is placed on their utilization in advancing important international joint research collaborations. This is accompanied by a growing imperative to support multilateral researcher-driven initiatives.

By simultaneously carrying out international joint research, the

world's technologically advanced nations can attain high levels of synergy while yielding innovative, knowledge-rich research results. JSPS's new Bottom-up International Joint Research Program targets research fields in which such synergistic achievements are possible. Launched this fiscal year, the program creates a cooperative framework of multilateral support by JSPS and counterpart science-promotion organizations for international joint research projects.

JSPS-NSF International Joint Research Program

This program started with an agreement concluded between JSPS and the National Science Foundation in the US. The JSPS-NSF program seeks, via simultaneous support by the two funding agencies, to pioneer new frontiers in the field of chemistry and achieve a high level of synergy, amidst which young researchers will be fostered and researchers networked.

Driven by the creativity and zeal of excellent researchers in Japanese and American universities and research institutes, collaborative research projects are supported jointly by JSPS and NSF. They are scheduled to be conducted on the following themes: Chemical synthesis; chemical catalysis; theory, models and computational methods; chemical measurement and imaging; chemical structure, dynamics and mechanisms; macromolecular, supramolecular and nanochemistry; environmental chemical sci-

ences; and chemistry of life processes.

The duration of support for each project is three years. JSPS funds them in an amount of up to ¥20 million per year or up to ¥60 million for the full three-year duration. A commission of up to 10% is included in the grant to cover administrative costs of the projects' host institutions. Joint JSPS-NSF screening will be carried out on applications soon to be submitted under the program's first call for proposals. The selection results will be announced around next June.

NSF carries out this program as a component of its "International Collaboration in Chemistry between US Investigators and Their Counterparts Abroad" (ICC Program).

G8-HORCs

The Heads of Research Councils of G8 Countries (G8-HORCs) was established in 1979 based on a proposal by Prof. Heinz Maier-Leibnitz, then president of the German Research Foundation (DFG). Japan joined the group from its sixth meeting in 1987. The meeting is held in a different member country every year. The 2008 G8-HORCs meeting was held in Kyoto, Japan, on 17-18 May. These meetings assemble the heads of leading research-funding institutions in the eight member countries of Japan, the US, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Canada and Russia. The meeting's closed, informal format allows a candid exchange of views among the members on global issues related to S&T policy and collaboration. To assure a high degree of freedom in these G8-HORC discussions, their contents are not publicly disclosed.



Multilateral Joint Research Program

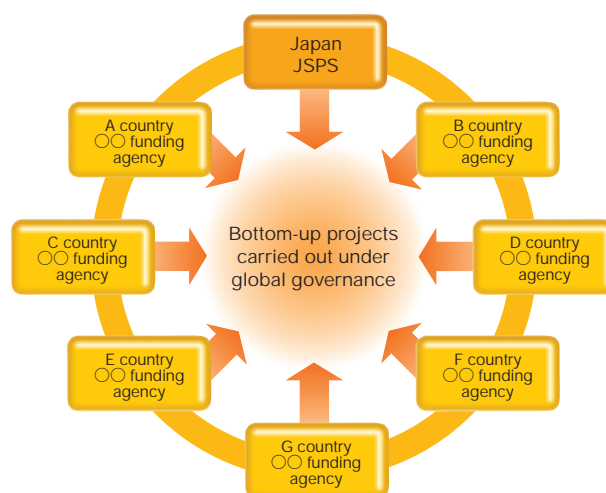
At the 2008 G8 Heads of Research Councils (G8-HORCs) meeting, a proposal was made for establishing a program of multilateral international joint research. The following seven countries are presently considering participation in that program: Japan (JSPS), Germany (German Research Foundation: DFG), the US (NSF), France (Agence Nationale de la Recherche: ANR), Russia (Russian Foundation for Basic Research: RFBR), Canada (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and National Research Council Canada: NSERC and NRC), and the UK (Research Councils UK: RCUK).

Under this program, each international joint research project will be carried out on a bottom-up basis. The partner funding organizations will deliberate and select program themes and research topics of wide global significance, and each cost-sharing organization will issue a call for proposals for related research projects. In preparing research plans and proposals based on their own concepts and approaches, the applying researchers will assemble a team, or consortium, of colleagues from at least three of the seven partnering countries. In this way, international cross-disciplinary research projects designed and advanced by the researchers themselves will be carried out through a unique framework of multilateral collaboration and funding support.

The initial proposal for this multilateral joint research program was made by the German Research Foundation (DFG) at the

aforementioned 2008 G8-HORCs meeting, held in Kyoto and hosted by JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono, who enthusiastically pledged JSPS's support for developing and implementing it. The program may, therefore, be called the "Kyoto Initiative." Deliberations are currently underway with regard to the program's themes, research fields, and funding arrangements.

By carrying forward its Bottom-up International Joint Research Program, JSPS will continue working to advance highly original, globally impactful international joint research collaborations.



Japan's Emperor Gives Endowment to JSPS

The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science was originally established in December 1932 as a non-profit foundation with an endowment provided by Emperor Showa to Japan's Minister of Education, Science, Sports and Culture. In September 1967, a law was enacted to convert JSPS into a quasi-governmental organization under the jurisdiction of the Ministry. After some 70 years of initiating and advancing programs as Japan's core research-promotion agency, JSPS marked a new start as an independent administrative institution in October 2003. This new legal status has given JSPS an even greater degree of operational freedom and effectiveness in enhancing the program services it provides researchers, universities and other research institutions.

Now, on 11 November 2009, His Majesty Akihito gave a new endowment to JSPS in commemoration of his 20th year of reign as the Emperor of Japan.

JSPS is greatly honored by the gift of this imperial endowment, and, in keeping with the spirit in which His Majesty

donated it, is considering using the funds to establish a program that gives recognition to outstanding doctoral students who can be expected to contribute to the future advancement of scientific research in Japan.



