

# JSPS Quarterly

Japan Society for the Promotion of Science



## FEATURE: University Internationalization Milestones Achieved under SiH Program

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## University Internationalization Milestones Achieved under SiH Program

The Strategic Fund for Establishing International Headquarters in Universities (SiH Program) was launched in FY 2005 by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and implemented over a five-year period by JSPS. The program has pivoted around 20 universities selected to establish on their campuses international strategy headquarters, which were to break old modes and new ground in initiating and carrying out institution-wide reforms that advance a broad scope of internationalization.

The Japanese higher education system is currently undergoing a comprehensive process of reform, in which internationalization is a major component. The university system in Japan has seen periodic reforms since it was first established after the Meiji Restoration in 1867, which ushered Japan out of more than two centuries of isolation from the international community. The University of Tokyo was established in 1877 as one of the first comprehensive institutions of higher learning with a mandate to educate the cadre

of leaders needed to modernize Japan. Its initial faculty comprised Americans and Europeans, who taught in their native languages. By the turn of the century, a process of Japanization had replaced the Westerners with Japanese instructors, who taught in the Japanese language.

Now, some century-and-a-half later, MEXT and JSPS are carrying out an array of programs to internationalize Japanese universities—integrating them deeper into the global academic community. One such program, titled Global 30, even re-introduces English as a language of instruction and degree acquisition, particularly for overseas students enrolled in Japanese universities. The SiH Program works to effect comprehensive, multi-tiered university internationalization overarching administration, staffing, course curricula, outgoing/incoming researcher and student exchange, inter-university collaboration, and university's overseas bases, among several other facets.

### Establishing International Headquarters within Universities

To carry out these functions effectively, the international strategy headquarters established within the 20 pilot universities are headed by the university president. While this makes the system top-down in configuration, it also tailors it in such a way as to be attuned to bottom-up initiatives. Up to now, launching an international program could entail the tedious task of obtaining the acknowledgement of each and every related department and holding

an endless series of meetings before preparations could even get started. In contrast, the president-led international headquarters have been shown to expedite the decision and implementation process, including personnel assignment and budget appropriation for international programs. This development of a cross-organizational structure for university internationalization has been one of the most salient successes of the SiH Program.

### Incentivizing Young Japanese Researchers to Gain International Experience

In the process of carrying out the SiH Program, systemic legacies have been found to impede university internationalization in a variety of ways. For example, though a myriad of overseas training and internship programs are available for young Japanese researchers, they are taking advantage of these opportunities in declining numbers. One major reason for this is a perception

that it is more career enhancing for young researchers to spend their time in Japan authoring as many research papers as possible vis-à-vis taking time and trouble abroad to master a foreign language and adapt to a different research environment. In this respect, the program revealed a need to modify the qualification criteria for faculty positions to emphasize quality over quantity

in paper writing and couple it with an appraisal of the applicant's overseas research experience and resultant international networking. To incentivize young researchers to go out and gain overseas experience, the pilot universities have introduced a

range of measures, including double-degree programs, which mitigate any loss in career development that their overseas stays may incur.

## Attracting and Receiving Overseas Researchers in Japanese Universities

Neither has the contemporary university system in Japan been well-equipped to accept overseas researchers. Though attracting talented researchers from other countries is the most important factor in advancing university internationalization, this is an area in which Japan lags far behind. The pilot universities under the SiH Program have taken various steps to improve this situation. They include establishing a "one-stop" service facility for accommodating overseas researchers on their campuses. Finding that overseas researchers' needs can best be grasped via face-to-face conversation, opportunities and platforms have been provided for actionable exchanges of views between them and university staff

and faculty. Such operational enhancements have been combined with strengthened international recruitment of overseas researchers into not only long-term and full-time but also short- and medium-term faculty positions. This is in response to a shift in the universities' perception of researcher mobility from one of brain gain and drain to one of brain circulation, which creates synergistic networks that of themselves generate knowledge and innovation. Though further steps still need to be taken, tangible progress has been made under the SiH Program in placing Japanese universities within the international flow of the world's best research talent.

## Ten University Internationalization Challenges

At the beginning of the SiH Program, the pilot universities were given ten internationalization goals to strive toward. A brief summary of how they met those objectives is as follows.

- 1) Organization made more responsive to internationalization by having university president take the lead
- 2) Internationalization strategically promoted by establishing concrete numerical objectives with accompanying action plan and evaluation system
- 3) Stable internationalization activities promoted by establishing a framework within the university for securing external funding
- 4) Strategic international collaborations, including consortiums, increased with overseas institutions of higher education
- 5) Internationally oriented education and research advanced

- 6) Training system enhanced for staffs engaged in international programs
- 7) Support strengthened for receiving/maintaining overseas researchers
- 8) Number of young Japanese researchers sent overseas increased
- 9) Effective internationalization promoted using the functions of universities' overseas bases
- 10) Ripple effect of good cases of university internationalization

These results are being widely disseminated to other universities throughout Japan so that they may emulate the program initiatives and innovations that yielded them when preparing and implementing their own campus-wide internationalization strategies.



Hokkaido University's faculty-development program at Leiden University, the Netherlands



Waseda University's international visiting scholars conference

## Presentation Ceremony Held for 2009 International Prize for Biology

On 30 November, the 25<sup>th</sup> annual ceremony to award the International Prize for Biology was held in the presence of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan at the Japan Academy, located in Ueno Park, Tokyo. The ceremony was organized by the Committee on the International Prize for Biology, chaired by Dr. Takashi Sugimura, vice president of the Japan Academy.

