

Italy

According to AIRI, the Italian National Association for Industrial Research, while there is no restriction on foreign participation in programs established which support the formation of RTD consortia, there exists a strong de facto bias in favour of companies with a local identity. Competition for funds is fierce and projects involving foreign companies with no sizeable presence in the country or commitment to the market are the first to be rejected.

Others

Generally, it appears that constraints to Canadian participation lie in the realm of inadequate contacts, planning and commitment of resources on the part of Canadians, and not in any specific barriers to access erected by host governments.

C. Japan

Japan's early attempts to extend participation in their scientific research programs were hampered by bureaucracy. Cooperation was being extended on a government-to-government basis which proved to be a complex management challenge. The Intelligent Manufacturing Systems (IMS) program was designed to be private sector driven, but Canada was not initially invited to participate. Last year, the Japanese government began announcing their domestic R&D programs by publishing a notice or Request for Proposal in widely disseminated scientific journals such as Nature magazine. This approach has generated some frustration within Canadian industry because of short deadlines, given that proposals must be submitted in Japanese and as it is difficult to get additional information on the projects before a bid must be submitted.

More recently, the Japanese have taken a new approach. Their programs now incorporate a one to three year initial study phase, which is more consultative in nature. Companies may submit proposals. However, it is not yet clear what the roles and responsibilities will be in such projects, in which case access by foreign participants to intellectual property rights is not yet well defined.

Generally speaking, there are no official restrictions on the participation of Canadian firms in Japanese-sponsored consortia. Canadian firms are free to bid on projects, although none have been successful. The limited resources of Canadian firms in the fields of research chosen for support (predominantly small and medium