

RIETI

Research Institute of Economy, Trade & Industry, IAA





About RIETI

The Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry (hereinafter referred to as RIETI), an Incorporated Administrative Agency, was founded in April 2001, at the time of the launch of the Incorporated Administrative Agency system. RIETI was established upon the foundations laid by its forerunner, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry/Research Institute (MITI/RI, established in April 1987), an internal branch of the then Ministry of International Trade and Industry. Under the aegis of the ministry, MITI/RI primarily conducted basic research on trade policy as well as on the overall economic situations in Japan and abroad from both theoretical and empirical viewpoints.

With the 21st century comes an era of change. In order to ensure its future as a mature and vibrant society in this rapidly changing international environment, Japan must proceed with bold reform in its economic structure as well as in its administrative and fiscal systems. Against this backdrop, there have been growing calls for strengthening the government's ability to formulate dynamic and innovative policies in a variety of policy fields going beyond the traditional confines of policymaking processes and lead Japan to proactively deploy policies in an increasingly international society.

In response to such calls, RIETI was established as a policy research institute with a certain degree of independence from the administrative authorities to carry out study, analysis and research on various policy issues at an internationally reputable level from a medium- to long-term perspective, thereby accumulating the necessary knowledge to formulate and recommend policy options.

The Law Concerning the Establishment of the Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry stipulates the organizational autonomy of the Institute as an Incorporated Administrative Agency (IAA), calls for its information transparency, and defines obligations to attain its objectives through a predefined scope of activities. By taking advantage of this discretion guaranteed by the law, RIETI not only recruits its researchers from government ministries and agencies but also appoints specialists with a great variety of profiles from outside the government — including university professors, researchers at private-sector research institutes, members of nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations (NPOs and NGOs) and the media in Japan and abroad — to engage in research activities during their fixed-term contracts. Specifically, RIETI undertakes three types of activities as described below.

First, in executing our primary task of conducting “research and studies”, we strive to undertake basic research and studies at an internationally reputable level, on the economic and industrial conditions, as well as on economic and industrial policy issues in Japan and abroad. Second, with regard to the task of “formulating and recommending policies”, we actively disseminate research results and policy recommendations in the form of printed publications and through our Web site. Furthermore, we also channel our research results and policy recommendations to policy debates by planning and organizing symposia and seminars that can positively influence the policy formulation process. Third, under activities classified as “information gathering and management, statistical processing and statistical management”, we aim to establish a system that allows for easy and reliable collection and browsing of information. This is made possible by creating a database that will turn tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge through a knowledge management system that makes full use of information technology, which facilitates and ensures efficient policy research.

As a platform for formulating economic and industrial policies, RIETI seeks to provide an efficient and effective theoretical foundation and knowledge network to the policymaking authorities. To this end, we strive to fulfill our mission to help invigorate policy debate by strengthening our capacity to formulate policy and improve the quality of our policy recommendations.

OKAMATSU Sozaburo, Chairman