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Young researchers and competitive research funds

“Competitive research funds” are plans aimed to provide financial support to research activities at universities.

Under a competitive research funding system, a researcher applies for a grant by making a presentation on his or her research activity plan for several years to come. Several researchers evaluate the proposal and decide on eligibility of the proposal. While the best known among competitive research funds is the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research, the JST-sponsored “PRESTO (Sakigake)” is worthy of mention as a plan specifically aimed at supporting innovative research by young and upcoming researchers.

In the foregoing interview, Associate Professor Hayase mentioned that frank exchange of opinions with other young researchers and advisers during the boarding session under the “Sakigake” system provided her with nourishment for growth as a researcher. In fiscal year 2010, Dr. Hayase presented a research theme entitled “Implementing a quantum interface between single photons and the collective excitation of electron spins in semiconductor quantum dots” which was also adopted by the “Funding Program for Next Generation World-Leading Researchers.”

On one hand, these competitive research funds play a significant role in fostering young researchers whose research environment often falls short of that of well established researchers. On

the other hand, themes publicly invited by these funds tend to seek solutions for contemporary problems and expect results to be produced in a relatively short period of time. So there are opinions that these funding systems should be improved to invest more in basic research activities from a long-range perspective.

In the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, the minister in charge of science and technology promotion announced the policy entitled “About the government’s current policy for science and technology” (issued on May 2, 2011) with the aim of reviewing the government policy in light of changing circumstances. It is a focus of attention among interested parties.

Science and Technology Information

Strategic Management Chair for Creating Innovations (a Sony-donated chair)

Open Symposia Series 2011: Toward a New Development Stage for Humankind and Society

“The 1st symposium: Innovation and Employment”

Date: October 14 (Fri.), 2011 18:00 ~

Place: Fujiwara Hiroshi Memorial Hall, Kyosei-kan Bldg. on Keio Hiyoshi Campus

Admission free; Prior applications required

<http://www.koukai-sympo.net/portal/>

This year as well, Keio University plans to hold a three-session series of open symposia offered by chairs donated to the Faculty of Science and Technology. Please apply for participation in these events via the foregoing URL.

※ Please note, however, that the schedule may be changed due to power consumption measures and other unavoidable reasons.

Information updates will be notified via respective websites.

Other Events on the Agenda

● October 28 (Fri.), 2011: The 12th KLL Seminar on Industry-Academia Collaboration

● December 9 (Fri.), 2011: The 12th KEIO TECHNO-MALL

● February 24 (Fri.), 2012: The 13th KLL Seminar on Industry-Academia Collaboration

Details of these events will be uploaded on Keio University’s Leading-edge Laboratory of Science and Technology’s (KLL) website (<http://www.kll.keio.ac.jp/>).



Scenes from Open Symposium 2010.

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Web version: <http://www.st.keio.ac.jp/kyurizukai>

Twitter page: <http://twitter.com/#!/keiokyuri>

WEB site Navi

We express our heartfelt sympathy for all those who suffered from the Great East Japan Earthquake. We have set up a portal site that introduces Keio University’s research activities related to recovery from the earthquake. Please access the following URL: <http://www.rcp.keio.ac.jp/srp/20110624.html>

Editor’s postscript

The Hayase lab is quite young. One student puts it this way, “Making our own lab is challenging. Even doing miscellaneous errands is fun for us.” The inside of the lab is neatly in order where removing footwear is the rule. As a power-saving initiative, air-conditioning has been kept at 82°F and each member is provided a mini-electric fan instead. Reflecting Associate Professor Hayase’s gentle personality, an atmosphere of mutual trust is felt in the lab.

Bright sunlight comes in through windows on the other side of the semi-dark corridor, symbolizing fresh and creative ideas that are radiant within the campus. Yes, our Yagami Campus is in the power-saving mode.

(Saori Taira)

**We at the New “Kyurizukai” editing committee launched our
Twitter page: <http://twitter.com/#!/keiokyuri>**

It will disseminate episodes during data collecting activities, information on the Faculty of Science and Technology, and media-related information.

We welcome your response to the #7 (August 2011) issue!