Open Innovation
ICT Deployment and Industry Promotion Department

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Information communication provides the infrastructure for social and economic activity. We are currently engaged in many activities in this field, such as promoting the commercialization of initiatives such as ventures that give rise to new services, enhancing our infrastructure to facilitate the use of diverse new forms of communication, promoting information barrier-free environments where information communication services can be used by anyone, promoting basic research in the private sector, and supporting international exchanges in research and development. Through these activities, we are helping to stimulate industry and facilitate rich lifestyles that are both safe and secure, and in order to support the adoption of highly convenient information communication services in people's social and economic activities, we are promoting the following initiatives in the field of information communication to efficiently and effectively implement various promotion activities.

Fig.1 : Silicon Valley Boot Camp

Inviting overseas researchers and providing support for the hosting of international research conferences

Through NICT's own International Exchange Program and the privately funded Japan Trust International Research Cooperation Program, we are working to invite overseas researchers to research institutes other than the NICT, and we are providing support for the hosting of international research conferences as part of our International Exchange Program.

(a) Foreign Researcher Invitation Program

In FY2017, our International Exchange Program placed eleven researchers at domestic institutes including Kyushu University and the University of Tokyo (although one dropped out after being placed).

(b) Japan Trust International Research Cooperation Program*

In FY2017, two overseas researchers were invited to the KDDI Research, Inc. and Fujitsu Laboratories Ltd. as part of the Japan Trust International Research Cooperation Program.

(c) International Conference Support Program

In FY2017, we supported twelve international research conferences including the International Conference on Light and Photonics 2017 and the 15th MST Radar Workshop.

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* The Japan Trust International Research Cooperation Program is operated as a joint effort of NICT together with the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO). NICT invites researchers in the fields of communication and broadcasting, and NEDO invites researchers in fields related to the mining and manufacturing industries.

Supporting ICT startups

We support the efforts of ICT entrepreneurs to start up and commercialize their businesses from a strategic viewpoint aimed at strengthening Japan's medium- to long-term industrial competitiveness in the field of information communication.

(a) Providing ICT startups with information and exchange opportunities

We aim to provide opportunities for people to present and exchange information by holding real-life events and hosting an online ICT startup support center (http://www.nict.go.jp/venture/), and to provide entrepreneurs with matching opportunities to promote the commercialization of their businesses.

(b) Investing in information communication ventures, etc.

We manage companies in which the TAO (a previous incarnation of the NICT) directly invested.

(c) Providing grants and loan guarantees to information communication ventures and the like

We provide grants and loan guarantees to businesses that use new technology development facilities, and to businesses that share area-specific telecommunication facilities.

(d) Discovering and nurturing ICT startups

To discover and train promising ICT startups and young entrepreneurs, we have contributed to regional collaboration events by organizing activities such as kick-off seminars and brush-up seminars in cooperation with regional entrepreneur support groups. Also, to impart a global mindset to people planning to take part in NICT's Kigyouka Koshien entrepreneur competition, we implemented a Silicon Valley Boot Camp that included exchanges with local ICT ventures at the west coast of the US (Silicon Valley) and lectures from locally active venture entrepreneurs and the like (Fig.1).

Supporting the spread of information communication infrastructure

We want Japan to be the world's most advanced ICT nation, and support the spread of information communication infrastructure in this country.

(a) Supporting regional communications and broadcast development projects

We are supporting businesses that contribute to the enhancement of telecommunications (e.g., by improving CATV or setting up relay stations for terrestrial digital TV broadcasting) in areas other than large cities by subsidizing their interest payments on loans from banks and other financial institutions.

Supporting people with insufficient access to information

We support the development of environments where everyone has equal access to communication and broadcasting services.

(a) Promoting the production of programs with subtitles, sign language, and audio description.

For people with audio-visual impairments, we partially subsidize the production of programs with subtitles, audio descriptions and sign language interpreting, sign language translation video to be displayed together with broadcast programs, and equipment that checks the subtitles of commercial programs.

(b) Promoting the development of communication and broadcasting services for challenged users

We provide partial subsidies for people who provide and develop communication and broadcasting services that are more accessible to people with physical disabilities who have difficulty in using communication and broadcasting services.

(c) Supporting barrier-free information delivery

Through our website on barrier-free information delivery, we are providing information that makes it easier for elderly and challenged users to make use of communi-

Fig.2 : A scene at the NICT exhibition booth in TechCrunch DISRUPT SF held in Sept. 2018

nication and broadcasting services.

Promoting private-sector research on communication and broadcasting technology

• Commissioning private organizations to research basic technologies

We promote the strategic and efficient research of fundamental technology by the private sector in the field of information communication.