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The National Science Foundation's Tokyo Regional Office periodically reports on developments in Japan that are related to the Foundation's mission. It also provides occasional reports on developments in other East Asian countries.

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Japan's Initiative for Internationalization of Universities [Strategic Fund for Establishing International Headquarters in Universities-SIH]

The world is getting smaller with the rapid advancement in IT tools. Global problems cannot be solved without international cooperation. And research is getting more and more internationalized. This report, prepared by Kazuko Shinohara (kshinoha@nsf.gov) of NSF Tokyo Regional Office, is to take a look at Japanese government's 5- year program to encourage international activities at its universities.

Background: Japan's Third Science and Technology Basic Plan (2006-2010)

[<http://www.nsftokyo.org/rm06-02.pdf>] encourages, among others, Japanese researchers to engage in international activities as well as Japanese universities to accept more foreign students and researchers. Encouragement is important both for global and domestic reasons. International collaboration between universities through exchange of ideas is expected to make contributions to solve global problems in such areas as environment, food, and medicine. None of these can be solved by a single country working alone. Domestically, Japan is facing decreasing birth rates. Especially universities face a serious shortage of students with the recent decrease in the number of 18-year olds.

Historically, international activities at Japanese universities have relied heavily on individual

researchers, and there have been no concerted organizational efforts. Typically, problems with hosting foreign researchers in Japan are language, a lack of adequate housing, and schools for family members. In most cases, Individual host researchers have provided solutions to these problems without the help of their university. At the same time, support for Japanese researchers to conduct research abroad has been very limited.

Having recognized the need for concerted efforts to internationalize universities, MEXT (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) launched a program, “Strategic Fund for Establishing International Headquarters in Universities (SIH)” in 2005.

The Initiative: The goal of the SIH initiative is to change the culture of Japanese universities by developing institutional strategies for internationalization. The SIH is funded for five years from 2005 through 2009 at Yen 500 million (~\$5 million) per year. Implementation of the Initiative was contracted out to JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science), a funding agency under MEXT. Twenty universities that were awarded the SIH projects are listed in the table below.

The SIH program announcement left it up to each applicant to develop specific activities that would meet the goals of the initiative. As a consequence, each awardee university has developed own activities that best meet its specific needs. It is hoped that some of the activities developed by the SIH projects could serve as a model for other universities across Japan in their internationalization efforts.

JSPS has established the Council for University International Strategy, whose responsibilities include reviewing of progress of the SIH projects and providing advice to JSPS and MEXT. JSPS has conducted annual interviews with the 20 universities and has so far made site visits to four of them. JSPS has also held annual awardees symposia where SIH PIs network and exchange best practices.

SIH Award Activities: The SIH universities established their own WEB sites to disseminate their activities and JSPS established SIH WEB at http://www.u-kokusen.jp/index_e.html that contains a link to each university’s SIH activities. Details of the SIH activities can be viewed by clicking the WEB sites in the table below.

While each SIH awardee university has developed own unique activities, those activities can be grouped roughly into several general categories. Below, categories are listed with representative example activities. Many of the examples may seem conventional and standard from the US perspective, however, they represent new activities for universities in Japan.

New Efforts to Streamline the Organizational Systems and Governance of International Activities:

- Waseda University consolidated the two existing units (the International Division and the Research Promotion Division) into a single office, Headquarters for international Research Promotion, which is designed to promote integration of research and international activities across the entire campus.
- Osaka University and a few other SIH universities established an internal WEB in order to encourage communication among foreign researchers/students on campus and the university administration.
- Kobe University has established new positions to manage its international activities, and developed a new training program for its administrative staff.

Introduction of Strategic Planning Process:

- Hiroshima University formed an outside advisory committee with Vice President of an Australian university as the chair to analyze their level of internationalization by means of SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat). Based on the result they have established six strategic action plans.

Increased Funding from Outside Sources:

- Both Hitotsubashi University and Kobe University have received funds from European Commission to serve as a node for the EU Institute for the Tokyo area and the Kansai area, respectively.
- Hiroshima University has successfully competed for funds from JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) to engage in cooperative research with developing countries.

Networking with Universities Abroad:

- Nagoya University has partnered with 25 universities and five private companies world-wide and formed an international network called the AC21 (Academic Consortium in the 21st Century). North Carolina State University is among the members.

