

CONCERT-Japan Stakeholders Conference on Europe – Japan Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Cooperation

CONCERT-Japan is an ERA-NET project funded under the EU 7th Framework Programme. The first Stakeholders Conference of the CONCERT-Japan (Connecting and Coordinating European Research and Technology Development with Japan) Project was held on 26 July 2011 in Budapest, Hungary. The event brought together a various range of stakeholders interested in the future of Europe – Japan cooperation in science, technology and innovation. The main purpose of the Stakeholders Conference was to present the intention of this ERA-NET project to coordinate, structure and enhance the science, technology and innovation cooperation between Europe and Japan to the relevant policy and programme community.

The Conference was opened with the welcome speeches of CONCERT-Japan Coordinator, Mr. Okan Kara (TÜBİTAK, The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey); International S&T Affairs Division Director, Mr. Katsuhisa Sagisaka (MEXT, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan); and CONCERT-Japan Project Officer at the European Commission, Mr Jürgen Sanders. A Keynote Address was given by Ms. Barbara Rhode, Head of Science and Technology Section, Minister-Counsellor at the Delegation of the European Union to Japan, highlighting the recent developments on EU-Japan S&T relations.

In the frame of the Conference, the analytical and informative studies of CONCERT-Japan which were undertaken since the beginning of 2011 were presented to the stakeholders highlighting the STI funding policy and system of Japan, the mapping of the current state of STI cooperation as well as survey results on future preferences of funding agencies with regard to the future of STI cooperation between Europe and Japan.

This was followed by another session on the experiences and good practices of cooperation. During this session, funding agencies from Europe and Japan shared their experiences about bilateral cooperation between Europe and Japan with a focus on good practices and successes, difficulties, lessons learned and possibilities for future coordination.

At the end of the Conference, the future perspectives regarding the forthcoming activities of the CONCERT-Japan project were summarized. As an ERA-NET Project, CONCERT-Japan aims to implement a pilot joint call for funding joint STI activities in a multilateral scale consisting of funding agencies from European countries and Japan. Various issues, including the nature, the themes and the instruments of funding in this pilot joint call were opened to broad discussion. The details of the call remain to be defined in the second half of 2011 with the input generated in the Conference, while the pilot joint call is expected to be announced in 2012.

The Stakeholders Conference constituted a favourable platform for ministries and funding agencies to be informed about the current state of cooperation between Europe and Japan through the analysis and reports of CONCERT-Japan project, as well as for expressing their interest in participating in the CONCERT-Japan joint call and joint activities in the future.

For more information, please consult www.concertjapan.eu.