At the ceremony, an opening message was delivered by Dr. Sugimura and a report on the selection process was provided by Dr. Makoto Asashima, chair of this year's Selection Committee, after which the prize and an Imperial gift were presented to this year's awardee, Dr. Winslow Russell Briggs, Director Emeritus, Department of Plant Biology, Carnegie Institution of Washington, USA. Congratulatory remarks were



Dr. Briggs giving presentation in presence of the Emperor and Empress



At reception

then delivered by Dr. Yukio Hatoyama, the Prime Minister of Japan and by Mr. Tatsuo Kawabata, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). The ceremony concluded with an acceptance address from Dr. Briggs.

At the reception following the ceremony, a congenial atmosphere prevailed with Their Majesties and Dr. Briggs engaging in amicable conversation with each other and with the guests who included embassy representatives and the Prize Committee members.

The International Prize for Biology Commemorative Symposium and Lecture on "Biology of Sensing" was then held on 2-3 December at Shiran Kaikan, Kyoto University, Kyoto.

### Acceptance Address by Dr. Winslow Russell Briggs

*Your Imperial Majesty the Emperor, Your Imperial Majesty the Empress, most honorable Prime Minister Hatoyama, most honorable Minister Kawabata, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, members of the Committee on the International Prize for Biology, colleagues, friends, family, ladies and gentlemen:*

*I am deeply honored on being awarded the International Prize for Biology. I know of no higher honor for a biologist and it makes me humble when I think of all of the gifted biologists whom I believe must clearly qualify for the honor. The Japanese nation is to be richly congratulated for supporting this remarkable award. I offer my heartfelt thanks to the Committee on the International Prize for Biology. I also particularly thank His Imperial Majesty the Emperor for his support for biology in all of its incredible diversity—from global ecology through taxonomy to the most intricate molecular mechanisms of living things.*

*My first direct exposure to plant science was as a teenager accompanying my father on expeditions to photograph Minnesota wildflowers—something that gave me a life-long interest in plant taxonomy. When I started college at Harvard, a strong-minded professor from the University of Minnesota urged me to take a botany course. He was so persistent that I finally did—and before long I was in graduate school in biology thanks to him. Although I started as a taxonomist, I was soon wooed into studying plant development by two giants in the field: Kenneth Thimann, a major figure in the plant growth-hormone area, and Ralph Wetmore, a prominent scientist studying plant development from what we now call stem cells. The opportunity to work directly with them was irresistible.*

*My career in plant photobiology was initiated by an astute graduate student in my plant physiology course at Stanford in 1957: He asked why nobody had ever done the particularly simple*

*experiment. He thought it would resolve a raging controversy over the hormonal mechanism of phototropism. He was right. We did the experiment and the result resolved the controversy. I was suddenly launched into a career largely devoted to studying plant photoreceptors and the biophysical, biochemical, and physiological consequences of their photoexcitation. This area has never ceased to present me with fascinating challenges.*

*It is extremely gratifying to me that the award this year is based on plant photobiological research. Japan has great strength in this field. There are top Japanese scientists working at the biophysical, molecular, biochemical, structural, physiological and ecological levels on plant photoreceptors and the myriad of light responses that they regulate. The Japanese contributions have been seminal in all of these areas and I give these scientists my highest commendation. They have immeasurably enriched the field.*

*There is an essential component to almost any successful research program in biology—including mine: able junior colleagues. I have had the great fortune to be at major research institutions for my entire research career—Harvard, Stanford, and the Carnegie Institution for Science. These renowned research institutions attract the highest caliber of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to their laboratories. These young people have gifted minds, dexterous hands, and the passion to find*

*out how living systems function. These are the characteristics that are the driving engine for biological research. Much research can involve deadly dull repetitious work; exciting results that are not reproducible; false leads; and other disappointments. These things can plague the researcher for months or even years. It is the passion of these special people that ultimately carries them past the obstacles and brings success to a research program. My junior colleagues over the years have been*

*superbly qualified. I have learned far more from them than they have learned from me. I thank them profusely and salute them.*

*I also thank my wife Ann for 54 years of steadfast support.*

*In closing, my wife Ann and I wish Your Imperial Majesty the Emperor and Your Imperial Majesty the Empress our heartiest congratulations on the occasion of your fiftieth wedding anniversary.*

— General Affairs Division

## 141<sup>st</sup> Committee on Microbeam Analysis Holds International Symposium in Hawaii

On 6 through 11 December, a symposium, entitled Atomic Level Characterizations for New Materials and Devices '09 (ALC '09), was held at the Westin Maui Resort in Hawaii. It was organized by the 141<sup>st</sup> Committee on Microbeam Analysis under JSPS's University-Industry Cooperative Research Program.

University-Industry Cooperative Research Committees are set up by JSPS as platforms for collaboration between universities and corporations in both basic and applied research. They comprise frontline researchers from the two sectors who consult with each other and exchange views on research topics vital to advancing future technological development.

Among these committees, the 141<sup>st</sup> was established in September 1974 to both systematically and comprehensively promote research on microbeam analysis to meet the growing demand to quantitatively improve element analysis and elucidation by applying various microbeam analytical methods employing new-at-that-time electron, ion and x-ray technologies used in corporate labs among industries.

The seventh in a series of symposia was held as a component of the committee's efforts to promote international cooperation and exchange with overseas researchers in the field of microbeam analysis. Its focus was on electron, ion and x-ray properties and phenomena, ultraviolet and infrared ray characteristics, and

imaging technologies, about which lectures were delivered by eminent researchers, and a panel discussion held along with a poster session. During the course of the symposium, JSPS executive director and 2008 Nobel laureate in physics Dr. Makoto Kobayashi gave an impressive lecture titled "Symmetry Breaking of CP Parity" on 9 December.

The symposium enjoyed great success, with more than 200 people participating in it.



