

Northeast Asia Regional Program



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Dr. Ming-Ji Wu is responsible for industrial science, technology, and innovation policy planning at the Department of Industrial Technology, a government agency comprised of 20 research institutes. Dr. Wu has been a key figure in drafting policy toward developing high-tech related industries and technological innovations over the past decade. While on fellowship, he visited major research and development institutions and companies to discuss current trends and explore potential future collaborative ventures.

Dr. Wu's fellowship travels took him to several U.S. technology industry clusters, including Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, the Bay Area, Seattle, upstate New York, and Boston. During these visits, he investigated IT development (including cloud computing, the Internet of Things, and smart cities), biotechnology, and nanotechnology development. Dr. Wu noted widespread advocacy for the position that U.S. industries consider the combination of innovation and non-technology know-how, in lieu of the combination of innovation and technology "know-know," in a bid to forge unique core competitiveness. He also found interesting the push to establish a National Innovation Foundation-like institution, along with an institution to promote industrial technology innovations similar to the National Institute of Standards and Technology, in order to actively help U.S. industries implement important innovation activities.

Dr. Wu observed that the east and west coasts of the U.S. have different perspectives on the outlook of economic growth, with the east coast looking (gloomily) to the EU while the western states are more connected with emerging economies in Asia, and thus anticipate a brighter future. He noted those he met in Silicon Valley "exhibited much confidence and willingness to connect with the Asian economies. As a matter of fact, Silicon Valley industries have been actively participating in the development of energy technology, emerging IT, biotechnology, and nanotechnology." He looks forward to enhanced collaboration between U.S. enterprises and research institutions and Taiwanese enterprises/research institutions going forward, and to "helping the U.S. east coast states to gain a better understanding of Taiwan."

Dr. Wu stated: "Through the program, I have been given a great opportunity to broaden my visions, realize personal growth and catch emerging technology trends. First, regarding the technology policy development, the program has helped me gain a better understanding of the differences between how technology policies are developed by Federal and state government, and how they are implemented. For example, the Federal government focuses more on the so-called 'big bet' innovation, while state governments focus more on employment and economic growth. Overall, many think tanks and industrial players have doubts about the significant improvements to the "valley of death," a phenomenon existing between basic research and the commercialization of a new product."

His fellowship resulted in the potential for numerous joint initiatives between Taiwanese R&D institutes and U.S. companies and universities, including new collaborations between North Carolina's Research Triangle Park and the Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI). Dr. Wu intends to invite many interlocutors he met while on fellowship to speak about topics that include non-profit venture capital, technology incubators, innovation, technological commercialization, U.S. energy innovations, cloud computing, and medical device development. He will also explore joint initiatives between Taiwanese research institutions and U.S. universities and assign Taiwanese R&D institutions to help U.S. companies he met establish operations in China (Taiwan).

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