The Japanese envelope conveying the imperial endowment, tied with decorative paper strings of dark green (produced with red dye) and white, used exclusively by the Imperial Family on celebratory occasions. On the right side of the envelope are inscribed the characters for the Emperor and on the left, for the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

2009 Recipient Chosen for International Prize for Biology

On 15 September, at a meeting of the Committee on the International Prize for Biology (chaired by Dr. Takashi Sugimura, vice president, the Japan Academy) of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science decided to present the 25th (2009) International Prize for Biology to Dr. Winslow Russell Briggs, an American citizen who is Director Emeritus, Department of Plant Biology, Carnegie Institution of Washington, USA, and Professor Emeritus, Department of Biological Sciences, Stanford University, USA.

The field of specialization for the 25th Prize is "Biology of Sensing." Dr. Briggs has made several important discoveries with regard to phototropism, which has been an issue in plant biology from the time of Charles Darwin. Most notably, he discovered phototropin, a photoreceptor that allows plants to recognize the direction of light, which has had a major impact on photoreaction research, not only on plants but also on the wider realm of biology. His work has indeed made an extremely valuable contribution to advancing the entire domain of biological science.

Award Ceremony

The award ceremony was held on 30 November at the Japan Academy. Each year, Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress



Dr. Winslow Russell Briggs

attend the ceremony and a party in honor of the award recipient.

Commemorative Symposium

To commemorate the award to Dr. Briggs, the 25th International Prize for Biology Commemorative Symposium on Biology of Sensing was held on 2-3 December at Kyoto University.

Dr. Winslow Russell Briggs

Nationality: United States of America

Present position: Director Emeritus, Department of Plant Biology, Carnegie Institution of Washington, USA
Professor Emeritus, Department of Biological Sciences, Stanford University, USA

Curriculum Vitae:

1993-present	Director Emeritus, Department of Plant Biology, Carnegie Institution of Washington
1993-present	Professor Emeritus, Department of Biological Sciences, Stanford University
1973-1993	Director, Department of Plant Biology, Carnegie Institution of Washington
1973-1993	Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Stanford University
1967-1973	Professor, Department of Biology, Harvard University
1966-1967	Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Stanford University
1962-1966	Associate Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Stanford University
1957-1962	Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Stanford University
1955-1957	Instructor, Department of Biological Sciences, Stanford University
1956	Ph.D., Harvard University

Awards and Distinctions:

2007	Gude Award, American Society of Plant Biologists
2006	Centennial Award, Botanical Society of America
2000	Finsen Medal, Association Internationale de Photobiologie
1995	Sterling Hendricks Medal, United States Department of Agriculture and American Chemical Society
1994	Stephen Hales Prize, American Society of Plant Physiologists
1993-1994	Alexander von Humboldt U.S. Senior Scientist Award
1986	Elected to Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina
1984-1985	Alexander von Humboldt U.S. Senior Scientist Award
1975	Elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences
1974	Elected to National Academy of Sciences

— General Affairs Division

STS forum's Annual Meeting Held in Kyoto

The 2009 Annual Meeting of the Science and Technology Society (STS) *forum* was held on 4-6 October. JSPS planned and carried out its 203-F3 Session, "Proposals from Young Scientists."

About the 2009 STS *forum*'s Annual Meeting

More than 800 people from 85 countries, regions and international agencies attended what can be called the science and technology version of World Economic Forum in Davos. Venued in the Kyoto International Conference Center, this year's STS *forum*'s Annual Meeting assembled people of knowledge and wisdom, including scientists, policymakers, business people and opinion leaders, to discuss effective ways to advance, while suitably controlling, science and technology. In this respect, they exchanged views on the topic "Lights and Shadows of Science and Technology." Held in early October every year, this was the sixth in the series of STS *forum*'s Annual Meetings.

Discussions in both the plenary and concurrent sessions focused on the theme "Energy and Environment"; on the last day a statement was drafted and released on points of agreement in those discussions. The statement can be viewed on the following website: http://www.stsforum.org/press/PDF/2009/2009Statement_en.pdf

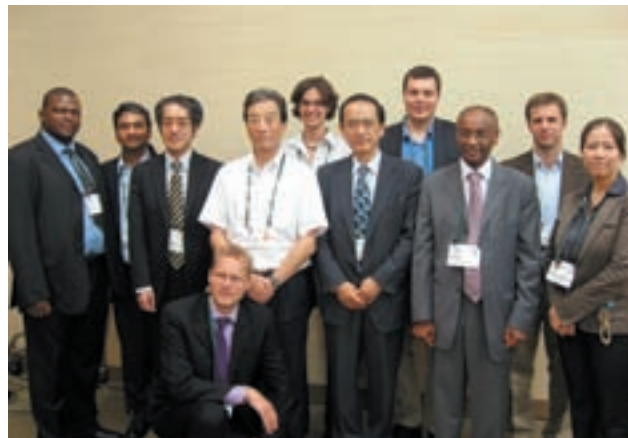
203-F3 Session

The 203-F3 Session was established via a request from the STS *forum* Council to create a session that assembles young scientists with high potential to become world leaders in their fields of specialization and that gives them a platform to discuss future S&T prospects and vistas and compile a proposal on the conclusions reached, while fostering young scientists and building networks among them. Based on this request, the 203-F3 Session was established and held for the first time last year. The STS *forum* entrusted the planning and implementation of this session to JSPS.



203-F3 Session activity

Held this year on 5 October, the 203-F3 Session was chaired by Prof. Kiyoshi Kurokawa, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies. Eight young scientists from countries around the world served as speakers in the session. Selected by JSPS and the New York Academy of Sciences (NYAS), they hailed from Japan, Europe, North America, South America and Africa. The session also enjoyed the participation of Nobel laureates.

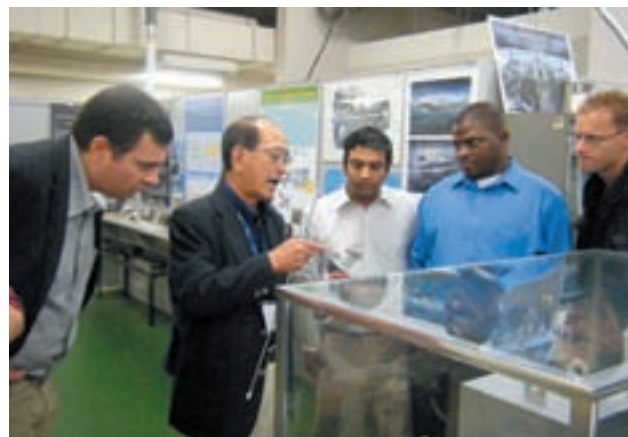


203-F3 Session participants with JSPS president Prof. Ono

A dialogue on the theme was actively advanced and expanded through discussions on the following four topics: "Empowering Young Scientists to Succeed," "Establishing Improved Networks of Young Scientists," "Envisioning the Next Frontiers in Science and Technology," and "Engaging in the Social Responsibilities of Science and Technology." The results of the session's discussion were reported at a later plenary session by Prof. Mohamed Hassan, the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS). The discussion results were also compiled into a proposal by the 203-F3 Session.