Dr. Kobayashi giving lecture

— University-Industry Cooperation and Research Program Division

## Projects Selected under Institutional Program for Young Researcher Overseas Visits

The Institutional Program for Young Researcher Overseas Visits is operated by JSPS for the purpose of funding highly effective projects carried out by Japanese universities and research institutes to dispatch young researchers to overseas research institutions for intensive study and training. An announcement was made of the selected projects on 29 January.

Funded under the government's FY2009 supplemental budget, a "Researcher Overseas Visit Fund" of ¥7.56 billion has been established in JSPS. In September, an open solicitation was issued for project proposals, in response to which 184 were received from 76 institutions.

Carried out by JSPS's International Program Committee, application screening was based on such criteria as the characteris-

tics, originality, concreteness and feasibility of the proposed projects. In the end, 96 projects were selected. For a more detailed outline of the selection results, please see the program's webpage: [http://www.jspis.go.jp/english/e-daikokai/05\\_list.html](http://www.jspis.go.jp/english/e-daikokai/05_list.html)

JSPS will provide funding support to institutions with selected projects over the next two to three years. The amount will coincide with the scale of each project and the number of their dispatchees. Ultimately, this program aims to foster highly capable young researchers with wide international perspectives by giving them the opportunity to study and experience research abroad early on in their careers.

— Overseas Training Program Division

## WPI Seminar Held in Washington, DC

On 14 December, a seminar was held in Washington, DC under the World Premier International Research Center Initiative (WPI Program) for the purpose of raising international awareness in the program among researchers and other stakeholders. Moderated by JSPS Washington Office director Dr. Hiroataka Sugawara, the seminar started with remarks by Mr. Ei Takeuchi, director, Office of Science and Technology for a Safe and Secure Society, Science and Technology Policy Bureau, MEXT, followed by WPI Program director Dr. Toshio Kuroki, who described the program's progress and its present status. Then, the directors of each of the five WPI centers described their respective operations and fielded questions from the floor. These Q&A discussions included administrative aspects, e.g. researcher employment and intellectual property rights management, as well as the research aspects of the centers. At the reception held after the seminar, the center directors and participants enjoyed exchanging views and information with each other.

On the following day, an observation tour was held of a top world-level US research hub, Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Janelia Farm Research Campus (JFRC). During it, JFRC director Dr. Gerald Rubin offered the group a briefing on the research



Q&A session

center's activities, following which they observed JFRC's facilities and held conversations with Japanese researchers working in them. JFRC is one of the research centers upon which the WPI Program was initially modeled. The visit garnered useful insights on future enhancements that can be made to the WPI centers, while building networks between theirs and JFRC's personnel.

— University-Industry Cooperation and Research Program Division/JSPS Washington Office

## Annual Meeting Held of A-HORCs

The seventh annual meeting of the Heads of Research Councils in Asia (A-HORCs) was held in Hiroshima on 5-7 November. These meetings bring together the top executives of leading science-promotion agencies in Japan, China and Korea to engage in a candid exchange of views on issues of science and technology



Professors Park, Ono and Chang

policy and to strengthen scientific collaboration among the three Northeast Asian nations. This year's meeting was attended by JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono; Prof. Qing Chang, deputy director general, Bureau of International Cooperation, National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC); and Prof. Chan-Mo Park, president, National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF).

Their discussion centered upon policies on international cooperation and included an exchange of views on the A3 Foresight Program and Northeastern Asian Symposiums, implemented by the group via trilateral cooperation.

Concurrently with this A-HORCs meeting, the 11<sup>th</sup> Northeastern Asian Symposium was held on the theme "Renewable Energy." It assembled 45 researchers from the three countries, whose energetic exchange of research reports and interactions foretold the creation of future joint research initiatives. The next symposium will be held on the theme "ICT: Next Generation Network and Network Security."

— Asian Program Division

## First Symposium Held by Bangladesh JSPS Alumni Association

On 19 December, the Bangladesh JSPS Alumni Association held its first symposium at Jahangirnagar University in the suburbs of Dhaka. Themed "Science and Technology for Sustainable Development," the symposium gathered together 70 alumni along with many distinguished guests from the Bangladeshi science community.

Attended by Mr. Tamotsu Shinotsuka, Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh, the symposium saw remarks delivered by its guest of honor Prof. Dr. Syed Modasser Ali, Adviser to the Prime Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Social Welfare Affairs, and from representatives of the University Grants Commission (UGC) of Bangladesh and Jahangirnagar University. Remarks were also given by JSPS senior fellow Prof. Muneo Tokunaga, who special-



Prof. Tokunaga offering message of appreciation on behalf of JSPS

izes in South Asia area studies, and Prof. Dr. Naiyyum Choudhury, who is president of the Bangladesh alumni association.

There were two keynote speakers: Prof. Takashi Uemura, who spoke about harmonizing modernization and environmental protection from a public health perspective, and Prof. Dr. M. Feroze Ahmed, fellow, Bangladesh Academy of Sciences, who addressed the theme from the viewpoint of population explosion. A

six-member panel discussion was held on the topics of water quality, climate change, food supply, emergent infectious diseases, water resource management, and thermotolerant microbial applications. The panelists, including two Japanese members (Prof. Keiichi Ohta and Prof. Mamoru Yamada) gave presentations and engaged the floor in spirited Q&A discussions.

— Overseas Fellowship Division

## General Meeting Held of Korean JSPS Fellows Alumni Association

On 16 January, the fourth General Meeting of the Korean JSPS Fellows Alumni Association was held on the campus of Seoul National University College of Medicine. The meeting was opened by Dr. Sang-Kyu Ye, associate professor, Seoul National University College of Medicine, after whom Alumni Association chair Dr. Se-Jin Seong, professor, Chungnam National Univer-

sity, offered welcoming remarks. Then, Prof. Youngah Park, who is both a member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea and a physics researcher, offered a message that stressed the importance of researcher exchange between Korea and Japan.

