

Summary of Academy of Science Presidents' Meeting (APM)

Date: 12:50-14:10 JST, Monday, October 5th, 2026

Venue: Room 104 of the Kyoto International Conference Center (KICC)

Organizer: Science Council of Japan

Participants: As per the attached.

Co-Chairs:

Prof. Dr. MITSUISHI Mamoru, Former President, Science Council of Japan

Sir Paul NURSE, President, The Royal Society

Theme: Promoting Scientific Mobility in a Dividing World

Science is a global endeavor founded on the universal values of curiosity, creativity, and rigorous inquiry. Scientific progress has long depended on the exchange of people, ideas, and knowledge across borders.

Today, addressing global challenges such as climate change, infectious diseases, natural disasters, the governance and impacts of artificial intelligence, energy, and food security require stronger international collaboration.

However, international scientific cooperation faces growing challenges, including geopolitical tensions, research security concerns, restrictions on researcher mobility, and evolving funding conditions.

Scientific mobility in this context should be understood not merely as the physical movement of researchers, but as a foundation for building trust, developing future scientific leaders, and sustaining international scientific cooperation.

The theme is intended to encourage discussion of national approaches, challenges, and good practices. Participants are invited to draw on their unique experiences of promoting scientific mobility and collaboration.

Summary of Discussion

At the opening, the co-chair Prof Dr. Mamoru MITSUISHI and Sir Paul NURSE welcomed participants and highlighted the growing importance of scientific mobility in a world increasingly affected by geopolitical tensions, restrictions on international collaboration, and declining trust. They emphasized that scientific mobility should be understood not only as the movement of researchers, but also as a means of building trust, nurturing future scientific leaders, and

strengthening international academic cooperation.

Key opinions and comments are as follows:

- Scientific mobility is particularly important for early-career researchers. Experience gained through studying and conducting research abroad contributes not only to scientific advancement but also to intercultural understanding and development of long-term international networks.
- Young researchers increasingly face barriers to mobility, including concerns about career prospects, visa restrictions, geopolitical tensions, and research security measures. Academies should continue to advocate for open scientific exchange and reduce unnecessary obstacles.
- Building trust is fundamental to sustaining international scientific cooperation. Scientific mobility contributes to trust-building through repeated interactions, collaborative research, and personal relationships among researchers across borders.
- Several participants highlighted the importance of creating opportunities for students and young researchers to engage internationally at an early stage of their careers, citing examples such as exchange programs, internships, graduate training schemes, and international scientific competitions. Engaging young generations starting from high school or younger was also noted as crucial.
- While Scientific mobility should be encouraged, some countries face significant challenges related to “brain drain”, with large numbers of talented researchers leave and do not return. Measures to support “brain circulation,” including incentives for researchers to return, establish independent research groups, and introduce new research directions, were highlighted as important means of addressing these challenges.
- Attracting and retaining talented researchers requires more than competitive salaries. A strong research environment, institutional stability, career opportunities, high-quality infrastructures, and broader societal conditions are also important factors. It was pointed out that unfavorable domestic political environments or a lack of societal stability can also become primary reasons researchers choose not to return.
- The evaluation system for researchers needs to be updated. It is essential to move away from purely numerical publication metrics and instead evaluate the implementation of unique research methods, the transfer of competencies to teams, and the creation of new collaborative networks.
- The quality of those evaluating research projects is also important. It is essential that evaluators possess not only expertise in the research content but also the mindset to identify the potential of projects worthy of support.
- Academies have an important role in communicating the value of science to society. Building public trust through proactive engagement, effective communication, and evidence-based advocacy can strengthen support for science and international

cooperation.

- Academies must proactively educate politicians and policymakers about the true nature of science, particularly the distinction between discovery (fundamental) science and applied science, to prevent unnecessary restrictions on basic research.
- Several participants stressed that academies should serve as trusted and independent voices, particularly when scientific evidence is challenged by political, ideological, or misinformation-driven narratives.
- The importance of supporting researchers and scholars affected by conflict, political instability, or restrictions on academic freedom was emphasized. Examples were shared of national initiatives providing temporary positions, fellowships, and institutional support for at-risk researchers.
- International scientific collaboration remains essential for addressing global challenges. Participants highlighted the value of maintaining dialogue even when political relations are strained and suggested that academies can provide neutral and trusted platforms for scientific engagement.
- Scientific mobility should be viewed not solely in terms of national gain or loss but as an investment in a global scientific ecosystem. Open exchange of researchers, ideas, and knowledge benefits both sending and host countries and contributes to scientific progress worldwide.
- Several participants highlighted the need to balance openness and research security. While legitimate security concerns must be addressed, restrictions should be carefully designed to avoid undermining scientific collaboration and the free exchange of knowledge.
- International academy networks can play an important role in promoting Scientific mobility through fellowship programs, researcher exchanges, mentoring schemes, and collaborative research initiatives, particularly for early-career researchers.

Based on the discussion, the co-chair Sir Paul NURSE emphasized that Scientific mobility is not simply about moving people across borders but about sustaining the international relationships and trust on which science depends. He noted the importance of supporting young researchers, maintaining open channels of communication, and ensuring that academies continue to provide trusted, independent spaces for scientific dialogue even during periods of political tension.

Finally, the participating academies reaffirmed their shared commitment to promoting Scientific mobility, supporting the next generation of researchers, strengthening trust-based international collaboration, and preserving the openness of science. With this common understanding, the meeting concluded.

List of Participants
The 19th Academy of Science Presidents' Meeting

(Co-Chair) Prof. Dr. MITSUISHI Mamoru
Former President, Science Council of Japan

(Co-Chair) Sir Paul NURSE
President, The Royal Society

Prof. Margaret SHEIL
Fellow, Australian Academy of Sciences

Prof. Juhani KNUUTI
President, Finnish Academy of Sciences and Letters

Prof. Francis-Andre WOLLMAN
Vice President, French Academy of Science

Prof. David HAREL
President, Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities

Prof. Jin-ho CHUNG
President, Korean Academy of Science and Technology

Dr. Martin VENHART
President, Slovak Academy of Sciences

Prof. Chien-Jen CHEN
President, Academia Sinica

Prof. Allaberdy ASHIROV
President, Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan

Dr. Neil H. SHUBIN
President, National Academy of Sciences