



**Weekly Wire**  
**News from East Asia and Pacific**  
**National Science Foundation**  
**Tokyo Regional Office**  
**April 14, 2015**

**AUSTRALIA: Research Vessel *Investigator* Maiden Voyage**

The state-of-the-art research vessel *Investigator* owned by the Australia's national science agency, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), started its maiden voyage on March 21. The Federal Government committed A\$120 million (\$91 million) in 2009 to build the vessel. The R/V headed to the Southern Ocean to deploy high-precision deep-water moorings which will form part of the Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS) and provide information that has global significance for climate research. Anchored to the ocean floor 4.5 kilometers below the surface, the equipment will spend the next year recording precise hourly readings of temperature, salinity, acidity, biological activity, ocean currents, nutrients and atmospheric conditions. Data collected at the surface will be relayed back to scientists in Hobart (Tasmania) by satellite. Like the NSF-supported R/V Joides Resolution, all Australian scientists and their international collaborators can apply for time onboard the Facility to conduct marine and atmospheric research.

Source: <http://csirofrvblog.com/tag/australian-bureau-of-meteorology/>

**JAPAN: National R&D Organizations**

As a result of the large-scale administrative reform in JFY2001, Japan established 98 independent administrative organizations (called quasi-governmental organizations before JFY2001) which administer the government work by receiving non-competitive operational funds from the Government without strict obligation of reporting the details for the use of the funds. Since then, a number of discussions have been held as to the difference among the nature of the independent administrative organizations. The typical discussion item was that they include both R&D-type organizations and non-R&D-type organizations. The Government finalized the discussions by giving 31 R&D-related organizations the status of "National R&D Organizations" as of April 1, 2015. The R&D organizations are different from the other independent administrative organizations in that (1) their goal is to maximize the research results; (2) they are evaluated in up-to-7 years, compared with the non-R&D organizations' up-to-5 years; and (3) they have flexibility in staff salary scale on condition that it be made transparent, while the non-R&D organizations have to follow the Government personnel salary scale. The 31 national R&D organizations include the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED), New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO), RIKEN, Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC), National Institute of Information and Communications Technology (NICT), National Institute of Environmental Studies (NIES), National Institute of Materials Science (NIMS), and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA). The evaluation is made by the ministers of the ministries to which the R&D organizations belong.

Source: *Cabinet Secretariat website and phone interview with the Cabinet Office*

**JAPAN: Open Science Guidelines**

The Government made public its guidelines on Open Science first in Japanese with its official English version soon to be uploaded on their website. Being aware that Japan is lagging behind other advanced

nations in having a policy on Open Science, the Council of Science, Technology and Innovation (CSTI) has held 6 meetings with members from academia, funding agencies, and research institutions. The guidelines are expected to nudge the funding agencies, Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)-related ministries and agencies, and research institutions to establish their own rules in opening their research results. CSTI will periodically check the relevant organizations to see if they have made progress in implementing any plans. (Refer to: Weekly Wire-February 3, 2015 at:

[http://www.nsf.gov/od/iia/ise/tokyo/articles/WeeklyWire\\_150203.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/od/iia/ise/tokyo/articles/WeeklyWire_150203.pdf))

*Source: Cabinet Office website*

### **JAPAN: Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED)**

AMED, a new funding agency established to make seamless support for medical research from the basic research stage through commercialization, officially began its operation on April 1, 2015 (see Weekly Wire-June 17, 2014 at [http://www.nsf.gov/od/iia/ise/tokyo/articles/Weekly%20Wire-2014\\_0617.pdf](http://www.nsf.gov/od/iia/ise/tokyo/articles/Weekly%20Wire-2014_0617.pdf)).

Having the U.S. NIH as its model, AMED is directed by Dr. Makoto Suematsu, former Dean of Keio University's Medical Department, has 300 staff members, and is located in the center of Tokyo. The Government expects AMED to improve the trade deficit in medical products and equipment by nurturing medical industries that will enhance Japanese economic growth. AMED plans to make clinical trials for more than 10 medicines for innovative cancer treatment and commercialize new medicines developed by various iPS cell technologies by the year 2020.

*Source: A summary translation of a NHK News item-April 1, 2015*

### **JAPAN: Science and Technology Indicators-2014**

The National Institute of Science and Technology Policy (NISTEP) published an English version of their Science and Technology Indicators-2014:[http://data.nistep.go.jp/sti\\_indicator/2014\\_e/RM229E\\_00.html](http://data.nistep.go.jp/sti_indicator/2014_e/RM229E_00.html)

The Indicators analyze statistics on Japan's R&D expenditures, higher education, R&D output, Science, Technology, and Innovation. Some of the highlights are (1) Japan's total R&D expenditures have been flat since 2009; (2) Japanese companies keep the same level of importance in R&D investment; (3) The Japanese Government supports Japanese companies' R&D activities indirectly rather than directly; (4) The number of researchers is the third largest in the world, following China and the U.S.; (5) The ratio of women researchers is big at universities and small at companies; (6) The ratio of women enrollment in undergraduate and graduate programs is steadily increasing; and (7) Among the foreign students in graduate programs, the number of those from China is far bigger than other nationalities.

*Source: NISTEP website*