Chaired by Dr. Alfred B. Hwangbo, assistant professor, Seoul National University of Technology, a panel discussion was held on the theme “A Comparison of Research Cultures in Korea and Japan,” in which the panelists discussed and compared their research stints in both Korea and Japan. They spoke of the problems they had encountered as researchers in each other’s countries and how they went about resolving them. The young researchers and students who packed the hall asked volleys of questions, engendering a spirited exchange of views that yielded valuable suggestions.

Toward the end of the meeting, an introduction was given of JSPS’s exchange programs with Korea, particularly its fellowship offerings.

— Overseas Fellowship Division



## JUNBA 2010 Held to Advance University-Industry Collaboration

On 11-12 January, the Japanese University Network in the Bay Area (JUNBA) convened its fourth annual event, titled “JUNBA 2010” in the vicinity of San Francisco. The JSPS San Francisco Office serves as JUNBA’s secretariat.

The first day’s summit, held under the theme “The Next Step for Internationalization of Universities,” was kicked off with greetings from Mr. Yasumasa Nagamine, Consul General of Japan in San Francisco, and Prof. Motoyuki Ono, president of JSPS. Then, presentations were delivered by representatives of JUNBA-member institutions and other leading Japanese universities, followed by discussions. Views were exchanged regarding the internationalization initiatives being taken by Japanese universities in the US arena and their efforts to foster internationally adept students.

The second day featured two events on the theme “Innovative Medicine and Technology”: a technology fair which was preceded in the morning by a symposium, in which presentations were given by researchers from US and Japanese universities and corporations. Prof. Yoshihiro Kawaoka, the Institute of Medical Science, the University of Tokyo, and another four speakers reported on the latest medical technologies being advanced in their respective countries.

The technology fair contained three sessions on “Medical Devices”; “Infectious Disease Technology (Prevention, Diagnosis, and Treatment)”; and “Regenerative Medicine.” Each held in a separate location, these sessions featured presentations by US and Japanese researchers on some 30 leading-edge technologies, ac-



Discussion at the summit

companied by exhibitions in which samples and posters were used to elaborate the subject technologies. With an eye to promoting future international university-industry collaboration, the participating organizations actively disseminated information—sharing literature with each other and passing it out to the visitors.

Greatly exceeding expectations, the event had succeeded in attracting some 250 visitors by the time the curtain closed on it. Building upon this milestone, JUNBA is expected to contribute greatly to the internationalization of university-industry collaboration along with technological advancement in the US and Japan.

For more details on JUNBA 2010, please visit JUNBA’s website at: <http://www.junba.org/>.

— JSPS San Francisco Office

## Symposium on Japanese Studies Held in Berkeley

On 6 December, UC Berkeley's Center for Japanese Studies (CJS) held a symposium on the theme "Japanese Studies at Berkeley: Past, Present, and Future." As one in a chain of events put on over a period of two years to celebrate CJS's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the symposium was cosponsored by the Japan Foundation and supported by JSPS and the Consulate-General of Japan in San Francisco.

Opening remarks were delivered by Dr. Duncan Williams, chair, Center for Japanese Studies, who moderated a roundtable discussion. In it, three past CJS chairs spoke about the landmarks and evolution of Japan studies, followed by Mr. Isao Tsujimoto, director general, the Japan Foundation, New York; JSPS San Francisco Office director Dr. Seishi Takeda; and Dr. Eric Gangloff, executive director, Japan-United States Friendship Commission, who discussed issues related to support for Japan studies. Taking center stage in the afternoon were eight directors of Japan studies



centers in Canadian and US universities, including Harvard and Columbia, who addressed the topic "The Future of Japanese Studies in North America." The first part of their exchange was devoted to the east coast and the second to the west coast of the region.

— JSPS San Francisco Office

## French-Japanese Workshop on Life Sciences Held with JSPS Participation

Over the two days of 22 and 23 September, the Institute of Biological Sciences held a "French-Japanese Workshop on Life Sciences" at the headquarters of Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in Paris. At the workshop, Dr. Noriyuki Satoh, senior program officer, JSPS's Research Center for Sci-



ence Systems, talked about leading-edge research trends in biological research in Japan and introduced a JSPS system for supporting research in fields of biology, and Prof. Yoichi Nakatani, director, JSPS Strasbourg Office, described JSPS's menu of programs. Prof. Marie-Claire Lett, president, JSPS French Alumni Association, introduced the alumni association's activities, while seven alumni members spoke about their research activities and experiences in Japan.

Some 85 researchers attended the workshop: On the French side, they were from CNRS, INSERM, INRA and French universities, while on the Japanese side, they came from RIKEN, the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), the University of Tokyo, and Kyoto University. The participants engaged each other in spirited exchanges of views on future joint research initiatives. This reach beyond the workshop added yet another dimension to the event's success.

— JSPS Strasbourg Office

## Sweden-Japan Joint Colloquium on RNA Research

On 19 January, the JSPS Stockholm Office held a Sweden-Japan Colloquium, titled "Current Approaches and Future Perspectives on the Human Genome, Transcriptome and Proteome," at the Nobel Forum of the Karolinska Institute (KI) in Stockholm. The colloquium, which delved into research topics related to RNA and other gene functions, was planned and organized under the lead of Prof. Juha Kere of KI and Prof. Yoshihide Hayashizaki of RIKEN.

In this era of rapid aging, the need for regenerative and preventive therapies becomes all the more urgent. Much expectation is being placed in RNA research as RNA is connected to the generation of life, cell division, and cancer initiation. In addition to presentations on already achieved research results, the fruits of yet-unannounced cutting-edge work were also reported and shared by the participants, spawning a highly animated environment among the attending researchers and graduate students.

