



ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

PROJECT NOTIFICATION

30 June 2016

1. **Project Code** 16-RP-29-GE-SMN-A
2. **Title** Study Mission to a Nonmember Country on Regional Innovation Strategies and Knowledge Productivity
3. **Timing and Duration** 31 October–4 November 2016 (five days)
4. **Venue** Switzerland
5. **Implementing Organization** APO Secretariat
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Website: <http://www.apo-tokyo.org>
6. **Number of Overseas Participants** Up to 19 qualified participants
(See 11. Qualifications of Candidates)
7. **Closing Date for Nominations** 30 September 2016
8. **Objectives**
 - a. To study innovation strategies that effectively foster innovation systems to enhance national productivity and competitiveness; and
 - b. To observe successful regional systems stimulating innovation and enhancing knowledge productivity.

9. Background

Globalization and rapid advances in technologies have reinforced the importance of innovation to national economies. Innovation nowadays holds the key to boosting productivity and serves as a major source of economic growth. Fostering innovation and creating a conducive environment for it are concerns of many governments. The concept of innovation systems therefore has been widely mainstreamed in the growth strategies of most advanced economies. An innovation system comprises main actors from academia such as universities, research institutions, etc., industry, and government. In each successful system, interactions among those players result in the creation, exchange, and diffusion of knowledge, which in turn results in innovation. In other words, through dynamic partnerships among those diverse actors in the system, innovation is stimulated. A strong innovation system is one with systemic linkages between external and internal sources of knowledge production; the higher the productivity of knowledge work, the stronger the innovation system. Innovation systems can be viewed through

the lens of national innovation systems, regional innovation systems, sectoral innovation systems, etc. Depending on different macroeconomic goals, strategies to strengthen innovation systems and to maximize the contribution of innovation to national productivity and competitiveness vary over time. Regions are currently the focus of innovation strategy formulation because they have the potential to correct the shortcomings of the national strategies prevalent in the 1990s.

Switzerland, a pioneer in innovation, was chosen as the destination of this study mission for participants to learn about regional innovation strategies. For the last seven years, Switzerland has maintained its first ranking in the Global Innovation Index of the World Economic Forum (WEF), which annually assesses the factors driving productivity and prosperity. Switzerland is also notable for excellent collaboration between the public and private sectors in efficient regional innovation strategies that would be applicable to less-developed countries. Insights from representatives of government, industry, and academia involved in Swiss systems will help participants understand better regional innovation strategies, the function of each actor in the system, and how the innovation process occurs. The success factors and challenges in developing and implementing those strategies for innovation systems will also be shared.

10. Scope and Methodology

The tentative modules to be covered are:

- a. Strategies for regional innovation systems;
- b. Actors and the roles of each in innovation systems;
- c. Knowledge creation, exchange, and diffusion in innovation processes and systems; and
- d. Knowledge productivity in innovation systems.

The study mission will consist of lectures and presentations by experts in regional innovation systems, regional innovation strategies, and knowledge productivity; visits to regional innovation systems in operation; discussions with different actors in innovation systems and policymakers responsible for regional innovation strategies; group discussions among participants from various countries; and action plan preparation.

The tentative program of the course is given below:

Date/Time	Activity
Sun., 30 October 2016	Arrival of participants in Zurich
Mon., 31 October 2016	Opening session Introduction to Regional Innovation Strategies in Switzerland Study visit to the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH Zurich)
Tues., 1 November 2016	Visit to Zurich Innovation Park Visit to start-ups in Zurich
Wed., 2 November 2016	Presentation by the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SEFRI): Innovation Strategies of Lausanne Visit to SIREN: Lausanne Municipal Renewable Energy Program for Innovation
Thur., 3 November 2016	Visit to the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL)/ Lausanne Innovation Park Visit to the Nestlé Research Center

Fri., 4 November 2016	Visit to the WEF Geneva Visit to the Campus of Biotech Geneva Group discussion and closing session
Sat., 5 November 2016	Departure of participants from Lausanne

11. Qualifications of Candidates

Present Position	Senior-level officials in science and technology and innovation ministries, NPO heads, and top leaders in the private sector involved in the development and strengthening of regional innovation systems.
Experience	At least 10 years of experience in a related field.
Education	Preferably university degree or equivalent qualification from a recognized university/institution.
Language	All proceedings of the project are conducted in English, and participants are frequently required to make oral and written presentations. They must therefore be proficient in spoken and written English. Those who are not proficient in English will not be accepted.
Health	Physically and mentally fit to attend an intensive project requiring participants to complete a number of individual and group activities and strenuous fieldwork. It is therefore recommended that member countries do not nominate candidates likely to suffer from physical and mental stress.
Age	Candidates who fit the above profile are typically between 35 and 55 years of age.
APO Certificate	Participants are required to attend the entire program to receive the APO certificate of attendance.

