

UK-Japan collaboration in the age of ISPF

Building on **RENKEI**'s networks and experience, we are excited to unlock truly inclusive, equitable and innovative futures through the **International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF)**.

The Fund promises a step change in the UK's partnership with Japan; shaping a more diverse landscape for scientific research, targeted to mutual priorities in research and innovation. Drawing on the strength of our shared values, but also the added value of our differences, we set out to:

- align with the UK's Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to advance equality of opportunity for people who share a relevant protected characteristic, with a particular focus on promoting gender equality in every aspect of RENKEI's activity.
- equip Early Career Researchers (ECRs) with the skills, networks and experience that they need to realise the potential of the UK-Japan higher education partnership.
- share insights with the sector to shape and catalyse effective bilateral collaboration.
- model best practice as universities respond to the climate emergency.
- convene workshops that bring researchers together around shared priorities, with seed funding to plant and nurture innovative collaboration.

RENKEI is a consortium of 12 universities that are working together to further knowledge exchange and research between institutions, individuals and sectors in the UK and Japan. The consortium has 10-years of experience in strengthening UK-Japan collaboration around the shared priorities of climate change, health care and security. Since its inception, RENKEI has also aimed to equip early career researchers with the skills and experience that they will need to realise the potential of the UK-Japan partnership, building a network of RENKEI Fellows.

The **International Science Partnerships Fund (ISPF)**, managed by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), represents the UK government's ambition to accelerate key strategic partnerships. In December, Minister George Freeman launched the first phase of ISPF through a speech at Keio University in which he announced £119 million of funding to support UK scientists, researchers and innovators to collaborate with colleagues around the world in tackling the great challenges of our time.

The four key strands of the ISPF are:

- Resilient Planet - Leading the green industrial revolution to protect the planet
- Transformative Technologies - Developing responsible technologies to secure our place in tomorrow's world
- Healthy People, Animals and Plants - Researching and innovating for secure and healthy populations
- Tomorrow's Talent - Nurturing talent to drive inclusion, research and innovation.

There is clear alignment between RENKEI's track record and the ISPF objectives.

- Under our Climate Change theme we have been working on innovative adaptation solutions to make our infrastructure more resilient, our ecosystems more diverse and our food and water supply more secure.
- Our Health theme has been looking at how to support the changing needs of ageing societies; how to ensure patient safety; how to use bioinformatics in medicine responsibly; how to prepare for future pandemics; and how to understand the social and economic determinants of health outcomes.

On the occasion of the G7 Summit 2023, we are bringing together members of the research community in the UK and Japan to discuss the opportunities that ISPF creates.

RENKEI will continue to catalyse multilateral and interdisciplinary collaboration; investing in the next generation of researchers to realise the potential of UK-Japan partnership and to translate the great strengths of our institutions into ground-breaking science and high-quality research.

We have created a short video in which members of the RENKEI network share their ideas for the opportunities the ISPF programme brings. See link >>>

