



Weekly Wire
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Junior Investigators and the Consortium of Research Institutions – Japan

A non-tenured researcher's anxiety about obtaining their next job or keeping their current one will soon be eased. To improve the current instability of young researchers' positions at research institutions, the Japanese government will promote the participation of researchers within a consortium, so that a fixed-term research worker at one institution can move to another research institution in the consortium when the term expires and a vacancy is found at another institution. The effort will also provide training opportunities for young researchers to create innovation.

The program launched by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) this year (JFY2014) will select 3 to 5 consortia in September 2014 after soliciting the program in June. There are no restrictions on the number of research institutions that can participate in a consortium; and it is also possible to join a consortium after it is formed.

It will be a 5-year program with the JFY2014 budget of Yen 1 billion (\$10 million). The funds can be used for starting up a consortium, managing the consortium, compensating a possible replacement of the researchers who will work in the consortium, providing the young researchers with internships at industries, and dispatching and inviting researchers to and from overseas.

It is possible for the research institutions to select young foreign researchers at their institutions to join the consortium. However, MEXT has not decided yet whether the Japanese research institutions can form a consortium with research institutions overseas.