Another feature of the event was a poster session put on by postdoctoral researchers and doctoral students, which set the stage for a lively exchange of views between the Swedish and



Prof. Hayashizaki holding mic during discussion

Japanese researchers.

Altogether, some 75 researchers and students attended the colloquium, far exceeding expectations. The interaction among them is expected to strengthen Swedish-Japanese collaboration at a depth that will accelerate RNA research toward new milestones.

— JSPS Stockholm Office

## FURUSATO Award Ceremony and Pre-departure Seminar Held in London

On 4 December, the JSPS London Office held an orientation for young scholars bound for Japan under JSPS's Postdoctoral Fellowship (Short-term) for North American and European Researchers. Its centerpiece pre-departure seminar provided information to these newly selected JSPS fellows on the research and living environment in Japan so that they would feel no hesitancy about going to Japan or uneasiness during their tenures. They were also introduced to programs to continue their collaborations with Japanese colleagues, for which they will be eligible upon their return to the UK. The meeting started with greetings from London Office director Prof. Yuko Furukawa, followed by the Japan-bound fellows' self-introductions, talks by former fellows on their experiences in Japan, and program briefings by representatives of the Japan Foundation and the Royal Society.

After the seminar, the UK JSPS Alumni Association hosted an Alumni Evening, giving the new fellows a good opportunity to intermingle and form collegial ties with the members. Dr. Martyn Kingsbury, chair of the UK JSPS Alumni Association, described the association's activities, after which a ceremony was held in



which Prof. Furukawa presented a certificate and memento to the FY2009 FURUSATO Awardees, alumni members selected to revisit Japan as a *furusato* (home away from home) for their research. Adding to event's appeal, the awardees talked about the fruits of their FURUSATO visits to Japan and what they aspired to accomplish in collaboration with their Japanese colleagues in the future.

— JSPS London Office

## London Meeting Held for Japanese Researchers Based in UK

On 20 November, a meeting was held by the JSPS London Office bringing together Japanese researchers based in the UK. This was the fifth such meeting since the first one was held in 2006. It was convened in two parts.

In the first, a confab on the research environment in the UK, a summary was presented of the results of a survey made of Japa-



Confab session

nese visiting researchers in the UK, which had been conducted from 2007. Then, Mr. Kazuhisa Okamoto, head of JSPS's Research Aid Division I, spoke about Japan's future research environment, followed by an animated discussion among the participants on what might be done to enhance it.

The second part comprised a lecture session and networking reception. With invitations sent out widely to Japanese researchers residing in the UK, some 60 attended. Following presentations by representatives from JSPS London and JSPS headquarters, Prof. Shin-ichi Ohnuma, University College London, delivered a lecture on the state of Anglo-Japanese cooperative research activities from his perspective of a researcher working in the UK. It spurred a spirited exchange of ideas and experiences among the participants.

The reception was held amidst a very friendly and collegial atmosphere. Many attending said how happy they were to have this kind of opportunity to meet and exchange views with fellow Japanese researchers in the UK.

— JSPS London Office

## JSPS Washington Office has moved!

As of 1 March, the JSPS Washington Office is situated at a new location.

Located on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor, our new office overlooks downtown Washington, DC. We've expanded the size of our office space to include a large conference room, which we look forward to using to hold many events.

Please update as follows your contact information on the JSPS Washington Office:

**JSPS Washington Office**  
**2001 L Street, N.W., Suite 1050,**  
**Washington, D.C. 20036, USA**

Our telephone and fax numbers remain the same.  
Please pay us a visit when you're in Washington, DC.

— JSPS Washington Office



## Japan Plays Key Role in Islamic Area Studies

An international symposium, entitled “New Horizons in Islamic Area Studies,” was held in Cairo, Egypt, on 12-13 December. The organizer was Japan’s National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU), under the umbrella of which Waseda University, the University of Tokyo, Kyoto University, Sophia University and the Toyo Bunko (Oriental Library) have built an academic network. Cairo University’s Faculty of Arts collaborated with NIHU in holding this symposium, sponsored by the JSPS Cairo Research Station.

About 60 Japanese researchers came to the Islamic hub that is Cairo. Some Egyptians wondered about the appropriateness of this degree of Japanese influx among the attendees—that is, researchers from a Buddhist country with a very sparse population of Muslims. However, the anxiety they may have felt was greatly relieved by the interest and affinity that the Japanese researchers displayed in Islamic culture and civilization. Since the fourth Middle East War of 1973, the ensuing oil crises, and the 9/11 attacks in the United States, many Japanese researchers have been attracted to the Islamic world. They are conducting studies in not only Islamic religion and Arabic linguistics, but also in the sociological, historical, anthropological and other aspects of Islamic areas and their peoples.

Chief organizer of the Cairo symposium Dr. Tsugitaka Sato, general director of the NIHU’s Islamic area studies program, stated that “Islamic area studies aim to further understanding of contemporary Islam through interdisciplinary research and through investigation of the relationships between Islam and the



Dr. Sato addressing audience

characteristics of its various geographic areas.”

The symposium was not a mere bilateral assembly of Egyptian and Japanese researchers. It enjoyed multinational participation, with attendees also hailing from such countries as China, Korea, Bangladesh, Palestine, Morocco, Spain, the UK and United States. They prepared papers and delivered presentations, providing highly contemporary insights into the wide sphere of intellectual pursuit being dedicated to Islamic area studies.

The high level of interest generated held the attendees over to the second day, with no decrease at all in their numbers. Probing questions animated the exchange between the floor and platform, topping off a greatly successful event.

