

## **Bilateral Core programme call of the Academy of Finland (AF) and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) in 2008 for supporting research in the field of ubiquitous information technology**

AF and JSPS support Finnish-Japanese collaboration between Centres of Excellence and other cutting-edge teams with a bilateral Core programme. The aim of the Core programme is to support the best Finnish-Japanese research projects within a predetermined theme. The theme for the 2008 Core programme call is ubiquitous information technology (Ubiquitous IT). Collaborative research projects in basic research with the topic Ubiquitous IT will be supported. The topic is also a programme activity, as AF is launching its Research Programme on Ubiquitous Computing and Diversity of Communication (MOTIVE) for the years 2009–2012. A clear synergy is seen when adding the future Core programme projects under the umbrella of the MOTIVE programme.

Ubiquitous computing, communications, and information retrieval are proliferating in every conceivable form. Technological development has multiplied the forms of communication. Communications has also altered the economy, the way we spend our time, and the opportunities for individual participation. The concept and vision of ubiquitous computing, as originally coined and developed by Mark Weiser<sup>1</sup>, is based on invisible computers embedded in the environment as well as on uses and applications made possible by new modes of interaction. The ubiquitous system automatically adapts to the user's behaviour and actions. The technology may be embedded in an intelligent environment that uses sensors or other devices to monitor and draw inferences about the user's actions and provide advice on how best to proceed with the task at hand.

Most research on ubiquity so far has focused on the aspect of technological development. However, there is a real need for human-centred ubiquitous computing as well. Ubiquitous technology affects our everyday life, our culture and society, and it should be developed on the basis of people's needs and desires.

The projects to be funded within the Core programme call for Ubiquitous IT shall **generate basic information and solutions based on it to serve as a foundation for realising ubiquitous citizen-centred information technologies.**

<sup>1</sup> Mark Weiser, "The computer for the 21st century". *Scientific American*, September 1991, 66–75.