Study Tours

After the Annual Meeting, the young scientists participated in study tours. They made observation visits to the Institute for the Physics and Mathematics of the Universe (IPMU) at the University of Tokyo, the International Center for Materials Nanoarchitectonics (MANA) at the National Institute for Materials Science (NIMS), Tokyo Institute of Technology, and Keio University, where front-line scientists described the facilities' cutting-edge research to the young scientists and, fielding questions, engaged in spirited exchanges of views with them. Besides giving the young scientists firsthand knowledge of leading-edge research being advanced in Japan, the study tours also helped them to make contacts with potential future collaborators.



Making observations at NIMS

— Research Cooperation Division II

Second HOPE Meeting Held on “Art in Science”

JSPS’s second HOPE Meeting, themed “Art in Science,” was held over the three-day period from 28-30 September in Hakone, Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan. Its organizing committee was chaired by 2001 Nobel laureate in chemistry Dr. Ryoji Noyori, president of RIKEN. The meeting brought together about 100 doctoral students majoring in chemistry and related fields from 14 countries and regions of the Asia-Pacific.

Beginning with Dr. Noyori, altogether seven Nobel laureates participated in the HOPE Meeting: JSPS executive director Dr. Makoto Kobayashi (2008 laureate in physics), Dr. Yuan T. Lee (1986 laureate in chemistry), Dr. Peter Agre (2003 laureate in chemistry), Dr. Leo Esaki (1973 laureate in physics), Dr. Susumu Tonegawa (1987 laureate in physiology or medicine), and Mr. Koichi Tanaka (2002 laureate in chemistry). On the rostrum, they were joined by Dr. Svante Lindqvist, president of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and director of the Nobel Museum. The lectures delivered not only conveyed cutting-edge scientific content, but also offered insightful messages on such topics as the mission of science and advice on how the young researchers can develop themselves into leading scientists. Following each of their presentations, the lecturers received volleys of questions.

Featured also were discussion sessions that divided the participants into small groups, where they engaged the lecturers in face-to-face discussions and paved the way for network building among themselves. In addition, lunch and dinner times also gave the young participants opportunities to freely exchange views with the Nobel laureates or to seek their critique of the poster presentations made earlier.

In line with this meeting’s concept of “Art in Science,” the participants attended a mini harpsichord concert and enjoyed a lecture by Prof. Shuji Takashina, director of Ohara Museum of



Art, on a comparison between Western and Japanese art.

At the closing ceremony on the 30th, the young researchers received a certificate of HOPE Meeting participation from the chair, Dr. Noyori. The next day, they took an observation tour to RIKEN. Though a short three days in duration, the HOPE Meeting allowed the participants to share intensive, quality time with each other before returning with a wealth of new collegueships to their respective countries.

It is expected that the HOPE Meeting stimulated the young participants, giving them a jump along their paths to becoming full-fledged scientists, while offering them an optimal opportunity to create and expand their networks with peers in the Asia-Pacific region.

— Asian Program Division

Commemorative Event for 30-Year JSPS-CAS Partnership

On 15 September in Tokyo, an event attended by some 60 researchers and others from Japan and China was held to celebrate the 30th anniversary of JSPS-CAS (Chinese Academy of Sciences) research exchange. In 1979, the year following the signing of the Japan-China Treaty of Peace and Friendship, CAS, China’s largest national research institution, and JSPS, Japan’s core research-promotion institution, concluded an agreement to carry out a program of research exchange and cooperation. Over the ensuing 30 years, the JSPS-CAS partnership has supported researchers from the two countries via collaborations under the Core University Program and through scientist exchanges and joint research projects.

At the ceremony held in the morning, JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono and CAS deputy secretary-general Prof. Tieniu Tan offered remarks, followed by congratulatory messages by representatives of Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Japan. Next, Dr. Hiroshi Komiyama, chairman, Mitsubishi Research Institute, Inc., delivered a keynote speech titled “Role of Japan & China in Sustainable Development.” Reports were then given on the achievements of Sino-Japanese exchange and on the results of the Core University Program.



Prof. Ono offering remarks

In the afternoon, a symposium entitled “Energy and Environmental Resolution 2009” was held. Presentations were given by leading Japanese and Chinese specialists on environment and energy issues, and a discussion was advanced on the current state of these issues in the two countries and future vistas.

— Asian Program Division

First ASIAHORCs Joint Symposium Held

On 18-20 July, the first ASIAHORCs joint symposium was held on the theme “Asian Biodiversity: Characteristics, Conservation and Sustainable Use” in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan.

Proposed and crafted by JSPS, this symposium was the first joint project of the Asian Heads of Research Councils (ASIAHORCs). Its objective was to foster young researchers in a field of mutual consequence to countries within the Asian region and to build interactive networks among them. The implementation of the symposium on biodiversity was supported by the ASIAHORC-member organizations. It enjoyed the participation of some 130 researchers and specialists, including about 50 young researchers from the region.

Over the three-day event, lectures were given and seminars led by eminent researchers, and oral presentations and poster exhibits were offered by the young researchers. The participants also made an observation tour to the Fujimae Tidal Flats and Kaisho Forest, where they received briefings on nature conservation activities being carried out in Japan. On the last day, a panel discussion was held on the topic “Toward Future Research on Biodiversity of Asian Region.” In it, young researchers representing



the various Asian countries engaged in a candid exchange of views on issues and prospects pertaining to human resource development, research promotion and researcher networking in the area of biodiversity within the Asian community. A summary was compiled of their discussion and its outcomes.

