



JAPAN PRIZE

The 2010 Japan Prize Awarded to Japanese and US Scientists

Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress Attended the Presentation Ceremony



The 2010 (26th) Japan Prize Presentation Ceremony was held on Wednesday, April 21, 2010 at the National Theatre of Japan in Tokyo. The prize is awarded to individuals who have made significant contributions to the advancement of world science and technology, thereby greatly furthering the cause of peace and the prosperity of mankind.

This year, there were 300 nominations in the field of "industrial production and production technology" and 248 nominations in the field of "biological production and environment." From the total 548 nominations, the 2010 Japan Prize was awarded to two scientists.

Prof. Shun-ichi Iwasaki, who has developed a perpendicular magnetic recording which can attain higher capacity in comparison to the conventional horizontal magnetic recording method, won the 2010 Japan Prize in the field of "industrial production and production technology." Prof. Peter Vitousek, who helped establish the methodology and concepts of a new research field called biogeochemistry, received the Prize in the field of "biological production and environment."

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The Japan Prize is awarded to scientists throughout the world who have been credited with original and outstanding achievements and have made major contributions to the advancement of science and technology, thereby manifestly furthering the cause of peace and the prosperity of mankind.

While the prize encompasses all categories of science and technology, two fields of study are designated for the prize each year in consideration of developments in science and technology.

Each Japan Prize laureate receives a certificate of merit and a commemorative medal. A cash award of 50 million yen is also made for each prize field.

Field : Industrial Production and Production Technology



Contributions to high-density magnetic recording technology by the development of a perpendicular magnetic recording method



Prof. Shun-ichi Iwasaki

Born : August 3, 1926

Director, Tohoku Institute of Technology

Professor Emeritus, Tohoku University

Acceptance Speech

It is truly an honor to receive the prestigious Japan Prize together with Professor Vitousek, here in the presence of Your Majesties, the Emperor and Empress.

The stated mission of the Science and Technology Foundation of Japan is to honor those who have contributed to peace and prosperity in human society through notable and practical achievements in science and technology; and this is evident when looking at the extraordinary winners of the past.

This prize for the perpendicular magnetic recording method is a recognition of how it greatly increased the storage capacity of hard disks and how we were able to popularize it in society through industrial production. I and the many other researchers who collaborated on the project for many years consider it the ultimate honor.

We will continue our research with the aim of contributing to the society as a true modern convenience for many years to come.

Lastly, I would like to express my deep gratitude to President Masao Ito and Chairman Hiroyuki Yoshikawa of the Science and Technology Foundation of Japan, Selection Committee Chairman Hiroshi Komiyama and the other members of the committee, and all those in attendance today.

Field : Biological Production and Environment



Contributions to solving global environmental issues based on the analysis of nitrogen and other substances' cycles



Prof. Peter Vitousek

Born: January 24, 1949

Professor of Biology, Stanford University

Acceptance Speech

Your Majesties, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests and Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great honor to receive the Japan Prize – one of the world's most important awards for science and technology – in such distinguished company.

Over the years, the Japan Prize has been awarded to many people who have changed the world – including Professor Iwasaki, with whom I am honored to share this occasion. I want to thank the Science and Technology Foundation of Japan for recognizing the field of biogeochemistry as deserving of an award.

The science of biogeochemistry provides clear and compelling insight into how large our species looms on Earth, and into the double-edged nature of many of our actions. This award recognizes a broad and active global research community as it turns from research that has carefully diagnosed some of the ills of the world, towards research that assists us along a path towards health and sustainability.

My partner Professor Pamela Matson has been a leader in this transition, in research and in my institution, Stanford University, and I am happy that she is here to share this occasion and our conversations. It is with great humility and gratitude that I accept the 2010 Japan Prize for Biological Production and Environment.

Presentation Ceremony

The Japan Prize Presentation Ceremony took place at the National Theatre of Japan, Tokyo, in presence of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress, and with the attendance of 1,000 guests such as the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President of the House of Councillors, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Japan, foreign ambassadors and their ministers, and notable figures including scholars, politicians, officials, business leaders, and journalists.

Following opening remarks by Prof. Hiroyuki Yoshikawa, Chairman of the Science and Technology Foundation of Japan, Dr. Hiroshi Komiyama, Chairman of the Selection Committee, reported on the results of the selection and introduced the laureates. Prof. Masafumi Maeda, Chairman of the Selection Subcommittee for the "industrial production and production technology" field, and Prof. Kunio Iwatsuki, Chairman of the Selection Subcommittee for the "biological production and environment" field, then explained the reasons why the laureates were chosen. Afterwards, Dr. Masao Ito, President of the Foundation, presented the laureates with certificates of merit and commemorative medals. After the laureates' acceptance speeches, H.E. Mr. Takahiro Yokomichi, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, gave a congratulatory address. The ceremony ended with a commemorative performance by the Tokyo Geidai Student Orchestra.



