

For the first time in Japan, 2 Scientists from Okayama University were recently awarded an ASCENT European grant.

Collaborations between Okayama University and the joint unit UCC and Tyndall National Institute in Ireland began in 2015. From the beginning the partnership was strong and included:

a - Several missions and visits by Okayama Professors and URAs to Cork. At the Autumn of 2016, a delegation led by Professor Shin-Ichi Yamamoto, VP of research at Okayama University visited Tyndall and UCC and gave institutional and scientific presentations.



October 2016 -- Okayama University delegation led by Professor Shi-Ichi Yamamoto, Vice President of research at University College Cork and Tyndall National Institute

Conversely, Dr. M. Modreanu from Tyndall Institute was invited in 2016 by Professors T. Teranishi and J. Kano for a 2 week stay at Okayama University where he gave several talks and participate in meetings to explore pathways to strengthen relations between both institutions.

b - At the meeting at Cork in 2016, it Okayama University and Tyndall Institute jointly decided to organise an International Conference at Okayama in November 2016. The project is now underway and more than 200 top level international scientists, 50% of them coming from Europe or North America will attend (see <http://www.ec.okayama-u.ac.jp/~sense/okayamaevent.html>.)

c - Joint research projects are underway around the development of high performance Li-ion Batteries (led by Pr. T. Teranishi from the Faculty of Engineering) or the preparation of nanostructured metal thin films for SERS effects (Surface Enhanced Raman Spectroscopy), project led by Pr. N. Takeyasu from the faculty of Science.

Recently in Spring 2017, Pr. Teranishi and Takeyasu were granted a European support from the ASCENT program (<http://www.ascent.network/>). ASCENT is funded by the European Commission under the H2020 research infrastructures program - This is the first time that Japanese scientists are successfully applying to ASCENT support. A news was released in the ASCENT Newsletter as well as a video reporting on ASCENT experiments performed at Tyndall.

<http://www.ascent.network/newsletter/>)