— JSPS Cairo Research Station

## Asian Science Seminar Held in China

From 7-13 January, an Asian Science Seminar was held in Changsha City, Hunan Province. It was cosponsored by JSPS and the Bureau of International Co-operation, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). Themed “Sustainable Eco-Design of Our Future on Food- and Bio-Production,” this seminar was organized by Prof. Mitsuru Osaki, director of the Sustainability Governance Project at Hokkaido University, on the Japanese side, and Prof. Zhiliang Tan at CAS’s Institute of Subtropical Agriculture, on the Chinese side.

A total of 80 people participated in the seminar: Six were representatives of JSPS’s Beijing Office, the National Natural Science Foundation of China, and other organizations that



support Sino-Japanese exchange; 37 were lecturers; and another 37 were students (young researchers receiving the lectures). The participants hailed from some ten countries: Japan, China, Korea, Mongol, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Tunisia and Nigeria, giving the event a colorful international complexion.

Not limited to lectures, the seminar also provided opportunities for the students to air their impressions at the end of each day’s activities. They split up into six small groups and exchanged views with each other and the lecturers. The last day was designed so as to give the students a platform for reporting on their learning and collegial experiences over the course of the seminar. Taking a recess from the lecture series, the students participated in an excursion on the 11<sup>th</sup> to CAS’s Taoyuan Station of Agroecology Research, where they observed the operation of an experimental farm.

Judging from the students’ post-seminar comments, the program was very successful as it provided the young researchers an excellent opportunity to upgrade their knowledge while networking with peers in the region.

— JSPS Beijing Office

## JSPS International Forum Held in Chiang Mai

On 16 and 17 November, the JSPS Bangkok Office sponsored the second JSPS International Forum, titled “Roles of Universities in Community/Regional Development.” Held at the Amari Rincome Hotel in Chiang Mai, the Forum addressed the contributions that Thai and Japanese universities and other research/education in-

stitutions can make through outreach initiatives to local communities and regions. Various examples of good practices were given and a spirited exchange of views was held on future prospects of such activities. The discussion also delved into assistance that can be provided via Thai-Japanese cooperation to promoting univer-

sity internationalization by amplifying institutional strengths on each side.

Three sessions were held on topics identified as high priority in the first Forum: “Regional Innovation: University-Industry Collaboration”; “Supporting Community and Region”; and “Wise Use of Local Resources.” Co-chaired by a Thai and Japanese researcher, each session featured keynote speeches, follow up by a panel discussion and exchange of views. Active participation throughout the Forum culminated in a very successful conclusion.



— JSPS Bangkok Office

## Science Dialogue Demo Held at Science Agora 2009

“Science communication” is a vogue term for interactions aimed at raising people’s interest in and perception of science and technology by providing information on S&T-germane issues and encouraging discussion about them among many people.

Science Agora is Japan’s largest-scale science communication event supported by JSPS. “Agora” is the Greek word for “plaza” or “square.” This fourth in the annual series of Science Agora was held from 31 October through 3 November at Odaiba in Tokyo. Each year, the event attracts ever-more people, with some 9,000



Taking quiz in JSPS’s Science Dialogue booth

coming to enjoy this grand “science festival” this time.

As in past years, JSPS operated a Science Dialogue booth at the Science Agora. This time, it featured English lectures by JSPS postdoctoral fellows along with a craft workshop and a quiz on English scientific terms held in participation with the booth visitors.

An endless stream of people, including many children as well as adults, visited the booth, which stimulated their interest in international science while introducing them to aspects of JSPS’s program.

Information about Science Agora can be found at the following website: <http://www.scienceagora.org/>.

Information about the Science Dialogue Program, through which JSPS fellows volunteer to give lectures in English about their research and home countries at high schools in the vicinity of their host institutions, can be found at the following website: <http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-plaza/e-sdialogue/>.

### *Collaborators in this Science Dialogue demonstration*

Prof. Yoshiteru Maeno, Dr. Shingo Yonezawa and Ms. Haruka Taniguchi; JSPS fellows Dr. Markus Kriener and Dr. Darren C. Peets from Kyoto University; and Mr. Hiroshi Ikenaga from Hiroshima Municipal Technical High School.

— Overseas Fellowship Division

## Science Dialogue

The following fellows participated in JSPS’s Science Dialogue Program during the period from October through December 2009. For details about the program, please see its webpage: <http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-plaza/e-sdialogue/>

— Overseas Fellowship Division

### Fukui Prefectural Fujishima Senior High School

Date: 24 November

**Dr. Hanafiah B. Yussof**  
(Malaysia)

Host institution: Nagoya University  
Title: “Research and Development of Humanoid Robot and Tactile Sensor”



### Fukushima Prefectural Soma High School

Date: 17 December

**Dr. Mohammad Al-Mamun**  
(Bangladesh)

Host institution: Iwate University  
Title: “Unique Digestive System in Ruminant Animals”



### Fukui Prefectural Koshi Senior High School

Date: 7 November

**Dr. Karel Svadlenka**  
(Czech Republic)

Host institution: Kanazawa University  
Title: “The Beautiful World of Mathematics”



### Gifu Prefectural Ena High School

Date: 11 December

**Dr. Silvia Pujals** (Spain)

Host institution: Kyoto University  
Title: “Biomedical Applications of Peptides and Proteins”



## Gunma Prefectural Takasaki High School

Date: 14-15 November

**Dr. Albert Djemetio** (Cameroon)  
Host institution: Meiji Gakuin University

Title: "Understanding and Addressing Environmental Degradation and Rural Poverty in Cameroon: Issues and Linkages"



**Dr. Kritsada Sriphaew** (Thailand)

Host institution: Tokyo Institute of Technology

Title: "Grasping Personal Feeling with Natural Language Processing"



**Dr. Karim H. O. Hasnaoui** (France)

Host institution: Tohoku University  
Title: "Introduction to Quantum Physics, Nuclear Physics and Nuclear Astrophysics"



