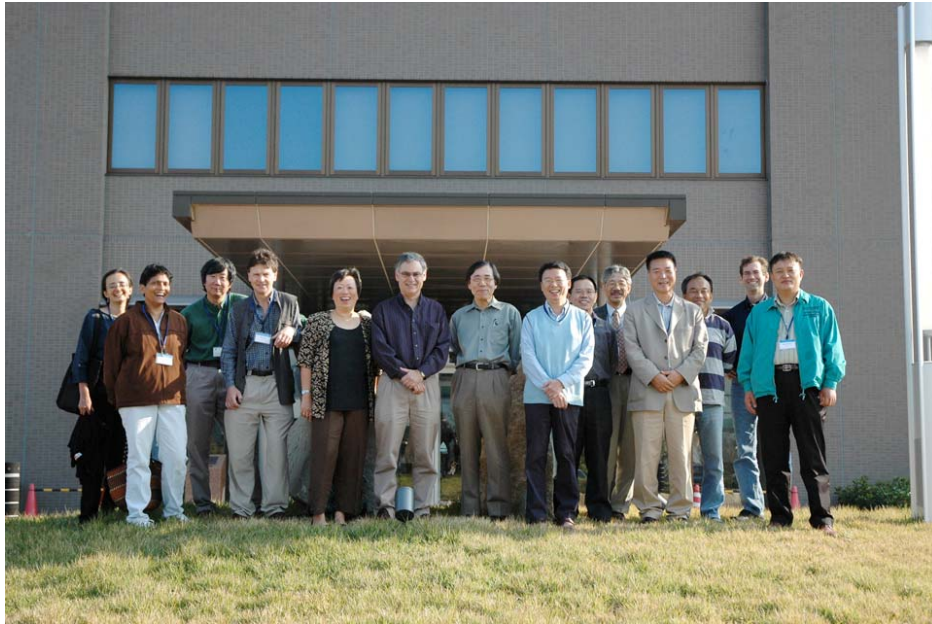


RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology (CDB)
2-2-3 Minatojima minamimachi, Chuo-ku, Kobe 650-0047, Japan

Asia-Pacific Developmental Biology Research Symposium

November 10, 2004 – Eminent researchers from across the Asia-Pacific region gathered in Kobe, Japan for a research symposium at the RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology. The meeting, sponsored by the Japanese Society for Developmental Biologists (JSDB) and the International Society for Developmental Biologists (ISDB) and funded by a grant from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), was held in the 150-seat CDB lecture auditorium, and featured talks by scientists representing China, India, Singapore, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan.



Speakers and participants in the Asia-Pacific Developmental Biology Research Symposium
(November 8, 2004; Kobe, Japan)

The first session opened with a talk on myoblast fusion in *Drosophila* by William Chia of the Temasek Life Sciences Laboratories in Singapore, followed by an overview of the genetic control of peristaltic movement in fly embryos given by Michael Bate of Cambridge University (UK) and the National Centre for Biological Sciences (India). The focus next shifted to sensory development, with Kathy Cheah of the University of Hong Kong (China) describing the role played by Sox2 in the organogenesis of the inner ear, and Henry Sun (Academica Sinica, Taiwan), speaking on the control of cell proliferation in *Drosophila* eye development.

After a brief recess, the second session opened with an interesting review of the tight cell junctions that form the blood-testis barrier in mice by Myung Chan Gye of Hanyang University (South Korea). Rob Saint (Center for the Molecular Genetics of Development, Australia) next spoke on the function of Rho-family small GTPases in fly development, followed by Anming Meng (Tsinghua University, China) who explained anterior-posterior specification in the zebrafish neuroectoderm. The meeting closed with a talk on positional information in lung bud formation, delivered by Atsushi Kuroiwa of Nagoya University (Japan).

The speakers at the symposium also joined in discussions held prior to and following the meeting regarding the establishment of a communications network for

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developmental biologists working in the Asia-Pacific region. There was a consensus among the participants that the region would greatly benefit from enhanced opportunities for interaction and exchange between organizations, labs and individuals working in related fields in this region, and the working group formally agreed to launch the Asia-Pacific Developmental Biology Network to promote the interests, activities and collaborations in the study of development across Asia and the greater Pacific. The network plans to convene its inaugural scientific meeting at the 15th ISDB Congress, to be held in Sydney, Australia in September 2005.