JSPS French and German Alumni Associations Hold First Joint Forum

On 21-22 May, the forum “Food Science and Society” was held jointly by JSPS French and German alumni associations and the JSPS Strasbourg and Bonn Offices. It marked the first time for the JSPS alumni associations and centers of two countries to co-organize a forum. Venued at the Institute of Chemistry of the co-sponsoring University of Strasbourg, this ground-breaking event was successful in attracting some 300 French, German and Japanese participants.

The German JSPS Club was established in 1995, and the JSPS French Alumni Association in 2003. In 2005, the executives of alumni associations in Europe got together and formed a council of European alumni associations (currently comprising five associations), which meets once a year for the purpose of promoting alumni activities on the Continent. This jointly implemented forum had its beginnings in an effort to catapult the council’s international agenda. Strasbourg was chosen as an ideal location for holding the forum as it is situated in the middle of Europe on the border between France and Germany.

The forum itself featured an interdisciplinary dialogue among French, German and Japanese researchers of the subject of “food.” The theme was explored and advanced from a wide variety of angles, including philosophy, social science, medicine, nutrition, neurology, geology, culinary science and gastronomy, with presentations and discussions held on the latest research results in areas related to health, food supply, and palatability. It was amply demonstrated that “food science” is grounded in a great many diverse fields, while “food culture” is imbuing the French, German and Japanese peoples with a wealth of wisdom.

The forum proceedings were broadcast over and archived in the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research’s Canal-U (http://www.canalc2.tv/).

— JSPS Strasbourg Office

Indian JSPS Alumni Association Holds Its First Symposium

On 10 May, the Indian JSPS Alumni Association held its first symposium at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) in New Delhi. Its theme “Recent Advances and Future Directions in Science and Technology” attracted some 120 people, including graduate and undergraduate students as well as alumni members, from around India to the event.

The symposium opened with greetings from the alumni association’s general secretary Dr. Pravin D. Kunte, followed by a message from Mr. Masashi Mizukami, Chargé d’Affaires, Embassy of Japan in India. Then, a traditional “lighting of the lamp” ceremony was conducted with sober solemnity to pray for the success of the symposium, after which the association’s chair Prof. D. Sakthi Kumar, Toyo University, delivered opening remarks. He was followed by IIT Delhi deputy director Prof. M. Balakrishnan and Dr. Yozo Fujino, professor, University of Tokyo, and senior program officer, JSPS Research Center for Science Systems, who offered congratulatory messages.

On the topic “Background and Bases of Manufacturing in Japan,” Dr. Manabu Kiuchi, emeritus professor, University of Tokyo, delivered a keynote address, followed by lectures on various aspects of the symposium’s theme by Dr. Yoshio Bando, chief operating officer, International Center for Materials Nanoarchitectonics (MANA), Professors B.R. Mehta and Joby Joseph of IIT Delhi, and Prof. A. Misra of Intellectual Ventures.

Innovations made in the design of the symposium gave it an added dimension. Besides the lecture hall, the foyer was occupied as a space for former JSPS postdoctoral fellows to introduce their host institutions in Japan to IIT students, giving them an informed opportunity to consider studying or researching in Japan.

On the day following the symposium, the Indian JSPS Alumni Association held its first general meeting.

— Overseas Fellowship Division