Contents

Icons

These icons indicate the four key fields in the Second Science and Technology Basic Plan that was established by a Cabinet Decision in March 2001.

Life Sciences
Environment
IT (Information Technology)
Nanotech/Materials

What is a Knowledge Cluster?

The Second Science and Technology Basic Plan, established by a Cabinet Decision in March 2001, called for the creation of Knowledge Clusters in the different regions of Japan. Moreover, the Third Science and Technology Basic Plan, established by a Cabinet Decision in March 2006, called for selective support of regions that have the potential to develop as world-class clusters.

A "Knowledge Cluster" is a system for technological innovation. Organized by local initiative around universities and other public research institutions with original R&D topics and potential, the system also features participation by companies inside and outside the region.

More specifically, a Knowledge Cluster establishes networks of individuals in academia and the private and government sectors—through project planning, joint-research, and exchanges of ideas. The Knowledge Cluster creates a system successively fostering technological innovation while stimulating interaction between the technological "seeds" of core research institutions and the practical needs of the business world based on close collaboration and daily communication. Developing this system will allow Japan to draw people, things and money and will allow Japan to expand its technological innovation on a global level.

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has been implementing the "Knowledge Cluster Initiative" since 2002 with the aim of creating Knowledge Clusters and revitalizing regional economies.

Points about the "Knowledge Cluster"
(1) Strategic implementation based on the cluster concept for the region
(2) Using accumulated knowledge: fostering technological innovation centered on universities and other public research institutions
(3) Technological innovation on a global level: accumulating people, things, and money from other regions

The Knowledge Cluster Concept (Example of a bio cluster)