

東洋大学長 殿
To the President of Toyo University

ストラスブール大学招聘教員 研究報告書
Research Report by Visiting Researcher from University of Strasbourg

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研究課題名 Research topic	The role of sustainability in the innovation strategy of Japanese firms
研究期間 Research period	年 月 日～ 年 月 日 From 2024/01/21 to 2024/02/08
研究協力教員氏名 (所属) Research partner (affiliation)	René Carraz, Associate Professor carraz@toyo.jp Global Innovation Study Department
研究成果発表 (予定も含む) Publication/Presentation (including future ones)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bollinger, B., Neukam, M., (forthcoming). Réussir la transition durable face aux défis mondiaux : mobiliser les capacités dynamiques dans les organisations européennes. Management International (MI), forthcoming.• Bollinger, B., Neukam, M., Guittard, C., 2023. Vers une RSE stratégique : une contrainte stimulant l'innovation. Innovations, Vol. 72 No. 3, pp. 65-102.• Neukam, M., Bollinger, S., 2022. Encouraging creative teams to integrate a sustainable approach to technology. Journal of Business Research, Vol. 150, pp. 354–364.
研究成果の概要 Summary of your research achievements	<p>I stayed 21 days at Toyo university. During that time, I worked on my research project and gave three lectures on innovation management, international management and intercultural management. Also I actively participated at CREATOYO which was not only a very enriching experience on a personal level, but also very interesting to gain further insights about the Japanese innovation ecosystem.</p> <p>Regarding my research, my objective was to work on open innovation and sustainability in Japanese firms. During the 21 days, I obtained precious insights through this stay that will directly impact my current research on two levels: Data collection as well as the redaction of several documents. The detailed research report provides further elements about these two points and how this will impact my research in the future.</p> <p>Above all, I am convinced that the greatest output of my stay at Toyo university is the creation of very precious contacts. First and foremost, I would like to thank René Carraz sensei as well as Hajime Imamura sensei for their great support during my stay and the time they dedicated to my research. I am looking forward to continuing our collaborations in the near future.</p> <p>Finally, I also would like to thank the International Affairs Office for their great help throughout the process. They so much facilitated my stay at Toyo university and I am very grateful for that.</p>

	I am looking forward to continuing working with Toyo university and would like to thank the university for this great opportunity to come to Japan.
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DETAILED RESEARCH REPORT

The starting point of my research can be traced back to the fact that the potential harm to human systems from climate change and other global risks such as addressed by the UN sustainability goals is increasingly global (IPCC, 2022). According to that point of view, firms around the globe have the potential to respond to those challenges through focused collaboration (Voegtlin and Scherer, 2017). This requires an open approach to innovation where public and private actors collaborate. But their efforts often remain limited to demand-oriented goals (George et al., 2016). However, the transition towards sustainable business models that assume a firm's responsibility towards society will represent a crucial factor for corporate survival in the future (Henderson, 2020; Neukam and Bollinger, 2022).

Based on my initial research proposal, the objective of this research visiting at Toyo University was to provide an extension to my current research program in France. Based on initial research results within European firms, it seems that cultural values as well as other national characteristics may potentially alter the perceived optimal equilibrium between (a) the scope of a firm's innovation strategy, (b) the degree of a sustainable approach to business as well as (c) the firm's economic performance to maintain business over time (Bollinger and Neukam, 2021). Considering that society requires the collective intelligence of various partners that collaborate in order to provide common solutions to global problems, I focused on the open innovation dynamics of Japanese actors.

During my stay, I obtained insights that will directly impact my current research on two levels: Data collection as well as the redaction of several research documents. Regarding data collection, I was, first, able to conduct 7 semi-structured interviews: 2 with industrial partners, 1 with a public actor in education, 1 academic partner, 1 expert on innovation, 1 expert for Japanese firms and 1 with a public institution for environmental issues. All interviews have been recorded, totally transcribed and revised. Second, I participated at CREATOYO through which I had the opportunity to do three company visits: Ricoh, The Global Village and Le Wagon. I also had another company visit with a public actor outside of CREATOYO. These company visits complete my data collection and provided me a very complete picture for my research on open innovation and sustainability

Besides data collection, I wrote several research reports to formalize the collected data. First, I wrote independent research reports for the two industrial partners I interviewed. These reports have been structured regarding their innovation capacity, their approach to SDGs as specific part of sustainability and their internationalization strategy. These reports have been sent back to them at the end of my stay to obtain their feedback on the collected material. I am optimistic to hear back from both of them soon. Second, I also wrote a horizontal case study report that summarizes the entire data collection in Japan. This case study report will serve as foundation for future publications on that topic. It will also be sent back after my stay at Toyo to the two experts on the field to check the coherence of the collected material. Third, I wrote a first parsimonious draft of a research paper about open innovation and sustainability in Japanese firms. This research paper will be completed and continued after my stay at Toyo University and will serve for publication in an internationally oriented research journal such as "International Business Review". The paper will be ready for submission to a journal before summer 2024. Fourth, I started to note further ideas for a second research paper that compares European with Asian firms on that matter. For this paper, however, additional data will have to be collected after my stay as we would require to adapt the collected material in Japan with the amount of collected material in France and in Germany, which is around 15 interviews per country. Thanks to the contacts I made during my stay, I am optimistic that this will be a reachable target. Further publications might be possible thanks to the collected data.