The summary and presentation materials are posted on the following homepage: http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-astrategy/07_asiahorc_03.html

— Asian Program Division

Third ASIAHORCs Meeting Held

On 20-23 October, the third meeting of the Asian Heads of Research Councils (ASIAHORCs) was held in Seoul, Korea. It was hosted by the National Research Foundation of Korea.

ASIAHORCs was established in 2007 for the purpose of building a stronger network among leading science-promotion organizations that shoulder the advancement of science and



technology within the Asian region. Its establishment was proposed by JSPS, which hosted the first two ASIAHORCs meetings. This was the first time for another member of the group to organize and hold the meeting. The meeting was attended by the representatives of science-promotion organizations in eight Asian countries, including JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono. They each gave presentations and exchanged views on the theme “Human Resource Development,” including such issues as “brain drain and circulation.” Prof. Ono also gave a report on the successful holding of the July joint symposium, ASIAHORCs first collaborative project.

Deliberation was also given to an ASIAHORCs “vision,” to be shared by the member organizations, and an ASIAHORCs logo.

It was agreed that the next ASIAHORCs meeting and joint symposium will be hosted by the Vice-Chancellors’ Council of National Universities in Malaysia (VCC) and held in Kuala Lumpur in the fall of 2010.

— Asian Program Division

Call for JARC-Net Registration

JSPS operates the Japan-Asia Research Community Network (JARC-Net) as a researcher information database. Its purpose is to support the maintenance and expansion of working networks between researchers in Japan and other countries of the Asian region, which have been cultivated over long years through JSPS programs, including fellowships, researcher exchanges, joint projects and seminars.

Registered members of the database are able to access other members’ profiles, including their names, affiliations, positions, research fields, and education/work histories. They can then use

this information to look for new research partners or to broaden support for their activities by mobilizing past colleagues, such as university or JSPS program alumni, from Asian countries. Members are also provided an information mail service on JSPS’s exchange and cooperation programs within the Asian community.

To register onto JARC-Net or peruse the site, please visit the following webpage:

<http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-astrategy/jarcnet.html>

— Asian Program Division

JSPS-IIAS International Symposium Held in Kyoto

On 29-30 October, the “JSPS-IIAS Joint International Symposium on Conservation Technology for Cultural Heritages” was held at the International Institute for Advanced Studies (IIAS). The symposium was jointly organized by IIAS and JSPS’s Frontier Research and Development Committee on Conservation Technologies for Cultural Properties.

Frontier R&D Committees are established within JSPS under three-year periods of support. They are mandated to conduct surveys and studies on research topics that are of a nature that enjoys deeper investigation or that are on the leading edge of fields envisioned to be of growing importance to the academic and/or industrial sectors.



In April 2007, the Frontier R&D Committee on Conservation Technologies for Cultural Properties was established to study the fungal communities that form around old tombs and to develop new sensing technologies. The committee has succeeded in developing highly-sensitive environmental sensing instruments that are both portable and relatively inexpensive, which it has used to make site surveys of the condition of cultural properties, particularly local Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples. Concurrently, the committee has achieved important scientific results in its research on the eco-systems of soil-born fungi. This symposium reported, while celebrating, the committee’s accomplishments over the nearly three years of its operations.

Opened with a congratulatory message by JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono, the two-day symposium attracted the participation of some 50 researchers, many of them highly distinguished, from both in and outside Japan. Lectures were given on such topics as the preservation status of mural paintings in ancient tombs, technologies for preserving cultural properties, and international cooperation in cultural property preservation.

Spurring dynamic discussions and lively exchanges of views, the symposium proved to be both an interesting and informative experience for all the participants.

— University-Industry Cooperation and Research Program Division

JSPS London Programme Introduction Day at Loughborough University

On 28 October, the staff of the London Office delivered a briefing on JSPS’s activities and fellowship programs at Loughborough University. It was attended by about 40 of the university’s graduate studentbody and faculty, including a number of senior researchers. The session was moderated by Prof. Ken Parsons (Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research) and enjoyed the participation of Prof. Shirley Pearce (Vice-Chancellor and President) and Prof. Neil Halliwell (Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor). The briefing helped to elevate understanding and interest in JSPS program offerings among the university’s administrators and research faculty.

— JSPS London Office



JSPS Abend Held in Germany

This year’s JSPS Abend was held on 2 September at the Prince Elector’s La Redoute in Bad-Godesberg on the outskirts of Bonn. Every summer, the JSPS Bonn Office holds this event, to which it invites the heads of JSPS’s counterpart organizations and universities for the purpose of thanking them for their cooperation, while widening its sphere of cooperation and exchange within Germany.

On behalf of JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono, whose participation in the Abend was preempted by urgent business in Japan, Dr. Toshio Kuroki, deputy director of JSPS’s Research Center for Science Systems, reported on JSPS’s activities and extended warm words of appreciation to the attendees.

A new component was added to this year’s event: A scientific lecture was presented by a Japanese researcher engaged in research on the ground in Germany so as to give Japanese research a more direct appeal to the German participants. A past recipient of a JSPS Research Fellowship for Young Scientists, Dr. Motomu Tanaka, professor at Heidelberg University, was asked to give a talk on his current work at the German university. Placing em-

phasis on the importance of research support and researcher training, his lecture was well-received by the participants.

Before closing the curtain on this convivial event, remarks were offered by Prof. Dr. Matthias Kleiner, president of the German Research Foundation.



Dr. Tanaka giving a talk

— JSPS Bonn Office

JSPS Colloquium Held in Stockholm

On 5 September, the JSPS Stockholm Office held a colloquium on the topic “Advances in Cellular Reprogramming and Stem Cell Biology.” Venued at the Karolinska Institute (KI) in Stockholm, the colloquium was attended by some 70 people.

In this era when advanced aging and changing dietary habits are proliferating such diseases as Alzheimer’s, cancer and diabe-



tes, keen interest is converging on regenerative medicines that can reprogram cells and restore the function of organs impaired by disease.

Riding the crest of this wave of interest, the colloquium featured presentations by Prof. Shinya Yamanaka, director, Center for iPS Cell Research and Application, Kyoto University, and five other researchers from the Center. Starting with Prof. Yamanaka’s success in generating induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells from human skin tissue, the Center has taken a world lead in the subject field of research. Along with presentations on advances on the leading edge of iPS cell research, presentations were also delivered on embryonic stem cells and a wide range of cutting-edge work by researchers from KI, Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research Ltd, Umeå University, Lund University, and University of Turku.

