

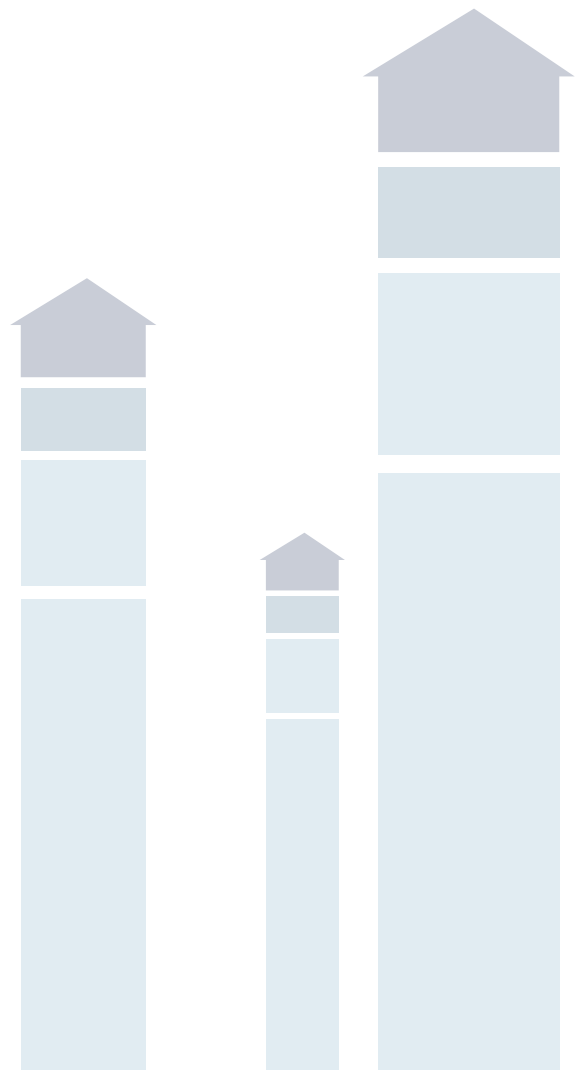
COMBINED EFFORTS

Initiatives seek to make research from São Paulo more competitive abroad

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Research from the state of São Paulo is taking measures to stimulate collaboration among scientists from São Paulo and their colleagues from other countries and to attract talent from abroad to improve the Brazilian scientific environment. One example of this strategy was seen in São Paulo, in early August, when 350 Brazilian and foreign graduate students plus 20 experts of several nationalities met, to honor the American mathematician John Nash and to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Nash Equilibrium, the theorem that forms the cornerstone of game theory. The speakers included four Nobel Prize laureates: John Nash himself, who was awarded the prize in 1994, Robert Aumann, the 2005 laureate, and Eric Maskin and Roger Myerson, the 2007 laureates. This was the fourth event held as part of the ESPCA program (São Paulo School of Advanced Science Program), a form of FAPESP aid designed to increase the international exposure of those areas in which São Paulo research has achieved competitiveness of a world standard. Released last year, the program enables São Paulo researchers to organize short courses that are one or two weeks long, to which professors from around the world and from São Paulo state should be invited. It is a requirement that the courses be attended by a certain number of students, at least half of whom must be from abroad. “In this way, we plan to garner global exposure for these research areas, in order to awaken foreign students’ interest in working as scientists here in São Paulo,” said the scientific director of FAPESP, Carlos Henrique de Brito Cruz, in an interview to Pesquisa Brasil [Brasil Research], a *Pesquisa FAPESP* radio program. “We want to show them what is best here in São Paulo. The public calls establish that each event is to include a reserved session in which someone from FAPESP presents the Foundation and the research opportunities available in São Paulo state. I made this presentation at three such events and had an excellent reception. There were lots of questions and the students from several places abroad, such as Chile, the United States, France, China and India, seemed genuinely





interested” he states. The program provides for two public calls a year.

To attract foreign researchers, opportunities for FAPESP post-doctoral grants are offered in monthly advertisements in the journal *Nature* and in the Foundation’s website, in Portuguese and English. The Foundation’s major initiatives, such as the Biota program, which studies São Paulo state biodiversity, the Bioen program, which researches bio-energy, and the Program of Research into Global Climate Change have been holding workshops and seminars attended by foreign researchers, in order to encourage the participation of São Paulo state researchers in international networks and to keep them in contact with the state of the art in their respective fields of knowledge. “There’s no silver bullet to solve complicated problems, because their solution depends on combined efforts. That’s why, when it comes to the issue of making São Paulo research more international, it’s important to maintain several linked initiatives,” stated Brito Cruz.

The Foundation’s internationalization strategy brings together a set of other efforts, such as cooperation agreements with agencies, companies and/or scientific institutions in Germany, Canada, the United States, France, Mexico, Portugal, the United Kingdom and Switzerland (*see list of agreements at [\[da-fapesp.htm\]\(http://www.fapesp.br/materia/102/a-instituicao/convenios-e-acordos-de-cooperacao-da-fapesp.htm\)\). One such example is the cooperation agreement signed in 2004 with France’s CNRS \(National Center for Scientific Research\), which aims to encourage an interchange of scientists and the submission of joint projects of researchers from São Paulo institutions and their French colleagues. To date, this has given rise to four calls for proposals and has provided grants for 27 projects. Likewise, FAPESP has an agreement with DFG \(Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft\), Germany’s main research promotion agency. In 2009, the Foundation established a bridge to British research, when it signed cooperation agreements with RCUK \(the Research Councils of the United Kingdom\) and with King’s College London, which became the first British university to partner FAPESP.](http://www.pesquisadores.fapesp.br/materia/102/a-instituicao/convenios-e-acordos-de-cooperacao-</i></p></div><div data-bbox=)*

Foreign institutions are showing a growing interest in partnering São Paulo researchers

In 2009, among the 3,953 grants and the 5,995 new scholarships from the Regular Line of research by FAPESP, 1,214 were characterized as scientific exchanges for research: 904 were grants to take part in scientific meetings abroad, 202 were grants for overseas researchers coming from abroad, 92 were Research Scholarships and 16 were from New Frontiers, a program which supports long term study visits in centers of excellence abroad, in areas of research not yet available in the state of Sao Paulo, by researchers who completed their doctorates more than ten years ago. Of the total projects, 309 are exchange programs with the United States, followed by Europe (170 projects) and Latin American and Caribbean countries (122). By country, those which had the greatest number of projects were Portugal (100) France (77) Spain (74) Italy (70) and Germany (61). The total number of projects with Asian countries was 79.

Foreign institutions have been showing a rising interest in partnering São Paulo researchers. Last month, for instance, six representatives of CAS (the Chinese Academy of Sciences) visited FAPESP headquarters in São Paulo with the aim of initiating scientific collaboration. “We wanted to find out how agencies such as FAPESP operate,” commented Pan Jiaofeng, the CAS secretary-general. “We are especially interested in biomass, biodiversity and the neurosciences.” According to him, this was the first visit to Brazil. “There is concern as to how we select the priority areas,” said Celso Lafer, the FAPESP chairman. “We talked about the possibility of future cooperation and agreed to explore this at a later date.” ■