

Japan's 1988 "White Paper on Science and Technology" proposed two fundamental changes in direction: a rapid increase in basic research spending; and the "internationalizing" of Japanese science and technology. Japan now leads the U.S. in terms of R and D expenditures compared to gross national product (3.19% vs 3.06%). Also, the Japanese file the largest number of patent applications compared to any other country in the world.

The Human Frontiers Science Program is the most visible manifestation of the new Japanese emphasis on basic research and on international collaboration in the area of science and technology. The framework for the program has been established with a secretariat in Strasbourg, France. The initial focus of collaboration is molecular and neurobiology. Canada fully supported the creation of the program and helped develop a consensus on its structure and implementation.

Canada recognizes that science and technology is important in its bilateral relationship with Japan. Enhancement of links with Japan and increased involvement of the private sector are key objectives.