Some of the research achievements reported will be published in next year’s edition of the international journal *Experimental Cell Research*.

— JSPS Stockholm Office

JSPS Forum Held on Singularities and Applications

On 24 August, the JSPS Strasbourg Office held the eighth in its series of JSPS Forums. Titled “Singularities and Applications,” it was cosponsored by the University of Strasbourg and Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS). Held at the University’s Institut de Recherche Mathématique Avancée (IRMA), approximately 60 French and Japanese researchers participated in this highly successful event.

Started mainly by the influence of Prof. René F. Thom and Prof. Heisuke Hironaka, a Franco-Japanese research partnership has evolved over past decades in the field of singularity theory. Under it, many postdoctoral researchers have visited each other’s countries, coauthored papers, and conducted joint research projects.

At this forum, presentations were given on new research results in singularity theory and its applications in such fields as astrophysics, medical imaging, visualization theory and learning theory. The forum also provided an excellent opportunity for young French and Japanese researchers to exchange views and updated information in this area of research endeavor.



The forum proceedings were transmitted in real time over the Internet via the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research’s Canal-U, where they are also archived for public perusal. (See <http://www.canalc2.tv/>.)

— JSPS Strasbourg Office

Third Meeting Held for University Administration Officers in the US

On 9 September, the JSPS San Francisco Office held its third Meeting for University Administration Officers in the US.

The purpose of this meeting is to establish a network and ex-



change information between administrative officers of Japanese universities based in and around the San Francisco Bay Area. The participants of the meeting were from Kagoshima University, Kyushu University, the University of Tokyo, Tokyo University of Science, and High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK) along with JSPS’s San Francisco Office. After briefly introduced themselves and their activities, the participants exchanged views on differences between operating in Japan and the US. The administrators described the nature for their overseas assignments and the missions of their university’s overseas offices. The meeting proved to be meaningful in boosting exchange between people from a diverse group of Japanese universities and research institutions. The fourth meeting is scheduled to be held in February 2010 at the JSPS San Francisco Office.

— JSPS San Francisco Office

Conference on Japanese Buddhist Studies Held in Berkeley

Over the period from 25-27 September, the JSPS San Francisco Office supported an international conference titled “Tracing Japanese Buddhism,” sponsored by UC Berkeley’s Center for Japanese Studies (CJS) and held at the Alumni House on the university’s campus. The conference assembled 42 scholars from the



US and Japan, who gave presentations and held a discussion on the theme from the perspectives of history, religion and cultural anthropology. Open to researchers and members of the interested public in the US, a discussion was also held on studies of Japanese Buddhism being advanced in the two countries.

On the second day, the group went to the Green Gulch Zen Center on the outskirts of Sausalito, just north of San Francisco. After holding a panel discussion at the Center, they observed its activities and practices and took a fieldtrip around its Zen-oriented environs.

Through these two days of activities, the Japanese and American participants were able to build research networks among each other. Indeed, the meeting provided a very meaningful opportunity, which would even be rare in Japan, for researchers of Japanese Buddhism specializing in the medieval, premodern, early modern and modern periods of the religion to gather together under one roof.

For further information about the conference, please see the Institute of East Asian Studies’ webpage: <http://ieas.berkeley.edu/events/2009.09.25w.html>

— JSPS San Francisco Office

Connection between “Japan and Japanese America” Explored at UC Berkeley

On 9-11 October, the JSPS San Francisco Office supported an international meeting on the theme “Japan and Japanese America: Connections Across the Pacific Rim,” sponsored by UC Berkeley’s Center for Japanese Studies (CJS) and held at the David Brower Center. At the meeting, experts from the US and Japan discussed from a historical perspective the connectivity between Japan and the Japanese-American community. Meant to deepen understanding of the mutual relationship between Japan and the United States, the meeting’s discussion was opened to both researchers and interested members of the public in the US.

On the meeting’s first day, Mr. Norman Mineta, former US Secretary of Transportation, delivered the keynote address. On the second day, Prof. Gary Okihiro of Columbia University gave a keynote speech, followed by a panel discussion by experts from the two countries on the theme from the perspectives of history, literature and religion. Another keynote speech was given by Mr. Glen Fukushima, CEO, Airbus Japan K.K. On the third day, the group repaired to Japan Town in San Francisco, where they enjoyed a luncheon hosted by the Consulate-General



Mr. Mineta giving address

of Japan.

For further information about the meeting, please see the Institute of East Asian Studies’ webpage: <http://ieas.berkeley.edu/events/2009.10.10.html>

— JSPS San Francisco Office

Seminars Held at Thailand’s Research Expo

On 26-30 August, Thailand Research Expo 2009 was held by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT) at the Bangkok Convention Centre. The JSPS Bangkok Office operated a booth at the Expo to display posters illustrating its activities. On the 28th, a seminar was held by the Association of RONPAKU Alumni of Thailand (ARAT); and on the 29th, a joint seminar was put on by the Bangkok Office in cooperation with NRCT.

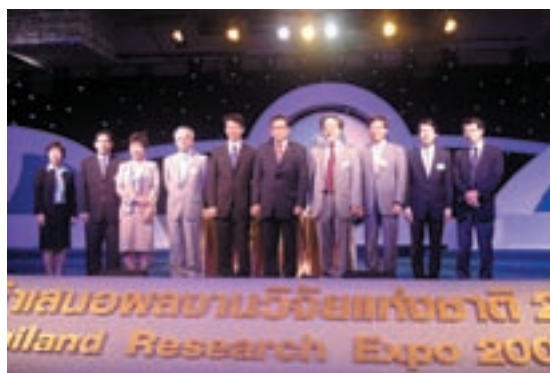
At the RONPAKU alumni’s seminar, Bangkok Office director Dr. Kou Ikejima delivered a speech entitled “Global Warming

Research and Policy Response in Japan,” followed by presentations from four alumni association members.