Acceptance Speech by Prof. Iwasaki



Presentation of the Award



Commemorative Concert



Congratulatory Address by
H.E. Mr. Yokomichi



Opening Address by
Prof. Yoshikawa



Introduction of the Laureates by
Dr. Komiyama



Citation for the Award by
Dr. Maeda



Citation for the Award by
Dr. Iwatsuki

Banquet

Following the presentation ceremony, a Banquet was held for the 2010 Japan Prize laureates at the Hotel New Otani. Around 300 people were invited, including the heads of the legislative executive, and judicial branches of government, ministers, foreign ambassadors, and other dignitaries from various fields. His Majesty the Emperor proposed a toast in honor of the laureates and their spouses. H.E. Mr. Satsuki Eda, the President of the House of Councillors, gave a congratulatory address on behalf of the heads of the three branches of government.

The Banquet concluded with speeches of heartfelt gratitude by the laureates.



■ Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress Arrive at the Banquet Hall



■ His Majesty the Emperor with the Spouses of the Laureates



■ Congratulatory Address by H.E. Mr. Eda



■ Acknowledgement by Prof. Iwasaki



■ Acknowledgement by Prof. Vitousek

Japan Prize Week

Monday, April 19



Welcome Reception



US Embassy Cocktail Reception

Tuesday, April 20



Courtesy Call on the Japan Academy



Courtesy Call on the Prime Minister



Visit to the Foundation Office



Academic Round Table Discussion

Thursday, April 22



Commemorative Lecture by Prof. Iwasaki



Commemorative Lecture by Prof. Vitousek

Saturday, April 24



Sightseeing in Kyoto



JAPAN PRIZE WEEK PHOTOS



JAPAN PRIZE

2011 (27th) Japan Prize

The categories for the 2011 (27th) Japan Prizes are "information and communications" and "bioscience and medical science." Candidates were recommended through numerous letters of nomination received by the Foundation from all over the world. The Japan Prize Selection Committee has been organized by the Foundation and the results will be announced in January 2011. The presentation ceremony will take place in Tokyo in April 2011.

Area of Studies I: mathematics, physics, chemistry and engineering Fields eligible for the award: Information and Communications

Background and rationale:

More than half a century after their invention, computers have developed through fusion with networking technology to yield information and communication systems processing almost all information arising in the real world. As an indispensable social infrastructure that supports civil life as well as socio-economic activities, these systems have greatly contributed to the further advancement of science and technology and the creation of new cultures. In view of such circumstances, among other factors, the enhancement of reliability and security of information and communication systems is becoming increasingly important in ensuring the safety and security of society and convenience in daily life. Such new issues need to be tackled in order to develop and advance our knowledge-based society on a global scale. Moreover, it is hoped that information and communications technologies, both in the software and hardware aspects, will be further developed and widely disseminated.

Achievement eligible:

The 2011 Japan Prize will be awarded to honor achievements that bring about remarkable progress in science and technology in the field of "information and communications," and make outstanding contributions to society by improving the safety and convenience of the lives of people through the creation of new industries, and improvement in productivity among other innovations.

Area of Studies II: biology, agriculture and medical science Fields eligible for the award: Bioscience and Medical Science

Background and rationale:

The progress in bioscience and medical science over the past half century has tremendously contributed to the understanding of biological functions, elucidation of the pathophysiology of various diseases and also to the development of new medical treatments and medicines. As a result, the average life expectancy has been drastically raised and the quality of life has been enhanced. However, there are still not a few diseases that are difficult to treat, and many patients are undergoing long-term care or suffering from the residual defects resulting in instability of daily life, poverty and the increase of burdens in the socio-economy. Furthermore, while malaria and tuberculosis are still raging, emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases including AIDS are also threatening our society. It is hoped that further progress in the fields of bioscience and medical science will help resolve these issues.

Achievement eligible:

The 2011 Japan Prize will be awarded to honor achievements that bring about remarkable progress in science and technology in the fields of "bioscience and medical science," and make an outstanding contribution to society in the treatment of diseases or the improvement of human health through the understanding of biofunctions, creation or promulgation of new medical technologies, or the development or production of new pharmaceuticals.

The Science and Technology Foundation of Japan

The Foundation was established in 1982, aiming to contribute to further development of science and technology. In addition to recognizing outstanding achievements with the Japan Prize, the Foundation has been promoting knowledge and information of science and technology by hosting the "Easy-to-Understand Science and Technology" seminars and awarding research grants to help nurture young scientists.

∴ Research Grants

The Foundation provides research grants to scientists and researchers under 35 years of age. Every year, the Foundation selects projects in the same fields as the Japan Prize of that year and awards one million Japanese yen for a project.

∴ "Easy-to-Understand Science and Technology" Seminars

The Foundation holds seminars on advanced science and technologies used widely in everyday life since March 1989. In the seminars designed for students and the general public, experts in the related fields explain in plain terms the technologies that are also the focus of interest at that time.

∴ Stockholm International Youth Science Seminar (SIYSS)

Under the auspices of the Swedish Federation of Young Scientists and with the support of the Nobel Foundation, the Science and Technology Foundation of Japan sends two Japanese students to the annual Stockholm International Youth Science Seminar since 1987.