**Dr. Javier Marti-Rujas** (Spain)  
Host institution: The University of Tokyo

Title: "Synthesis of Porous Crystalline Solids"



**Dr. Marta Juhasz** (Hungary)  
Host institution: Meisei University  
Title: "Relation between Hungary and Vitamin C"



**Dr. Michael S. Chae** (Canada)  
Host institution: Saitama University  
Title: "The Genetics of Ageing"



**Dr. Bishnuhari Paudyal** (Nepal)  
Host institution: Gunma University  
Title: "Mt. Fuji to Mt. Everest"



**Dr. Marek Bundzel** (Slovakia)  
Host institution: Waseda University  
Title: "On Computational Intelligence"



**Dr. Minxia Li** (China)  
Host institution: The University of Tokyo  
Title: "Energy, Environment and Earth"

## Hyogo Prefectural Kakogawa Higashi High School

Date: 15 December

**Dr. Sebastian O. Danielache** (Argentina)  
Host institution: Tokyo Institute of Technology



## Ichikawa Gakuen Ichikawa Senior High School (Chiba)

Date: 6 October

**Dr. Douglas J. Bakkum** (USA)  
Host institution: The University of Tokyo

Title: "The Science and Art of Cultured Neurons: Learning, Memory, and Creativity"



## Ikeda High School (Kagoshima)

Date: 9 November

**Dr. Mohammad Basyuni** (Indonesia)  
Host institution: University of the Ryukyus

Title: "Characterization of Terpenoid Biosynthesis of Mangrove Tree Species and Its Correlation to Salt Tolerance"



## Ishikawa Prefectural Nanao High School

Date: 7 November

**Dr. Jeremy D. Bricker** (USA)  
Host institution: Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology  
Title: "Global Warming and Its Effects on the Oceans"



## Kumamoto Prefectural Daini High School



Date: 16 December

**Dr. Oleksandr Loboda** (Ukraine)  
Host institution: Kyushu University  
Title: "Quantum Chemistry: History and Theory"

## Miyazaki Prefectural Miyazaki Kita High School

Date: 16 December

**Dr. Javier A. Ramon** (Spain)  
Host institution: University of Hyogo  
Title: "What are Biosensors?"



## Miyazaki Prefectural Nobeoka High School

Date: 12 November

**Dr. Julius J. Mbuna** (Tanzania)  
Host institution: Kyushu University  
Title: "Tanzania: Land of Kilimanjaro and Zanzibar; Development of a Separation Method for Anticancer Drugs and Its Application"



## Saitama Prefectural Urawaichijo High School

Date: 29 October

**Dr. Jillian M. Healy** (Australia)  
Host institution: The University of Tokyo  
Title: "From Australia to Japan on the Back of an Eel"



## Naragakuen Tomigaoka High School (Nara)

Date: 28 October

**Dr. Belle Asante** (USA)  
Host institution: Kyoto University  
Title: "A Global Adventure: Gaining an International Perspective on Cultural Diversity and Heritage Management"



## Shizuoka Prefectural Nirayama High School

Date: 9 October

**Dr. Daniel P. Potaczek** (Poland)  
Host institution: Juntendo University  
Title: "Allergy and Genes"



## Niigata Prefectural Niitsu High School

Date: 9 December

**Dr. Herve Martial Poumale Poumale** (Cameroon)  
Host institution: Yamagata University  
Title: "Purpose of Natural Products in Our Live"



## Wakayama Prefectural Koyo High School

Date: 18 December

**Dr. Christine S. Vogler** (Germany)  
Host institution: Osaka University  
Title: "What is Epigenetics?"



## Seishin High School & Junior High School (Ibaraki)



Date: 31 October

**Dr. Abbas Taheri** (Iran)  
Host institution: Tokyo University of Science  
Title: "Role of Geotechnical Engineering in Our Life"



**Dr. Dung T. Le** (Vietnam)  
Host institution: National Agriculture and Food Research Organization  
Title: "Creating Novel Crop Varieties That Can Produce Foods in Extreme Conditions"



**Dr. Marcos Valdes** (Italy)  
Host institution: The University of Tokyo  
Title: "What Do You Know of the Universe?"



**Dr. Robert E. Simpson** (UK)  
Host institution: National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology  
Title: "A Memory of Tomorrow"

## Yamanashi Prefectural Tsuru High School



Date: 19 November

**Dr. Mostafa A. Shaikh** (Bangladesh)  
Host institution: The University of Tokyo  
Title: "Computing with Our Known Sounds"



**Dr. Michael A. Bodendorfer** (Switzerland)  
Host institution: Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency  
Title: "Ad Astra! (To the Stars!)"



Date: 26 November

**Dr. Aqil Muhammad** (Indonesia)  
Host institution: Tokyo University of Agriculture  
Title: "Degradation of Tropical Watershed and Development of Environmental Restoration Measures"

## Yamanashi Prefectural Yoshida High School

Date: 18 November

**Dr. Luis A. Diago Marquez** (Cuba)  
Host institution: Tokyo Institute of Technology  
Title: "From Cuba to Japan—Linking Science with the Society"



## Recent Visitors to JSPS (November 2009-January 2010)

### Executive Director of STDF, Egypt

On 8 December, Prof. Aly El-Shafei, executive director, Science and Technology Development Fund (STDF), Egypt, paid a courtesy visit to JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono. STDF implements an Egypt-Japan bilateral program for which participant recruitment has begun under the Memorandum of Understanding signed between JSPS and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Egypt, last June. While Prof. El-Shafei and Prof.

Ono confirmed that the highly competitive response to the recruitment bespeaks the significance of the bilateral relationship, Prof. El-Shafei expressed an ambitious view of the new bilateral partnership, saying how much Egypt values scientific cooperation with Japan and how he looks forward to the bilateral relationship expanding into a wider range of scientific fields.