Titled “Advanced Science and Education in Japan,” the JSPS-NRCT Seminar was kicked off with welcoming remarks from NRCT secretary general Prof. Ahnond Bunyaratvej, followed by opening remarks and a description of JSPS activities from Dr. Ikejima. Three keynote lectures were delivered: Prof. Toshio Fukuda of Nagoya University, who spoke on “Robotics and Automation for Human Support”; Prof. Koji Iwase of Tottori University, who talked about how “Plants cannot grow without

mushrooms—underground world of mycorrhizal associations”; and Prof. Toshinori Nakayama of Chiba University, who addressed the subject “Development of New Immunotherapy for Cancer: iNKT Cell-based Immunotherapy.” All three of their universities have been selected as education/research hubs under JSPS’s Global COE Program. Each of the three Japanese speakers was accompanied by a Thai moderator, a researcher in the same field who introduced the speaker in the Thai language and served as an interpreter during the Q&A session.

Attended by some 300 participants, the seminar brimmed with enthusiasm displayed in the spirited Q&A discussions after each presentation. The proceedings also helped to raise the level of the Thai researchers’ interest in research initiatives being advanced in Japan.



— JSPS Bangkok Office

Second JSPS-NRCT Summer School: Biomass Energy in Asia

The use of biomass energy is gaining importance as a means of providing energy security and mitigating global warming. On 7-9 September, the second JSPS-NRCT Summer School was held on the theme “Biomass Energy in Asia.” It was co-organized by the JSPS Bangkok Office, National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), and the University of Tokyo.

Gathered at this summer school, 22 young researchers from Japan and Thailand gave presentations on their research and discussed issues of common interest, in the process of which they deepened and expanded each other’s multifaceted understanding of biomass energy usages, while building working networks among themselves.

Five classroom sessions were held. While most focuses on biomass conversion technology, the first session addressed “policy and sustainability” while the last took the form of a general discussion on the theme. The presentations on technology, such as biomass thermo-chemical conversion techniques, evoked energetic discussions on both the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches.

On the second day, a study tour was made to two plants in Saraburi Province: One generates biogas as a heat source from waste liquid discharged by a conjoined starch factory; the other

produces ethanol from strained sugarcane lees discarded by a similarly conjoined sugar refinery.

Back to the first evening of the summer school, a cultural exchange program was held as a night session in which the participants got to know each other better as colleagues.



— JSPS Bangkok Office

Academic Meetings in Egypt: “Studying Death to Appreciate Life”

From the end of September to early October, the University of Tokyo held a series of academic meetings on “Death and Life Studies (DALs)” in Cairo and Alexandria in collaboration with Egypt’s Supreme Council of Culture (SCC), and Bibliotheca Alexandrina. JSPS’s Cairo Research Station took part as a sponsor of this program.

sor of this program.

This new DALs discipline has emerged over the last several years. In a rapidly aging society like Japan’s, pondering the nature of death and life is a matter of contemporary urgency that transcends the scope of conventional studies.

The subject addressed was somewhat divorced from popular interest in Egypt; nevertheless, the meetings drew large audiences, who exchanged heated views with the panelists on the platform. Prof. Susumu Shimazono, head of the Japanese delegation, and Prof. Tetsuya Otoshi, coordinator of the meetings, found themselves surrounded by TV crews and newspaper reporters after many of the sessions.

Under a glaring headline that read “Studying Death to Appreciate Life,” the celebrated professor of religious studies Prof. Shimazono was quoted as saying, “The new discipline also aims to study how the Western and Eastern cultures view death, which mankind today has lost the ability to face and understand.” (8 October, 2009, *The Egyptian Gazette*)

— JSPS Cairo Research Station



Meeting in Alexandria

Fukui Prefectural Koshi Senior High School

Date: 26 September
 Dr. Andrew S. Utada (USA)
 Host institution: The University of Tokyo
 Title: "Drop Formation in Microfluidics"



Yamanashi Prefectural Tsuru High School

Date: 17 September
 Dr. Marc A. Humblet (Belgium)
 Host institution: The University of Tokyo
 Title: "Coral Reefs: Wonder of the Sea"



Kumamoto Prefectural Daini High School

Date: 15 September
 Dr. Truong Minh Pham (Vietnam)
 Host institution: University of Occupational and Environmental Health, Japan
 Title: "Tobacco Smoking and Our Health"



Yokohama City Municipal Yokohama Science Frontier High School (Kanagawa)

Date: 18 August
 Dr. Spela Kunej (Slovenia)
 Host institution: Tokyo Institute of Technology
 Title: "The Sol-gel Process and Its Nanostructured Materials"



Dr. Zaneta E. Swiatkowska-Warkocka (Poland)
 Host institution: National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology
 Title: "Nano-scale Science"



Nagano Prefecture Suwa Seiryō High School

Date: 4 September
 Dr. Ling Bai (China)
 Host institution: The University of Tokyo
 Title: "Introduction to Earthquake"



Dr. Oleg Gusev (Russia)
 Host institution: National Institute of Agrobiological Resources
 Title: "'Sleeping' Chironomid and Its Utilization in Space Life Science"



Dr. Padmalatha Koilkonda (India)
 Host institution: KDRI
 Title: "Introduction to Genomics"



Shizuoka Kita High School (Shizuoka)

Date: 10 September
 Dr. Mark W. Sherwood (UK)
 Host institution: RIKEN
 Title: "Understanding Memory"



Dr. Timothee Levi (France)
 Host institution: The University of Tokyo
 Title: "Neuromorphic Engineering"

Shizuoka Prefectural Iwata Minami High School



Date: 30 September
 Dr. Gora Diop (Senegal)
 Host institution: Kyoto University
 Title: "How to Identify Genetic Factors Controlling HTLV-1 Virus Infection?"



Dr. Mostafa A. Shaikh (Bangladesh)
 Host institution: The University of Tokyo
 Title: "Information Science = Playing with Information"



Dr. Zhenzhu Xu (China)
 Host institution: National Institute for Environmental Studies
 Title: "Climate Change and Grassland Ecosystem Degradation"



Dr. Bantu Prasanta K. Patro (India)
 Host institution: The University of Tokyo
 Title: "Understanding the Mother Earth through Geology and Geophysics Spectacles"



Dr. Noya A. M. Loew (Germany)
 Host institution: Tokyo Institute of Technology
 Title: "Dye-sensitized Solar Cells"

Recent Visitors to JSPS (August-October 2009)

FWF President

On 1 October, a three-member delegation from Austria, headed by president of the Austrian Science Fund, Dr. Christoph Kratky, visited JSPS. In 1994, the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) and JSPS signed a memorandum to carry out scientific cooperation in fields of the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences.

