Best Practices and Key Success Factors in Industry-Academia-Government Cooperation and Regional Innovation in the U.S.

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Both the United States and Japan have government programs to encourage industry-university research and technology transfer. For example, the U.S. supports university-industry engineering research centers and uses the Bayh-Dole Act to encourage the transfer of university research to companies. Japan has similar policies.

However, in a related policy area – the promotion of regional innovation and growth – the U.S. and Japanese governments take different approaches. In Japan, the national government plays an important role, through such programs as Venture Business Laboratories and incubation facilities. The U.S. federal government has very few programs directly aimed at promoting regional innovation. Instead, the federal government contributes to regional economic growth *indirectly*, by supporting R&D at universities, companies, and federal laboratories; by buying high-tech products (and thus contributing to the demand for innovative products); and by maintaining tax laws, intellectual property rules, and other policies that encourage and reward entrepreneurship. Many state governments and local civic organizations seek to build on federally-funded R&D capabilities in their regions, in the hope that they can encourage the creation and growth of high-tech clusters. Some regions in the U.S. succeed better than others. The experience of San Diego, California, illustrates some best practices and key success factors in U.S. regional innovation.