

German Institute for Japanese Studies Tokyo (DIJ)

## DIJ Social Science Study Group

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### **Outgrowing the “triple helix” – The effects of international cooperation on the emergence of Japanese regional high-tech innovation clusters**

Regional economic disparities, rapid ageing, low GDP growth, and the increasing importance of science-based industries induced a major shift in Japanese innovation policy over the last decades. Regional innovation clusters with collaborative research between universities and surrounding companies at their core, promising radical high-tech novelties with the potential for start-ups, have become the target of recent policy efforts and subsidy programs.

Compared to “market-based” systems such as the Anglo-Saxon economies, Japan’s “coordinated capitalism” (e.g. Streeck, Yamamura 2003) is typically associated with institutional constraints on radical innovation, like a lack of venture capital or a rigid labor protection regime. This research demonstrates the onset of significant institutional changes in Japan’s innovation regime. Policy document analysis and expert interviews conducted in comparative case studies show that apart from enhancing cooperation between the “government, universities and industries” (“triple helix” model, Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff 1995), cooperation with international partners can be critical for creating successful clusters in which knowledge, capital, technology and markets are productively exchanged. On the other side of the spectrum, the formation of clusters depends on the involvement of local actors to ensure they meet the capabilities and needs of the area. The findings suggest that a focus on top-down national policies for industrial- and research-coordination is not sufficient to explain how regional innovation systems emerge in Japan, and how they overcome constraints to create new high-tech innovation.

**Benjamin Rabe** is a PhD student at the Institute for East Asian Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen, where he also obtained his M.A. He currently holds a position as a guest researcher at The University of Tokyo.

All are welcome to attend, but **registration ([jentzsch@dijtokyo.org](mailto:jentzsch@dijtokyo.org)) is appreciated.**

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The DIJ Social Science Study Group is organized by S. Brucksch, S. Ganseforth, S. Heinrich, P. Holdgrün, H. Jentzsch and D. Kremers.