After paying a courtesy visit to JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono, they met with

JSPS executive director Mr. Naoki Murata and exchanged information on the latest scientific trends and views on ways to further promote collaboration between Austria and Japan, particularly with regard to establishing a funding and time framework for optimizing the implementation of joint research projects and seminars.

— Research Cooperation Division I



Kenya NCST Secretary

On 6 October, Prof. Shaukat Ali Abdulrazak, secretary of the Kenya National Council for Science and Technology (NCST) and chair of the Eastern Africa JSPS Alumni Association, paid a courtesy visit to JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono.

Prof. Abdulrazak told Prof. Ono about the strong expectation in Kenya over the agreement for research cooperation between JSPS and NCST currently under negotiation on the administrative level. He said the agreement enjoyed strong support by

Kenya's Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology. He also spoke about the importance of JSPS's postdoctoral fellowships to Kenyan researchers, and described the state of activities in the Eastern Africa JSPS Alumni Association. Prof. Ono thanked Prof. Abdulrazak for his visit, telling him how happy and proud he was of Prof. Abdulrazak serving in such an important position in the Kenyan government. He also expressed his view about the importance of expanding researcher ex-



change and joint research with Kenya via the cooperative agreement.

— Asian Program Division

NSERC President

On 7 October, Dr. Suzanne Fortier, president of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), came to JSPS to sign an updated scientific cooperation memorandum between NSERC and JSPS.

Since concluding their initial memorandum in 1994, the two organizations have carried out a program of scientist exchanges. NSERC also serves as JSPS's nominating

authority in Canada for postdoctoral fellowships, while the two organizations work together as members of the G8-HORCs.

After the signing, Dr. Fortier and JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono exchanged views on the need for cooperation among countries in addressing global issues, particularly the strengthening of collaborative ties between Canada and Japan.

— Research Cooperation Division I



Argentine Minister of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation

On 8 October, Dr. José Lino Salvador Barañao, Argentine Minister of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation, visited JSPS. He had participated in STS *forum's* Annual Meeting held in Kyoto on 4-6 October. Being in Japan, he took advantage of the opportunity to come to JSPS and discuss with Prof. Motoyuki Ono

the program between Argentina's National Council of Scientific and Technological Research (CONICET) and JSPS, under which researchers are exchanged between the two countries. They enjoyed a spirited conversation on ways to further develop the bilateral program.

— Research Cooperation Division I



Vice-Chancellor, Newcastle University

On 15 October, Dr. Chris Brink, vice-chancellor of Newcastle University, and Dr. John Terry, head of the University's International Office, visited JSPS and met with JSPS executive director Mr. Naoki Murata. They enjoyed an exchange of views, in which Mr. Murata introduced JSPS's activities, particularly the Global 30 and WPI

(World Premier International Research Center Initiative) programs. Then, Dr. Brink described the background of Newcastle University's establishment and introduced the University's current activities and future program plans.

— Research Cooperation Division II



Hailing from Moscow, Russia, Dr. Zoya Viktorovna Efimova has been conducting research with her host Dr. Wakana Kono at the Graduate School of Humanities, Chiba University under a JSPS postdoctoral fellowship since November 2007. Dr. Efimova did her doctoral work under the supervision of Prof. Vera Podlesskaya at the Institute of Linguistics, Russian State University for the Humanities (RSUH) in Russia, where Dr. Kono has conducted her own research in the Russian language. Over about the past 10 years, the two have continued their research collaboration in the field of corpus linguistics.

By the time this volume of the *JSPS Quarterly* is issued, Dr. Efimova will have become the mother of her second child. To deliver the baby, she took advantage of the maternity leave systems of the JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowship Program and of Chiba University.

Please explain the nature of the research you are conducting under the JSPS fellowship?

I am working in corpus linguistics, which in simple terms is the study of language as expressed in "real life" usages. This approach is based on the idea that a field-collected dataset of natural language usages allows reliable language analysis. Linguists gather text corpora (a large and structured set of texts), which contain many samples of natural language usages. In order to make the corpora more useful for linguistic research, texts are usually provided with annotations (various linguistic information such as transcription and translation). I am a member of a big project at RSUH to build a large multilingual corpus, which contains Italian, Armenian, English, Persian and, of course, Russian and Japanese narratives composed by native speakers. This spoken data is transcribed, texts are segmented into basic predications, and pause lengths are annotated. As a specialist in Japanese grammar, I have been working on the Japanese part of this corpus project.

The primary goal of my research in

Japan is to gather corpora of Japanese narratives and develop systematic principles of universal transcription along with an annotation system that enables comparing spoken data of typologically different languages. Together with my colleague Dr. Kono, a specialist in Russian language, we are working out principles for text representation, which can apply to either Japanese or Russian. Based on the materials we have prepared, I am also doing some contrastive studies of Japanese and Russian discourse.

Why did you originally choose Japanese as the object of your research?

I chose Japanese almost accidentally. I had entered the linguistics department at RSUH, where all students were tasked to learn at least one foreign language. My happenstance choice of the Japanese language caused me to get involved in Japanese history, culture, and so on. The more I studied Japan, the more I got interested in it. This passion placed me on the starting line of my research into Japanese grammar.

You are going to give a birth while in Japan. Does this cause you any anxiety?

No. If I had not given birth before or was not confident of my Japanese, I may have hesitated. Other reasons also affected my decision. First of all, my husband had just found a job here and my son is in the middle of his second year at a Japanese elementary school, so it would be a pity to hinder their progress by going back to Russia for the delivery. Second is the well-developed health care system here in Japan, which is also key in my decision to stay here. Moreover, there are some Japanese obstetricians and gynecologists who can speak English well. Third is the good opportunity to experience a part of Japanese life that is not often discussed in books about Japan. I am also interested in the early mother-children relationship and its influence on social tranquility in Japan. I would like to make a close, personal observation of it.



