



Weekly Wire
News from East Asia and Pacific
National Science Foundation
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AUSTRALIA: Science Budget Far From Ideal

Science and Technology Australia (STA) CEO Catriona Jackson said: “There are some mixed and confusing messages here for Australia science. Back in May the community breathed a collective sign of relief when Minister Pyne announced he had saved the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS) scheme. But extracting the NCRIS funds from the rest of the research community is simply robbing Peter to pay Paul. This is a bad result for science and for research more broadly.”

Source: <http://scienceandtechnologyaustralia.org.au/focus-on/some-cuts-some-lifelines-in-a-mixed-budget-for-science/>

JAPAN: Proactive Actions on Research Integrity

Following a high profile case of research misconduct in 2014, the National R&D agencies are more engaged in research integrity. Here are examples at the Science and Technology Agency (JST) and the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST). JST began to require all the applicants for their programs to indicate completion of research integrity training on the application form, although it was previously mandatory only when the grants were made. JST has also added a Japanese translation to the DVD produced by the U.S. Office of Research Integrity, and has distributed the DVD to 1,300 research institutions as well as uploaded it on their website (see <http://lab.jst.go.jp/japanese.html>). AIST began not only to make it a prerequisite for all their researchers, including visiting researchers, to have the AIST research integrity training every year, but also to have the research supervisors check their researchers’ papers, using special software to detect plagiarism.

Source: A summary translation of a Nikkei article-May 12, 2015

JAPAN: Cooperation with Vietnam

Japanese and Vietnamese Governments will cooperatively establish a graduate university on the campus of Hanoi University, in September 2016. The idea has been nurtured since 2006 when the Vietnamese Government asked the Japanese Government for cooperation in personnel training. The graduate education will be for masters programs in human and social sciences. This first step will be followed by the opening of a university by both governments in 2019-2020 whose undergraduate programs will be in science, engineering, medical and nursing care, economics, business management, law and Japanese studies in English, Japanese and Vietnamese languages. Japanese universities will send their faculty members and students to the new university and receive the students and researchers from the new university. Japan will use the Official Development Aid (ODA) funds for establishing the university and also collect donations from Japanese companies that have business in Vietnam.

Source: A summary translation of a Nikkei article-May 8, 2015

JAPAN: 40% of Faculty as Non-tenured

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) survey for major 11 Japanese universities revealed that the number of non-tenured faculty members has increased by 4,000 from 2007 to 2013. The non-tenured faculty members' rate to the total number is 27-39%. Not surprisingly, the number of tenured faculty members has decreased by 1,400 in the 6 years. The financial support for the tenured faculty members comes mostly from non-competitive funds provided to the universities by MEXT based mostly on the numbers of faculty and students, and for non-tenured members it comes from various competitive funds. Since the epoch-making university reform that took place in 2004, the non-competitive government funds to the universities have been decreasing every year, while the amount provided by the competitive programs has been increasing. This has resulted in young faculty members being hired as "faculty members of specific missions" for a fixed term from the competitive funds.

Source: A summary translation of a Nikkei article-May 4, 2015

SINGAPORE & SOUTH KOREA: Train Medical Technologies Innovators

Singapore-Sanford Biodesign (SSB) and South Korea Dongguk University (DU) recently signed a three-year partnership to foster talents in medical technologies innovation and gain insights into the medical technologies ecosystem in Singapore, Korea and the region. Under the partnership, SSB will hold three Biodesign workshops for 15 DU students. The Korean students will understand Singapore's clinical needs and challenges, and be trained to become medical device innovators. In exchange, Singapore SSB fellows will attend DU-facilitated clinical immersion sessions at Korean hospitals to identify clinical needs in the South Korean healthcare system and to develop medical technologies for the country.

Source:

<http://www.a-star.edu.sg/Media/News/Press-Releases/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/4108.aspx>