

The Way of the Society of Fiber Science and Technology, Japan

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In this paper, I outline the Society of Fiber Science and Technology, Japan from the viewpoint of the president of the Society.



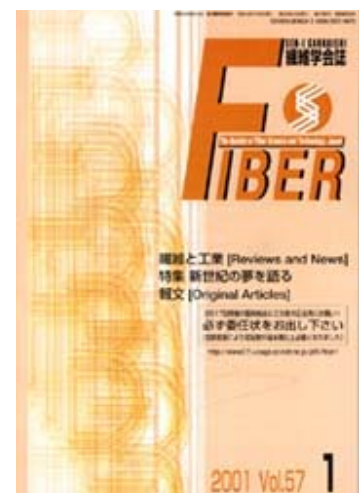
The Society was established on December 10th, 1943 and we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Society two years ago. The society concerns with science, engineering and technology of fiber and related materials including polymer, film, paper and pulp, etc. The society is composed of 1,750 members (including students) and 110 supporting companies.

The activities of the Society of Fiber Science and Technology, Japan include several meetings, seminars, workshops, publications, commendation, etc.

The regular meetings are the annual meeting for three days in June and the fall research meeting for two days in October. The former includes more than ten sessions such as session of fiber chemistry, fiber physics, high strength fibers, dyeing, etc. In addition, some subjects relating with fiber, e.g., colloids, gels, and liquid crystals, are also in respective sessions. One international symposium is held at the same time with the annual meeting although the subject differs year by year.

There are some workshops given regularly. One of them, “Introductory course of fibers”, is oriented towards fresh persons in companies and universities. Another workshop is rather for matured persons who can get information of new fibers and textiles as well as pieces of respective samples.

Among the routine activities of the society, I would focus on 14 research groups. Following research groups (RGs) are established more than twenty years ago; RG of fundamental fiber science, RG of dyeing, RG of fiber and textile fabrication, RG of sensing and measurement, RG of clothing science, RG of paper and pulp, and RG of optics & electronics.



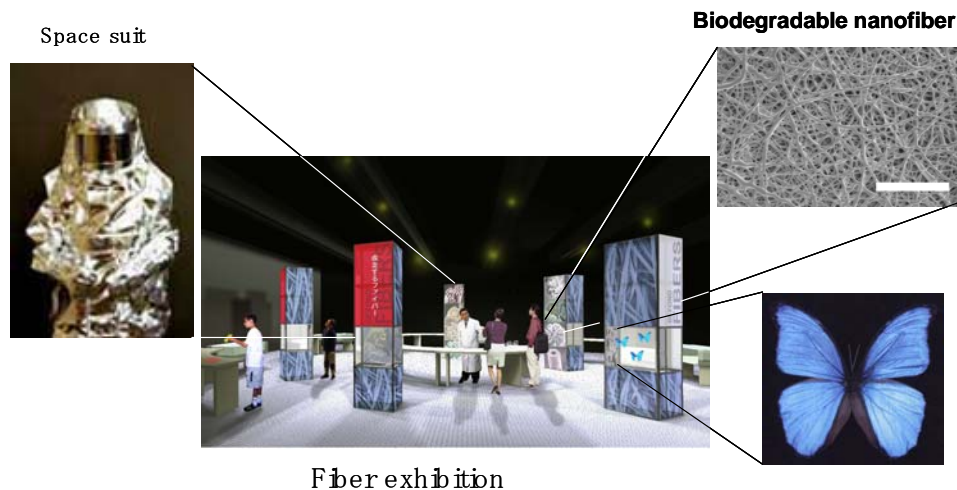
After that, some RGs were set up irregularly, e.g., RG of advanced fiber materials, RG of geo-textile, sensibility forum, fiber industry forum, and RG of supercritical fluid. Last year we approved a new RG, RG of nanofiber. It seems to be the most active RG in the society at present. RG of nanofiber is not the newest one. The newest one is RG of supra-biomimetics which was started just now. We would encourage these research groups to develop a new world of fibers.

Publication is one of the essential services of society. We publish a monthly journal which is composed of reviews and news part and original articles part. A few distinguished papers are awarded by the society annually, and two of the recipients of award this year were foreign scientists, one is a Korean student and a researcher in the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

On the occasion of the society's 60th anniversary, we hold an exhibition entitled "Spurting Fibers" at an exhibition hall in Tokyo. The exhibition materials are preserved and lent out in response to request. It is possible to lend them to overseas. In fact, it has been overseas twice.

As to publication, we published a handbook "Fiber Handbook, the 3rd edition" with the joint effort by more than 100 society members two years ago. We may consider to publish its English edition.

International cooperation is what we respect the most. In addition to AFC, Shino-Japan joint symposium has been going well since 2004.



All of the academic societies in Japan are controlled by MEXT (the ministry of education, culture, sports, science and technology). This is the case for the society of fiber science and technology. But our society also has a close relation with METI (the ministry of economy, trade and industry) because fiber industry is one of the most important industries in Japan. Now METI is going to issue "a road map of **fiber technology**" in cooperation with our society. The road map presents the milestones for new fiber technologies. The details will appear on the website of METI

soon. In addition, our society has issued “an academia road map of **fiber science**” which was completed relatively young scientists of fiber and clothes. These two road maps will give us helpful suggestions for our future works.

METI also supports us through other routes. NEDO (New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization) is one of affiliated organizations in METI. HSFP (High-Strength Fiber Project, Project leader: Professor T. Kikutani) is a R&D unit in Nano-technology Program for Materials Development promoted by NEDO. The goal of this project is “to double the strength of conventional high-strength fibers keeping the production cost less than double.

All of the Japanese academic societies and foundations are now nervous in the government decision in which the administration of academic societies will be severely inspected by the government from 2009. Through this, the government expects to open the societies to the public. The new rule forces the Japanese academic societies to give benefits not only to their own members but also to society.