

**Science and Technology in Japan**  
**By**  
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**1. Japan: S&T Opportunities for Canada**

In Japan, a number of administrative reforms of the government have taken place since January 2001, and more reforms are in the works; these are expected to be implemented in the next year or two. An example of one such impending reform is the expectation that Japan's national universities are all to be transformed into "agencies". University researchers will no longer enjoy the prestigious status they have been accustomed to, that is, of being governmental employees belonging to national institutions. They soon will be exposed to a situation that encompasses a degree of uncertainty, a sort of "survival of the fittest" environment. Faculty will face a much more competitive environment that they will have to learn to deal with. Part of this challenge will be their confrontation with a long-overdue competitive funding system, which will be oriented toward evaluating the outcomes of their work. This environment could impel researchers to seek collaboration with foreigners to demonstrate the level of their research capability.

Another example of an impending reform soon to be implemented is provided by the fact that many governmental institutions are poised to become Independent Administrative Institutions (IAIs). These are being relieved of a number of legal restrictions on their operations and funding constraints. For years they have had strict limits placed on their operations and spending wishes, as well as on their human resource policies and other administrative matters. IAIs now are exercising their freedom to use their own budgets as they best see fit, to recruit researchers without regard to parent ministerial constraints, even those from abroad, if this is desired. IAIs are also much more free to send their own researchers abroad, so that they can attend conferences workshops, and the like. They now have independent decision-making power and can exercise their own discretion. These changes are providing Canada with greater opportunities for collaboration than ever before.

The framework of the Canada-Japan S&T Co-operation Agreement, signed in 1986, will be reviewed this year with a view to strengthening the opportunities now available in Japan, and to reflect on recent changes in the Japanese and Canadian S&T