Dr. Zoya Viktorovna Efimova

Assistant Professor, Institute of Linguistics, Russian State University for the Humanities (RSUH)

Ph.D. (Linguistics), RSUH, Russia, 2006

M.A. (Linguistics), RSUH, Russia, 2001

How easy was it to apply for maternity leave under the postdoctoral fellowship?

It was very easy. All I had to do was submit a copy of my "maternal and child health handbook" and a few forms. It is a well-conceived gender-equal provision of the fellowship program, which enables fellows to swiftly return to their research activities after taking leave for child bearing.

What advice do you have for other fellows who may give birth during their fellowship tenure?

First, a good hospital or clinic will require appointments from the early stages of pregnancy. I would advise you to decide whether you want to deliver in Japan or in your own country as soon as possible. Once you start seeing a doctor regularly, everything should go smoothly. Procedures are simple. You do not need to be anxious about them. Next, it is very important to join the National Health Insurance system. On an average, hospitals charge about 4,000 dollars; however, if you join the system, the Japanese government will cover about 3,500 dollars of that cost.

Note: Fellows wishing to take leave for childbearing and/or infant care should submit the form "Request for Maternity Suspension of Postdoctoral Fellowship."

JSPS Fellows Plaza Website

JSPS Fellows Plaza is continually in the process of updating its website, which provides information for present, past and prospective JSPS fellows. Please give us a visit at: <http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-plaza/>

You'll find pages on "How to Apply," "Experiences and Messages from JSPS Fellows," "Program Guidelines," "e-Orientation," "Find Nearby Fellows," "Science Dialogue," and "Alumni Associations." The site also carries current and back copies of our newsletter "JSPS Quarterly" and the booklet *Life in Japan for Foreign Researchers*.

If you have any opinions or impressions you wish to share regarding our website, please contact us at the JSPS Fellows Plaza.

— JSPS Fellows Plaza

Introducing Japan: Chiba

By Dr. Zoya Viktorovna Efimova

During my fellowship tenure, I have traveled with my family to a lot of places around Chiba. We have developed a close affinity for this wonderful green land with its vast rice paddies, emerald hills and scenic coastline. In Chiba, we have also discovered the love that the Japanese people have for their country—everything that's beautiful, historical or interesting is treated with great care and local pride. I am happy to introduce this dear land to you.

Chiba Prefecture is located on the Boso Peninsula to the east of the Tokyo metropolitan area. It's said that humans first inhabited the peninsula some 30,000 years ago. Shell mounds from the Jomon period show that about 10,000 years ago the shoreline on the bay side of the peninsula cut much deeper into the land than it does now. During the period of the Kamakura shogunate, the Chiba samurai clan wielded power on the Chiba side of the bay. Chiba Prefecture was officially established in 1873, after the Meiji Restoration. Nowadays, about six million people live in the prefecture, which is one of Japan's largest industrial centers while ranking second in agricultural production as well.

Despite its name, the Tokyo Disney Resort is located inside Chiba Prefecture. There are also many other great sightseeing spots to enjoy.

If you should go to Narita Airport to greet or see off someone, I'd recommend that you spend a couple of hours visiting the Narita-san park and temple complex, located just a train stop or two away from the airport. From the station, a picturesque avenue takes you by souvenir shops and restaurants serving authentic Japanese cuisine and local delicacies, such as *unagi-no-kabayaki* (broiled eel), en route to the park. At the center of this awesome park



Performance during drum festival in Narita

is the ancient AD 940-constructed Buddhist temple called Shinsho-ji, "new victory temple," said to commemorate the defeat of the Kanto samurai Taira no Masakado, who led a rebellion against the central government in Kyoto. Millions of people from all over Japan go there to pray during the festive New Years holiday. The place has amazing sites to enjoy in other seasons as well: The blooming of *sakura* and beating of the drum festival in the spring and the blazing red of maple leaves in the fall are a couple of examples.

This summer, we discovered for ourselves the beautiful old town of Sawara. At its center is preserved an Edo period environment, so you can enjoy walking down streets full of traditional charm or if you're lucky you might stumble across a film crew shooting an historical drama. Sawara is also famous for its Iris Festival. Many romantic young couples who want an unusual wedding ceremony choose to hold it in these public gardens enveloped in blooming irises.



Newlyweds riding a boat during Iris Festival in Sawara

Chiba's Pacific coast is dotted with many traditional fishing villages, such as Onjuku, Katsuura, Ohara and Kamogawa. Many people are attracted to this coast by its rugged cliffs and roaring breakers. Another feature of the area, which we really enjoy, is Kamogawa Sea World with its performances by dolphins, sea lions, and killer whales.



Jigoku-nozoki lookout point

Another great sightseeing venue is Nokogiriyama, "saw-tooth mountain." It features a sprawling Buddhist temple site built across the top and sides of the mountain and cut into its walls and cliffs. You can hike all the way up the mountain or take the "rope-way" to the top. One of the mountain's highlights is its lookout point called Jigoku-nozoki, "peering down into hell," a narrow rock platform jutting over a sheer cliff. From the peak, winding paths lead you through the woods and hollows to Nihon-ji temple, built in 725. As you proceed further, you will encounter throngs of stone *rakan* (arhats), Buddhist practitioners, each with a different face and peculiar expression. Within the temple precincts, there is the largest sitting Buddha statue in Japan.

I hope you will have a chance to come to Chiba some day and experience firsthand its wonders and beauties.





Cover photo:

February snow on a tree of camellias, some 2,000 varieties of which bloom from autumn through spring in Japan.

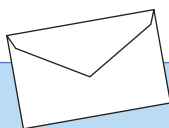
About JSPS

The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) operates as an independent administrative institution to perform the following main functions: fund scientific research, foster researchers, promote international scientific exchange, and advance university reform.



Crowing Rooster, Emblem of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science

From days of old in Japan, it has been the belief that the vigorous cry of the rooster in the gray of the morning augurs the coming of a new and bright day. As the crowing rooster can therefore be thought of as a harbinger of the kind of new knowledge that promises a brilliant future for humankind, it was chosen as the emblem of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. This emblem was designed in 1938 by Professor Sanzo Wada of Tokyo Fine Arts School to depict the rooster that symbolizes the breaking dawn in a verse composed by Emperor Showa.



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