

JAPANESE INDUSTRY AND POLICY NEWS

September 2016

LEGISLATION AND POLICY NEWS

20 Content Technologies Chosen as “Innovative Technologies of 2016”

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) announced on 2 September that 20 excellent technologies in the content field were recognized as Innovative Technologies 2016. They include “Luminescent Tentacles” of Mr. Akira Nakayasu/Kanazawa College of Art, “8K Time Into Space” (NHK, MIT Media Lab) and mobile robot phone “RoBoHon” (Sharp Corporation). Among the technologies recognized in the past, “Project Morpheus” of Sony Interactive Entertainment was awarded as the project is already at advanced stages of practical use.

http://www.dcxpo.jp/exhibition_index

<http://www.meti.go.jp/press/2016/09/20160902002/20160902002.html>

(Japanese language only)

Winners of "Kids' Design Award" Announced

On 5 September, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) announced winners of the 10th “Kids’ Design Award” which is accorded to the products and services contributing to the safer living, nurturing of creativity and favorable raising environment for children.

The winning work of the top prize (Prime Minister’s Prize) was Tokyo Yurikago (cradle) Kindergarten + Satoyama Education for its facility of natural life education. METI Minister’s prize was attributed to excellent designing of four entities.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/0905_02.html

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/pdf/0905_02a.pdf

Model Plans under the “Craft Meet” Project Selected

On September 7, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) announced the traditional craft business operators, production areas and ten model plans, which are evaluated and selected under the Craft Meet Projects across Japan.

The Craft Meet Project seeks to reevaluate the traditional craft techniques of

each area of Japan with the aim of cultivating overseas markets and revitalizing regional economies. The project identifies business operators that could potentially host experts from overseas.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/pdf/0906_01a.pdf

<https://www.japanpage.net/featured/craftmeet/en/>

Sakai City Wins Grand Prize of Sewage and Wastewater Management

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism accorded the “Sewage as Circular Route” (Sewage and Wastewater Management) award on 9 September and the top prize went to the city of Sakai, Osaka prefecture for their project to use treated waste water as source of regional heating as well as flushing water and channel water in Aeon Mall Sakaiteppocho. City of Yokohama won one of the Innovation prizes for their special team effort for international human resource development cooperation.

This is an annual award introduced in 2008 for promoting good examples of sewage and wastewater management.

http://www.mlit.go.jp/mizukokudo/sewerage/crd_sewerage_tk_000085.html

(Japanese language only)

<http://www.mlit.go.jp/common/001142860.pdf> (Japanese language only)

Strategy for Energy Conservation Technology Formulated

The Agency for Natural Resources and Energy (ANRE) and the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) jointly formulated the “Energy Conservation Technology Strategy 2016”. The strategy aims to effectively promote the research and development of energy conservation technologies. It specifies the important fields such as energy conversion/supply, home and business and transportation that will strongly contribute to energy conservation

The strategy was revised from the 2011 version to include broader concepts concerning energy management systems, e.g., Home Energy Management System (HEMS) and Building Energy Management System (BEMS), bearing in mind the trends in Internet of Things (IoT) and other new technologies.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/0916_02.html

Winners of the “Travel Mine Japan” Project Announced

Under the project to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in

developing Japan brand products and services, commonly known as the “Travel Mine Japan” program, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) assists SMEs and other entities in regional areas with subsidies of a portion of the expenses necessary for their initiatives to further cultivate the attractiveness of regional resources, branding such resources in the regions, drawing global attention to such brands through sales promotion overseas and other activities. On 23 September, METI announced 9 winners, including “Gastronomy tourism in snow country” (Yuzawa/Niigata), “Entertaining foreign visitors in classical/historical housing” (Sasayama/Hyogo) and “Aizu experience design project” (Aizu Wakamatsu/Fukushima). Winners were selected from 73 applicants by external experts.

<https://travelminejapan.com/> (Japanese language only)

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/0913_01.html

SURVEY AND BUSINESS DATA

Study Finds Potential for European Water Turbines in Japan

New Energy Promotion Council published on September 9, a study report on the promotion of small-scale hydroelectric power generation, which was contracted to the Mitsubishi Research Institute, Inc. (MRI) and New Nippon Consultant (NIX) Co., Ltd.

The study analyses that some European manufacturers integrate most advanced technology to supply efficient turbines which have potential in the Japanese market. The study revealed that water turbines were actually imported from Bulgaria, Czech and Germany.

For further success in Japan, the report points out such challenges as the transfer of management and maintenance skills.

