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RIKEN BSI, Toyota tie up for smarter cars

Integration of brain science and auto tech aims at intelligent human-machine interface

RIKEN's Brain Science Institute, Toyota Motor Corp. and the Toyota Research Center on Nov. 1 established the RIKEN BSI-Toyota Cooperation Center to promote collaborative research into the integration of neuroscience and industrial technology.

The idea behind the BTCC is that BSI and Toyota can better contribute to society by working together, bringing into reality new technologies by studying the mechanisms of the brain and applying their findings. Both should be able to enjoy a multiplier effect from cooperating in 'brain science and the integration of technology in the spirit of an intelligent machine system,' the joint venture said in a statement.

In particular, the tie-up will investigate ways to reduce accidents, with special focus on improving the fit of the human body to the machine and optimizing brain function.

Studies will focus on three broad fields - 'neuro driving,' or research into mental processes as drivers perceive and react to traffic conditions; 'neuro robotics,' which studies how the brain processes information; and 'the brain and health,' which examines the physiology of the brain and nervous system with special attention on the relationship between the brain and physical health.

RIKEN BSI, as it conducts world-leading basic research into neuroscience, tackles its subject strategically, focusing on the mechanisms of brain function. It sees applying its research results to benefit society as one of its core missions. For its part, Toyota, as a world leader in advanced manufacturing, is actively promoting greater cooperation of the individual and society via the car. The BTCC tie-up will help the two organizations construct a base for innovation with which they can develop 'intelligent machine systems' by applying their respective strengths.

The center's labs and other facilities will be housed at RIKEN's Bio-Mimetic Control Research Center in Nagoya, which is near Toyota's headquarters in the city of Toyota, Aichi Prefecture.



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