

# Foreword

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Japan's significant progress in science and technology made thus far has contributed to achieving economic growth and building a prosperous society. In recent years, amid the increasingly intensified global competition for innovation and the further diversifying and accelerating innovation process, the environment for creating innovation in science and technology now exists at a time of major transformation on a global scale. Under such circumstances, in order to realize "Society5.0" and keep creating innovation, fundamental capability for STI, such as human resources, foundation of knowledge and research funds available at universities, public research institutions, and industrial sectors, which will serve as driving forces for creating innovation in science and technology, will take on greater significance.

The 5th Science and Technology Basic Plan provides that Japan must have core capacities that will enable it to respond with accuracy and flexibility when confronting any new challenges or situational shifts, and to this end, the government will develop and secure human resources with innovative ideas and flexible ways of thinking not caught up in the traps of convention or common sense, in addition to highly specialized knowledge, and will strengthen a foundation for the generation of diversified and outstanding knowledge that will serve as a source of innovation. The Basic Plan also points out that in order to secure funds to support STI activities, it is necessary to enhance government investment in R&D and promote effective and efficient use of funding.

In the 2018 White Paper prepared against this background, Part I, which is titled "For Further Reinforcing the Fundamental Capability for STI," analyzes the current situation concerning fundamental capability for STI which will serve as driving forces for creating innovation in science and technology, such as human resources, foundation of knowledge and research funds available at universities, public research institutions, and industrial sectors, and suggests the direction in which Japan should move in the future. The feature story reports Japan's initiatives to realize "Society5.0" through the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs).

In this time of transformation of the environment for creating innovation in science and technology, the government, with a view to shaping a bright future, is determined to continue to strongly push forward initiatives in science, technology and innovation, and will make full efforts to enable all important actors in the innovation process, namely universities, public research institutes, and industries, to work together and play their respective roles to the fullest extent.

Finally, we hope this white paper will help all Japanese people to understand the current policies on science and technology promotion and be a reference for undertakings by all concerned.