

## WEEKLY WIRE

TITLE: Three New **World Premier International (WPI)** Research Centers in Japan

Summary:

WPI-Focus for unique and globally visible research centers in Japan

TEXT:

The Japanese Government announced the selection of three new **World Premier International (WPI)** Research Centers on October 30, 2012. The new centers are the International Institute for Integrative Sleep Medicine (PI: Masahi Yanagisawa, Tsukuba University), the Earth-Life Science Institute (PI: Kei Hirose, Tokyo Institute of Technology), and the Institute of Transformative Bio-Molecules (PI: Michinari Hamaguchi, Nagoya University).

The WPI provides significant support for projects implemented by Japanese universities and research institutes aimed at building world-class research centers staffed by high-caliber researchers. As such, these centers hope to have a level of global visibility that attracts researchers from around the world.

Five WPI centers were awarded in 2007 in the fields of materials, physics and mathematics of the universe, cell and material sciences, immunology, and nanoarchitectonics, and one in 2010 in carbon-neutral energy, with an award size of \$17 million per center per year for 10 years (with possible renewal to 15 years). Each center is required to have at least 200 staff members, 30% of whom should be from overseas. The official language of WPI centers is English.

Differing from the awards made in 2010, the three new WPI awards just announced were made at a lower award size as each new center will be carrying out more focused research. For this reason, the program in 2012 is called WPI-Focus. The award size for WPI-Focus is \$8 million per center per year for 10 years (with possible renewal to 15 years). The staff size will be 70-100. The newly selected centers will have their own websites soon. Information on the WPI program can be obtained at:

<http://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-toplevel/index.html>