

Co-operation in Science and Technology

Canada's relations with Japan in the area of science and technology have been intensifying in recent years. The Canada-Japan Study of Science and Technology Complementarity, requested jointly by Prime Minister Mulroney and former Prime Minister Takeshita and launched in 1988, made recommendations upon which relations have expanded. A key recommendation was to establish the Japan Science and Technology Fund.

Substantial bilateral co-operation goes back to the early 1970s and is co-ordinated through the 1986 Canada-Japan Agreement on Co-operation in Science and Technology. There are approximately 85 projects under the agreement, ranging from simple information exchange to long-term collaboration between institutes in joint research, researcher exchanges and sharing of facilities.

Recent initiatives, both bilateral and multilateral, include the complementarity study, the Japanese-led Human Frontiers Science Program, and the Canada-Japan Space Panel.

The complementarity study specified certain high priority areas for mutual collaboration, including space, biotechnology and biosciences, and the environment. It laid the foundation for a new era in bilateral relations. The complementarity study also led to the creation by Canada of the Japan Science and Technology Fund (JSTF) in 1989.

The JSTF is a five-year \$25 million fund to promote joint scientific and technological development and to help to create strategic partnerships in sectors of domestic priority. The JSTF, which is the largest part of the Pacific 2000 Strategy, is a strong indication that Canada places top priority on its collaboration with Japan.

One of the projects being developed with JSTF assistance is the Co-Op Student Placement Program, which will place Canadian science and engineering students in Japanese companies on work terms. The objective of the program is to develop a Canadian pool of young scientists and engineers with practical experience in Japanese industrial practices and research environment. A number of private sector research and development (R and D) projects have also received JSTF support.

Another benefit of the complementarity study was the creation in 1989, following a Canadian proposal, of the space panel, which includes representatives of the public and private sectors of the two countries. Space is both the most important and the most intensive area of collaboration between Canada and Japan.

Research is currently going on in earth observation, micro-gravity, and solar terrestrial science and space astronomy. Other projects include research in space communications and life sciences.

Closer Canada-Japan technology links are also being forged through an industrial co-operation arrangement signed between Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry and Industry, Science and Technology Canada. The purpose of the industrial co-operation arrangement is to encourage more joint ventures, licensing agreements, joint research and development and two-way investment between the private sectors of both countries. The Technology Inflow Program at External Affairs and International Trade Canada has assisted Canadian small- and medium-sized enterprises to identify and acquire international technology.