— Asian Program Division



### Vice President, Academy of Finland

On 14 December, Dr. Riitta Mustonen, vice president, Academy of Finland (AF) visited JSPS along with Dr. Paavo Löppönen, director of AF's Development and Evaluation, and Dr. Aki Salo, science adviser to AF's Health Research Unit. Dr. Mustonen's visit was occasioned by the publication of the Academy's report "State and Quality of Scientific Research in Finland 2009," which is issued in book form once every three years. She introduced the Academy's pro-

grams to JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono and executive director Mr. Naoki Murata and told them about the research systems described in the report and issues related to them. They asked her questions about the university administrative system and young researcher development policy in Finland in an exchange of views comparing the situations in the two countries.

— Research Cooperation Division II



### German Ambassador

On 18 December, Dr. Volker Stanzel, the newly appointed German Ambassador to Japan, came to JSPS to exchange views on German-Japanese academic cooperation with Prof. Motoyuki Ono. JSPS carries out various proactive programs of scientific collaboration with its counterpart organizations in Germany. With the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary

of German-Japanese diplomatic relations coming up next year, Ambassador Stanzel and Prof. Ono exchanged ideas on ways to celebrate it, while confirming each other's aims to continue working together to advance scientific exchange between their countries.

— Research Cooperation Division I



### HFSPG Secretary General

On 14 January, Prof. Ernst-Ludwig Winnacker, secretary general, Human Frontier Science Program Organization (HFSPG), paid a courtesy visit to JSPS president Prof. Motoyuki Ono. Up till 2006, Prof. Winnacker had served as president of the German Research Foundation (DFG), and up till 2009, as first secretary general of the

European Research Council. Through these connections with JSPS, he and Prof. Ono had become old friends over the years. Amidst a congenial atmosphere, they exchanged candid views on S&T policies, including higher education and budgetary trends in Europe and Japan.

— Research Cooperation Division II



## 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

## Message from Former JSPS Fellow (13)

### Sports Engineering in Japan

It's a couple years on from my visit to Japan under a JSPS invitational fellowship, which was undertaken in late 2007. That fellowship continues to have a lasting effect on my research and my continuing collaboration with Japan.

In 2005, I made my first visit to Japan for a sports engineering conference at the Tokyo Institute of Technology hosted by Prof. Sadayuki Ujihashi. Sports engineering is a new discipline internationally, and it was there that I first discovered a thriving Japanese and international sports engineering community. On that occasion, I met Dr. Yuji Ohgi from Keio University's Fujisawa Campus for the first time. We immediately discovered common research interests in applying miniature technology to monitoring athletes during competitive sport events, and we promised to keep in touch. The following year, we had the opportunity to visit each other's research facilities in Japan and Australia. Then in 2007, Dr. Ohgi kindly applied for a JSPS fellowship on my behalf.

Undertaking the fellowship gave us a wonderful opportunity to spend a considerable period of time working together, while giving me a chance to get to know other active researchers in Japan. There were visits and opportunities to speak formally and informally through the Japan Society of Mechanical Engineers' Joint Symposium on Human Dynamics and Sports Engineering, a conference I have continued to follow—one which embodies several universities and companies. It was at that time that we began collaborative research with Dr. Ohgi's partner company AR'S, a Yokohama-based wireless company, eventually leading to additional



Together with Dr. Ohgi in Hakone

support from the Australia-Japan Foundation and the Queensland Academy of Sport to continue the work. This year, one of my students begins working in a full-time job at AR'S. Since the visit, our work has been reported at conferences and lecture series in Australia and Japan, and at several international conferences, with some of our work recently featured on TV in Australia as well. More importantly, there has been a regular exchange of postgraduate students and academic staffs between ours and other institutions in our respective networks over the past three years, with many more exchanges planned. None of this would have been possible without my relatively long period of stay in Japan with the support of JSPS.

For anyone contemplating or planning to visit Japan, I would rate it both a career and personal highlight. Ten things I learnt along the way that you might find helpful are as follows:

*Don't ask what a morsel of food is until after you eat it.*

*Try not to ask yes/no questions when getting directions from strangers.*

*Everywhere you go or eat it is probably "famous" for something, so try to find out what it is.*

*Asking a question of a person can impose an obligation, so be careful or hesitant when doing so.*

*Cash is king. Carry lots of cash (it's safe) as only the biggest of places have western electronic facilities and finding an ATM when you most need it can be tricky.*

*Japan is a very safe place, full of helpful people and adventures.*

*Riding the subway can be chaotic to the uninitiated; but there is order in the system, so taking your time and asking questions will get you where you want to go.*

*You may need to walk a long way with your luggage, so choose it wisely.*

*It can be hard to find English reading material and entertainment, so bring your own or buy it on Amazon Japan and have it delivered.*

*Have a great time in the heady mix of old and new Japan, as it will exceed your expectations.*



### Dr. Daniel James

Sports Bio Engineering, Centre for Wireless Monitoring and Applications, Griffith University

Centre of Excellence for Applied Sport Science Research, Queensland Academy of Sport

JSPS Invitation Fellow (Short-term), October-November 2007

For further reading, more detailed information about our research and its related publications can be found replete with photographs on the following website: <http://sportsbioengineering.com/australiajapan.html>

A personalized account of my research visit to Japan can be found under the title "Budo Bum in Japan" on the following site: <http://www.aikidorepublic.com/trip-and-seminar-reports/aikido-japan>

*Domo Arigato Gozaimashita*



"Me enjoying some local culture"



**Cover photo:**

*Tsukushi*, or “field horsetail” in English, is an edible wild plant whose sprouting denotes early 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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