Development of International Research Collaboration:

- Tottori University has established an education and research center at CIBNOR (Centre de Investigaciones Biologicas del Noroeste) in Mexico to promote student exchanges, and joint research and education activities.
- Nagasaki University has established overseas centers in Kenya and Vietnam to study infectious diseases.

Creating a University Friendly to Foreign Researchers and Students:

- Hitotsubashi University and Aizu University have changed the beginning of their graduate school year from once a year in April to twice a year in April and October.
- Tokyo Institute of Technology (TIT) has established a ten-year rental agreement with several private apartments to house foreign researchers as well as Japanese students. Foreign researchers and students at Kyoto University receive priority for housing owned by Kyoto Prefecture. This cooperation between a university and a prefectural government is the first of this

kind in Japan.

- Aizu University recruits faculty members through international solicitation so that the percentage of foreign faculty members is presently 40 percent. The University's official language is English and the University endorses a tenure decision three years after the recruitment.

Increased Opportunities for Japanese Students and Young Researchers to Study Abroad:

- Tohoku University has established a double degree program with two institutions in France and one university in China.
- Keio University has a double degree program with universities in China, France, and Indonesia.
- Waseda University has a double degree program with universities in China, Singapore, Taiwan, and Columbia University in the U.S.
- Tokyo Institute of Technology has a dual degree program with a university in China.

[Double Degree Program is to obtain two degrees from two universities in different fields. Dual Degree Program is to obtain two degrees from two universities in one (or similar) field.]

Establishment of Overseas Liaison Office:

- Nagoya University has opened the Shanghai Office and holds orientation sessions for Chinese students before coming to Nagoya University as exchange students.
- Tokyo University of Foreign Studies has established an office in Beyrouth.
- Osaka, Kyushu, Kagoshima, Tohoku and Hosei Universities formed the JUNBA (Japanese University Network in the Bay Area) in 2006, headquartered in Berkeley, California. The network contributes to Japanese universities' international activities in the Bay Area.

Future: MEXT/JSPS will continue to promote SIH and exchange information between the universities through the annual SIH awardees symposia and the WEB sites. In addition, JSPS encourages the universities to make good use of JSPS' 17 overseas offices (http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/about_us/overseas_office.html) and expand young researchers' training opportunities overseas through ITP (International Training Program: <http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-itp/index.html>). MEXT has not yet decided whether they will continue this program after 2010.

Table

20 SIH-designated Universities	Strategic International Headquarters WEB Site
Hokkaido University	http://www.hokudai.ac.jp/huisd/en/index.html
Tohoku University	http://www.bureau.tohoku.ac.jp/goc/top.html (in Japanese language)
University of Tokyo	http://dir.u-tokyo.ac.jp/en/index.html
Tokyo University of Foreign Studies	http://www.tufs.ac.jp/common/is/kenkyu/ofias-e.html
Tokyo Institute of Technology	http://www.ipo.titech.ac.jp/activityE/activityE2005.html
Hitotsubashi University	http://www.hit-u.ac.jp/intl-strat/en/index.html
Niigata University	http://www.isc.niigata-u.ac.jp/~globalstrategy/englishindex.htm
Nagoya University	http://www.iech.provost.nagoya-u.ac.jp/en/
Kyoto University	http://www.opir.kyoto-u.ac.jp/e/index.html
Osaka University	http://www.osaka-u.ac.jp/ip/international/iab/e/index_e.html
Kobe University	http://www.office.kobe-u.ac.jp/opie/eng/
Tottori University	http://www.is.zim.tottori-u.ac.jp/hqis/Pages/e_top_page.htm
Hiroshima University	http://www.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/category_view.php?category_id=27&template_id=8&lang=en
Kyushu University	http://www.isc.kyushu-u.ac.jp/intlweb-e/index.htm
Nagasaki University	http://www.cicorn.nagasaki-u.ac.jp/en-html/index-en.html
University of Aizu	http://www.u-aizu.ac.jp/official/csip/index_e.html
Keio University	http://www.ogi.keio.ac.jp/english/index.html
Tokai University	http://www.tokai.edu/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1
Waseda University	http://www.waseda.jp/rps/en/irp/
National Institutes of Natural Sciences	http://www.nins.jp/english/international/interchange.html