12. Financial Arrangements

To be borne by participants or participating countries

- a. Round-trip international airfare between the international airport nearest to the participants' place of work and the project venue(s) in Switzerland.
- b. Participants' insurance premiums: All participants should be fully insured against accident and illness (including hospitalization and death) for a principal sum equivalent to USD10,000.00 for the entire duration of the project and travel and must submit to the APO Secretariat a copy of the comprehensive travel insurance certificate before participation. Such insurance should be valid in the host country. This insurance requirement is in addition to existing government insurance coverage in some member countries. If any participant is unable to insure himself/herself as stipulated above, he/she should secure this insurance in the host country at the commencement of the project and pay the premium himself/herself, if necessary, from the per diem allowance provided. Neither the APO nor the implementing organizations will be responsible for any eventuality arising from accident or illness.

- c. Any travel expenses related to travel insurance costs, passport, visa fees and airport taxes.
- d. Any expenses incurred by participants for stopovers on the way to and from the project venue as well as for extra stay at the project venue before and/or after the official project period because of early arrival or late departure, for example, due to either limited available flights or any other reason.

To be borne by the APO

- a. Appropriate hotel accommodation and per diem allowances for all participants for up to six days in Switzerland.
- b. All local expenses related to the study mission.
- c. All assignment costs of resource persons.

13. Actions by Member Countries

- a. Each participating country is requested to nominate three or more candidates to attend this mission no later than 30 September 2016. Please ensure that candidates nominated meet the qualifications specified under section 11 above.
- b. No form of self-nomination will be accepted. All nominations must be endorsed and submitted by an APO Director, Alternative Director, Liaison Officer, or their designated officer.
- c. Please note that nomination of a candidate does not necessarily guarantee that he/she will be selected. Selection is at the discretion of the APO Secretariat. A basic criterion for selection is the homogeneity of the participants in terms of qualifications and work experience. Nonselection therefore does not mean that the candidates concerned are not competent enough. Sometimes candidates are not selected because they are overqualified for a project.
- d. Each nomination should be accompanied by the necessary documents. A nomination lacking any of these documents may not be considered: two copies of the candidate's biodata on the APO biodata form together with a passport-sized photograph. The biodata form can be downloaded from the APO website (www.apo-tokyo.org). We encourage submitting the biodata form to the APO Secretariat in electronic form as an attachment to a cover e-mail message from the APO Director, Alternate Director, or Liaison Officer. The nomination documents should be sent to the Research & Planning Department, APO Secretariat (e-mail: rp@apo-tokyo.org, fax: 81-3-5840-5324).
- e. The APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form. Every candidate must complete and submit a copy of the APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form with his/her biodata at the time of nomination. Please note that self-declaration is sufficient for candidates without any of health conditions or illnesses listed on the reverse side of the medical form. However, for all others, medical certification by a licensed physician on the reverse side of the medical form is required.
- f. Necessary documents are to be submitted electronically. In that case, there is no need to send a hard copy by postal mail. However, if the documents are submitted by fax, member countries are requested to send the originals of the documents to the APO Secretariat by

postal mail as well. If a digital photograph of a nominee is not attached to the electronic biodata form, a hard-copy photograph should be sent to the APO Secretariat by postal mail. Please give the candidate's name and the project code on the reverse side of the photograph.

- g. Member countries are requested to adhere to the nomination deadline given on page 1. The APO Secretariat may not consider late nominations as they have in the past resulted in considerable difficulties to the implementing organization in its preparatory work for the project.
- h. For member countries where nominations are required to be approved by higher government authorities and require a longer time, the APO Liaison Officers/NPOs are urged to send the names of nominees on or before the deadline, indicating that government approval will follow.
- i. If a selected participant becomes unable to attend, he/she should inform the APO Liaison Officer/NPO in his/her country immediately and give the reason for withdrawal. The NPO concerned is requested to transmit that information to the APO Secretariat and the host country promptly.
- j. NPOs are requested to inform the selected participants that they are not to bring family members or to engage in any private business activities during the entire duration of the project.
- k. Each selected candidate is required to arrive at the venue one day before the start of the official project. Also, he/she is expected to return home upon completion of the official project because he/she is visiting the host country for the specific purpose of attending this APO study mission.
- l. NPOs should inform participants that they must attend whole duration of the project to qualify for the certificate of attendance.

14. Actions by the APO Secretariat

- a. Under normal circumstances, candidates who are selected will be informed of their acceptance at least four weeks prior to the start of the project.
- b. If some candidates fail to qualify or be unable to participate after selection, or if some member countries fail to nominate any candidate, their slots may be filled by alternates from the same or another member country on a merit basis.

15. Project Preparation

Participants in this study mission are required to prepare a short paper on the innovation policy in their countries prior to departure for the project venue. The Secretariat will provide more details on the paper after the completion of participant selection.

16. Postproject Actions

The APO will also request participants to submit feedback reports on follow-up actions taken six months after completion of the mission.

17. Evaluation of Participants

If the conduct/attendance/performance of a participant is not satisfactory, these will be reported to the APO director concerned.

18. Guide for Participants

Other conditions for participation are given in the *APO Guide for Participants*, which is available from APO Liaison Officers/NPOs in member countries and on the APO website (www.apo-tokyo.org).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mari Amano', written in a cursive style.

Mari Amano
Secretary-General