

630th ASRC Seminar

Date: 10:50 ~ Tuesday, May 17

Location: Conference hall, ASRC bldg.

Speaker: Prof. Yasuhiro Iye
(Japan Society for the Promotion of Science)

Title: Promotion of Science in Japan - Current
Policies and Issues

Abstract: In this talk, I give an overview of recent trend in science and technology policy in Japan, and offer some personal observations on current situation of such issues as research funding, career path, competition and evaluation, which deeply affects young researchers' morale and behavior.

The enactment of Science and Technology Basic Law in 1995 and the transformation of national universities into National University Corporations in 2004 profoundly changed the funding scheme for scientific research in Japan. Due to economic stagnation, the overall S&T expenditure did not increase over the last 20 years. The operating support fund for the universities and research institutions has been steadily cut, and the funding scheme has been shifted towards more and more strategic and prioritized allocation.

The mission of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) is to promote scientific research in Japan. The Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (Kakenhi) is the largest (~230 billion JPY) competitive research funding for Japanese scientists. It is open to the entire spectrum of research fields ranging from humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Research proposals are openly called and selected by peer-review process on the basis of academic merit. The screening committee consists of approximately 6,000 reviewers who are practicing scientists. Other important undertakings of JSPS include fellowship programs for young scientists, and various international collaboration programs. JSPS fellowship is awarded to about 4,500 doctoral students and about 1,500 postdocs. JSPS operates bilateral and multilateral exchange programs with many countries.

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