

**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
TOKYO REGIONAL OFFICE**

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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.*

*Tokyo Office Report Memoranda are intended to provide information for the use of NSF program officers and policymakers; they should not be taken as statements of NSF policy.*

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**Report Memorandum #09-04**

**Two Japanese Large-scale R&D Programs**

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Japan has announced two large-scale R&D programs. Proposals must be submitted by the end of July with decisions to be made by the end of August, 2009.

**Transformative Research**

CSTP (Council for Science and Technology Policy) announced a large-scale program titled 'Innovative Technologies' on June 30, 2009 and is soliciting proposals through July 28, 2009. In May 2008 CSTP decided to establish the 'Fund for Promoting Innovative Technologies' in JFY2009 (April 2009-March 2010) and identified 23 innovative technologies for support (See <http://www.nsftokyo.org/rm08-05.pdf>). The Fund, set up at MEXT (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology), will be managed by MEXT but administered by JST (Japan Science and Technology Agency). CSTP has selected 5 of the 23 technologies for implementation in JFY2009: Brain machine interface; Regenerative medicine/toxicity evaluation using iPS (induced pluripotent stem) cells; Spintronics; Solar energy technology; and New superconductive materials. The 'Brain machine interface' technology will receive ¥800 million

(~\$8 million) and the other four technologies will receive ¥1 billion (~\$10 million). Projects will commence in September 2009, and must be completed on March 31, 2010.

Projects proposed for the new program must already have government support at the time of submission. The grants are intended to accelerate the projects, yielding more advanced outcomes than originally conceived.

Eligible applicants include Japanese universities, national research institutions, independent administrative research organizations, and private R&D institutions. Proposals will be reviewed in August 2009 (the names of reviewers will be announced). Final selections will be made at the end of August by the S&T Minister and CSTP.

### **World Cutting-edge Research**

Three days later, on July 3, 2009, CSTP announced another large-scale research program designed to support the development of new, “world-class” technologies within 3-5 years. Named the ‘World Cutting-edge Research Support’ Program (approximate translation), this special ¥270 billion (~\$2.7 billion) fund is being held by JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science) as part of the JFY2009 Economic Stimulus Package (See <http://www.nsftokyo.org/rm09-03.pdf>). This program is unprecedented in Japan in that projects will be supported for five years and unused funds can be carried forward from one fiscal year to the next. Previous programs supported research for only one fiscal year at a time, and unused funds could not easily be carried forward. Furthermore, the applications will be submitted to CSTP, not to individual funding agencies; and CSTP will first select the principal investigators (PIs) who can then choose any entity to administer the project. In addition to the traditional funding agencies such as JST and JSPS, universities and research institutes are eligible to serve as the grant administrator.

Preliminary proposals are to be submitted to CSTP by July 24 and final proposals by July 31, 2009. Japanese researchers working on basic research, development, or targeting commercialization, are eligible to apply for awards. Principal investigators (PIs) and co-principal investigators of successful proposals are not allowed to engage in any other government funded research after JFY2010 while the new grant is effective. If they already have other government research grants, they will be terminated at the end of JFY2009.

A 13-member program committee, chaired by the Prime Minister, and a 24-member working group, chaired by a CSTP executive member, have been set up at CSTP (see Appendix) to

review the proposals. The working group will prepare an initial shortlist of 60 proposals by mid-August; and the program committee will prepare a final shortlist of about 30 proposals by the end of August for a final decision by CSTP. CSTP will then invite proposals from universities, funding agencies, and private companies in September to serve as the funding agency for each of the selected projects. PIs of the 30 or so selected projects will be entitled to choose any number of funding agencies, who then request JSPS to transfer funds based on discussions with the PIs. The value of the awards will vary from ¥3 billion (~\$30 million) to ¥15 billion (~\$150 million) per 5-year project.

NSF Tokyo Office will report on the selected projects in September.

## Appendix

### **World Cutting-Edge Research Program Support Selection Committee (13 members):**

Chair: Prime Minister

Deputy Chair: S&T Minister

Members: Masuo Aizawa, CSTP executive member  
Sadayuki Sakakibara, CSTP member from Toray Company  
Makoto Kobayashi, Executive Director, JSPS & Nobel Laureate  
Tsuyoshi Sasaki, Professor, Gakushuin University  
Katsuhiko Shirai, President, Waseda University  
Katsuaki Watanabe, President, Toyota Motor Corporation  
Hideko Kunii, Chairman, Ricoh Software Company  
Kyoko Chino, Writer, Sankei Newspaper

### **Working Group (24 members):**

Chair: Masuo Aizawa, CSTP executive member

Members: Tasuku Honjo, CSTP member  
Naoki Okumura, CSTP member  
Takashi Shiraishi, CSTP member  
Sadadayuki Sakakibara, CSTP member  
Toyoko Imae, CSTP member  
Reiko Aoki, CSTP member  
Ichiro Kanazawa, CSTP member & President of the Science Council of Japan  
Hisashi Ishitani, Professor, Graduate School of Media and Governance, Keio Univ.  
Motoya Katsuki, President, National Institute for Basic Biology &  
Deputy Director, JSPS Research Center for Science Systems  
Maki Kawai, Professor, University of Tokyo & researcher at RIKEN  
Teruo Kishi, Former President, National Institute of Materials Science  
Katsuhiko Sato, Visiting Professor, Meisei University  
Ayao Tsuge, President, Shibaura Institute of Technology  
Tomoko Nakanishi, Professor, Graduate School, University of Tokyo  
Shojiro Nishio, Vice President, Osaka University  
Kazuhito Hashimoto, Professor, Research Center for Advanced Science and  
Technology, University of Tokyo  
Mutsuhiro Arinobu, Advisor to Toshiba Corporation  
Tetsuya Iizuka, President, THine electronics, Inc.

Michiharu Nakamura, President, Hitachi, Ltd.

Kazumi Nishijima, Director, Pharmaceutical Development Headquarters,  
Mochida Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.

Yoshio Matsumi, Director, Frontier Technology Strategy Center, Itochu Corp.

Ikutoshi Matsumura, Vice President, Nippon Oil Corporation

Hiroyuki Watanabe, Chief Engineer, Toyota Corporation