<http://www.nepc.or.jp/topics/2016/0909.html> (Japanese language only)

http://www.nepc.or.jp/topics/pdf/160909/160909_1.pdf (Japanese language only)

Potential of Small-scale Hydroelectric Generation at Water Supply Facilities Calculated

Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare published on 13 September the result of a joint study on the potential of

introducing small-scale hydroelectric generation systems to water supply facilities.

The study reveals that a total of 563 facilities have the potential of generating electricity, out of which 274 can generate more than 20kW. If all of 563 facilities start generating, it is estimated that they can make 5.3 billion yen under the feed-in tariff (FIT) selling system and reduce CO2 emission by 92,000 tons annually.

According to the study, the actual ratio of generation system installation remains 2.7% of all water supply facilities in 2015.

<http://www.env.go.jp/press/102335-print.html> (Japanese language only)

<http://www.env.go.jp/press/files/jp/103626.pdf> (Japanese language only)

Outline of the FY2015 Energy White Paper Published in English

The Agency for Natural Resources and Energy (ANRE) published the English version of its Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Report on Energy (Energy White Paper) on 12 September. The English white paper features (a) Low crude oil prices and future energy security, (b) Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and nuclear energy policy and (c) Climate change and the need to change energy policy.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/pdf/0517_01.pdf

English Handbook of Health and Welfare Statistics Published

On 12 September, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare published the “English Handbook of Health and Welfare Statistics 2015”. The handbook covers such vital statistics as ‘population and households’, ‘health’, ‘social welfare’ and ‘social insurance’.

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/database/db-hh/index.html>

COMPANY NEWS

FamilyMart-Uny Merger Creates Second-largest Convenience Store Chain

FamilyMart and UNY Group Holdings merged 1 September, creating the second largest convenient store chain after 7-Eleven (Seven & I Holdings) in Japan. The new company, FamilyMart UNY Holdings Co., Ltd. has 12,000 FamilyMart stores and 6,250 CircleKSunks stores which were owned by UNY Group

Holdings.

http://www.fu-hd.com/company/news_release/fu-hd/docs/20160901HLDGSrelease.pdf

(Japanese language only)

Euglena to Build Biggest Microalgae Culture Facilities for Bio Fuel

Euglena Co., Ltd., a producer of microalgae with a strong focus on euglena, announced on September 1 that it would construct a culture facility (pool) in central Japan of Mie prefecture. The size of the culture pool will be gradually extended to more than 3,000 square meters in 2018, making it one of the largest in Japan.

The culture pool will be built in a site next to a biomass power station of Chubu Plant Service, a subsidiary of Chubu Electric Power Co. in order to utilise exhausted gas, water and heat for the culture of algae in an effort to reduce the production cost of bio fuel.

<http://v4.eir-parts.net/v4Contents/View.aspx?cat=tdnet&sid=1398774> (Japanese language only)

http://www.town.taki.mie.jp/contents_detail.php?co=cat&frmId=93&frmCd=2-1-0-0-0 (Japanese language information on the construction site)

TOPICS

METI Promotes Kyushu Region as a Destination for Foreign Tourists

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) compiled a “storybook” for conveying the attractiveness of the Kyushu’s exceptional regional resources in order to expand local consumption by overseas visitors. Kyushu region is still suffering the adverse effects of declining demand after the earthquakes in Kumamoto prefecture last spring.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/0906_03.html

<https://wonderkyushu.com/en/>

Healthcare IoT Consortium Inaugurated

The New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) announced that the Healthcare IoT (Internet of Things) Consortium was established on 9 September from NEDO’s Clean Device Promotion Project.

Founding members include Nuture Networks and Hokkaido University both of them are participants of the NEDO project together with other entities including Tokyo University, Hiroshima City University and IntaSect Communications.

Its main objective is to realise a “personal driven healthcare” where individuals provide their healthcare data of their own will to enterprises in order to promote their health and develop a secure IoT platform to share healthcare information.

The number of consortium members is 28 as of the end of September.

http://www.nedo.go.jp/news/press/AA5_100633.html (Japanese language only)

<http://healthcareiotcons.com/> (Japanese language only)

Japanese Traditional Craft Showroom Opens in Paris

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) announced that a showroom for Japanese traditional crafts would open on 1 October in Paris.

It is called Espace DENSAN (traditional products), located at 8bis, rue Villedo, 75001 Paris. Espace DENSAN is expected to serve as a promotional basis which aims at buyers of quality hand-made products, influential people and local media.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2016/0926_01.html

http://kougeihin.jp/system-manager/wp-content/uploads/NEWS-RELEASE_2_20160923.pdf