

Thomson Salutes Japan's Contribution to Global Research

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TOKYO, Sep. 20, 2007 (Canada NewsWire via COMTEX News Network) -- Japan's continuing influence on international Research & Development (R&D) was recognized today as 17 of its most prominent scientists working in the ten R&D fields in Japan were presented with the Thomson Research Front Award at the Thomson Japan Research Day and Research Front Awards 2007, held at Marunouchi Building Hall in Tokyo.

Thomson Scientific, a leading provider of information solutions, announced the winners following a bibliometric study of citation and research using its Essential Science Indicators (ESI) product.

The seventeen leading scientists were presented with the accolade after their research was analyzed using Thomson Scientific's Research Front methodology to assess their level of influence on specific scientific fields per se and other researchers in the sector.

The Research Front methodology was employed by the National Institute of Science and Technology Policy (NISTEP) to advise on the formulation of the 3rd Science and Technology Basic Plan that went into effect in April 2006. NISTEP continues to monitor emerging scientific areas and technology fields using this method, with their most recent report Science Map 2004 (NISTEP Report No. 100) printed in March 2007.

Research Front methodology looks at patterns of intense communication between scientists and using citation analysis of a list of highly cited papers, defined as the top 1% of papers in each of 22 disciplines, is compiled. Discovering how these cited works are related is achieved by Thomson's ESI and is called Research Front analysis, a tool which can assist in identifying areas where important work is being conducted and where the scientific community is focusing.

These Japanese winners were selected by examining author address affiliation of highly cited papers in each Research Front to establish their contribution to the R&D within this sector. 16% of the 5,348 Research Fronts in the 2001-2007 period had one or more author affiliate with Japan, and this was analysed on two levels - one to identify the most cited author in each front and the most cited paper.

Based on the findings the top ten Research Front areas where Japanese scientists have had greatest emphasis and influence are:

- Research Front #170
- Dr. Yoshio Okamoto, Guest Professor, Funded Research Division of Chiral Polymer Technologies (Daicel), EcoTopia Science Institute, Nagoya University
- Dr Eiji Yashima, Professor, Graduate of Engineering, Nagoya University, Project Leader of "Super-structured Helix Project", Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), Exploratory Research for Advanced Technology (ERATO)
- For their contribution to the discovery, design and synthesis of functional helical polymers

- Research Front #700
- Dr. Shizuo Akira, Professor, Department of Host Defense, Research Institute for Microbial Diseases, Osaka University For his contribution to research into elucidation of the pathways from viral recognition by innate immunity to interferon production

- Research Front #730
- Dr. Katsunari Oikawa, Associate Professor, Department of Metallurgy, Graduate School of Engineering, Tohoku University For his contribution to the development of the new magnetic shape memory alloys

- Research Front #933
- Dr. Hideomi Koinuma, Advisor: National Institute for Materials Science; Senior Fellow, Centre for Research and Development Strategy, Japan Science and Technology Agency; Guest Professor, The University of Tokyo; Guest Professor, The University of Tohoku; Professor Emeritus: Tokyo Institute of Technology
- Dr. Tomoteru Fukumura, Senior Assistant Professor, Institute for Materials Research, Tohoku University For their contribution to combinatorial discovery of room temperature ferromagnetism in diluted magnetic oxide semiconductors

- Research Front #1461
- Dr. Naotoshi Nakashima, Professor, Department of Applied Chemistry, Faculty of Engineering, Kyushu University For his contribution to research into Strategic Approaches for Carbon Nanotube Solubilization and Functionalization

- Research Front #1509
- Dr. Ken-ichi Okamoto, Professor, Graduate School of Science and Engineering, Yamaguchi University
- Dr. Hidetoshi Kita, Professor/Director, Department of Environmental Science and Engineering, Graduate School of Science and Engineering, Yamaguchi University

- Dr. Kazuhiro Tanaka, Associate Professor, Environmental Science and Engineering, Graduate School of Science and Engineering, Yamaguchi University
- For their contribution to the development of sulfonated polyimide electrolyte membranes for fuel cells
- Research Front #1781
- Dr. Hiroki Shirato, Professor, Department of Radiology, Hokkaido University Graduate School of Medicine For his contribution to research into four-dimensional radiation medicine improving the accuracy related to organ motion
- Research Front #3032
- Dr. Kei Hirose, Professor, Department of Earth & Planetary Sciences, Tokyo Institute of Technology
- Dr. Motohiko Murakami, Assistant Professor, Institute for the Study of the Earth's Interior, Okayama University For their contribution to the discovery of post-perovskite phase transition and the study of Earth's lowermost mantle
- Research Front #4491 Dr. Masaki Azuma, Associate Professor, Division of Synthetic Chemistry - Advanced Inorganic Synthesis; Institute for Chemical Research, Kyoto University
- Dr. Yuichi Shimakawa, Professor, Division of Synthetic Chemistry - Advanced Inorganic Synthesis, Institute for Chemical Research, Kyoto University
- Dr. Mikio Takano, Professor Emeritus, Institute for Chemical Research, Kyoto University For their contribution to the search for magnetic ferroelectrics in Bi- based perovskites
- Research Front #6117
- Dr. Yoshiji Takemoto, Professor, Department of Organic Chemistry, Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Kyoto University For his contribution to For the Discovery and Application of symmetric reactions Catalyzed by Multi-functional Thiourea Organocatalysts

"Facing an increasingly competitive world of scientific research, Thomson's Research Front methodology allows Japan's policy makers and researchers to clearly identify in which fields they are still hugely influential and taking the lead," explains Mark Garlinghouse, Vice President of Thomson Scientific Asia Pacific. "Our congratulations are extended to each of these winners for making a difference to today's world of research."

Thomson Scientific's information solutions assist professionals at every stage of research and development from discovery and analysis to product development and distribution.

Thomson Scientific is also known for its annual announcement of Nobel Prize candidates determined by high citation impact of their work. This year, on 10 September Thomson revealed Thomson Scientific Citation Laureates researchers, those likely to be in contention for Nobel honors in anticipation of this year's Nobel Prize winners to be announced in October.

Each year, data from ISI Web of Knowledge(SM), a Thomson Scientific research solution, is used to quantitatively determine the most influential researchers in the Nobel categories of chemistry, economics, physiology or medicine, and physics. Because of the total citations to their works, these high-impact researchers are named Thomson Scientific Laureates and predicted to be Nobel Prize winners, either this year or in the near future. Of the 54 Thomson Scientific Laureates named since 2002, four have gone on to win Nobel honors.

Two Japanese researchers are cited for this year's prize: Yoji Totsuka, Former Director-General High Energy Accelerator Research Organization, Special University Professor, Emeritus University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan For leadership roles in discovering that neutrinos change types and have mass.

Sumio Iijima, Professor, Meijo University , Nagoya, Japan, Research Fellow, NEC Corporation, Ibaraki, Japan For his pioneering work on carbon nanotubes, which has ignited a revolution in both physics and chemistry.

Visit the Thomson Scientific Laureates website at scientific.thomson.com/nobel for more information.

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