

## Foreword



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Developments in science, technology, and innovation enrich our lives and contribute to the advancement of society. Efforts that leverage the power of regional communities are even more critical as we aim to develop further in the hopes of becoming a science and technology nation.

In February 2022, the Government of Japan approved the Comprehensive Promotions Package for Regional Core and Distinctive Research Universities to provide robust support for initiatives spearheaded by regional core universities and universities with strengths in specific fields that would fully demonstrate their unique strengths and drive social reforms, leading to regional reforms, increases in Japan's industrial competitiveness, and resolutions to global issues. In February 2023, this package was revised to include the Program for Promoting the Enhancement of Research Universities with a Regional Core and Distinctive Characteristics, which was introduced as a part of the second supplementary budget for FY2022, to actively encourage regional innovation.

In this year's features, we focus on the appeal and distinctiveness of different regions in Japan and highlight efforts to discover and nurture a variety of innovations born from those regions, while looking back on the evolution of the Government's regional science, technology, and innovation policies to date. We explore how science, technology, and innovation can be applied to meet diverse regional challenges and needs by introducing unique examples of such that emerged in several regions.

2023 is the third year, or interim point, of the 6th Science, Technology and Innovation Basic Plan period. This white paper is intended to help the public deepen their understanding of the current state of Japan's science, technology, and innovation policies. We also hope that it will serve as a reference for future initiatives undertaken by those involved in science, technology, and innovation-based regional revitalization efforts across various regions.