

Urgent need of university-based innovation ecosystems

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Japan is facing difficult challenges, including a low birthrate and aging population. In order to overcome these difficulties, it is essential to maintain a sound economic foundation by fostering innovation. As Japan's industrial structure changes from a capital-intensive type to a knowledge-intensive type, the social role of universities also needs to change.

This change requires universities to play a core role in building innovation ecosystems by creating and providing advanced knowledge, skills and human resources. Universities need to develop new relationships with partners such as manufacturing/service companies, investment/financial institutions, local governments and others to jointly create value and to grow together by circulating knowledge, technology, funds, and human resources among them. Japanese society has high expectations for such innovation ecosystems with the recognition that they will be indispensable for the future of Japan. Responding to this expectation is vital for universities not only to fulfill their mission of "contributing to society," which was added by the revision of the Fundamental Law of Education in 2006, but also to further enhance academic disciplines (especially innovation-related sciences) in collaboration with industry and society.

This presentation provides an overview of the new role of universities in building innovation ecosystems and policies/measures to facilitate management reform of universities in this context.

External links

<http://www.jst.go.jp/opera/koubo.html>