

Shigeki Suwa, founding director of the Japanese KEK Laboratory, died on December 16, aged 77. After studying nuclear theory at Tokyo, Professor Suwa subsequently moved into the experimental field, initially measuring hyperfine structure and the magnetic moment of nuclei. When Tokyo's Institute of Nuclear Study (INS) was established and construction of the 160 cm cyclotron launched, he joined the team in 1953, taking responsibility for the radiofrequency system and inventing the efficient "n=1 extraction" scheme. In 1960 Suwa was invited to Minnesota for a project to accelerate polarized protons in a linac. After its successful completion, he began research in asymmetry measurements in polarized proton and nucleus scattering. Then he was invited to join the construction of Argonne's Zero Gradient Synchrotron (ZGS) and the development of a polarized proton target. Using one of his best polarized targets, Suwa's work on hadron spectroscopy became a role model for the field.

When the Japanese high energy community began preparations for its first proton synchrotron, he was called back to INS to lead the project. After a long period of negotiation with government and much technical R&D, as the head of the project he pushed the scheme through and KEK was established in 1971 with its 12 GeV proton synchrotron as major facility. The natural appointment as the new laboratory's first director, he oversaw the project during the entire construction period of the first KEK accelerator.

After deciding to retire as laboratory director in 1977, at the request of his successor, Tetsuji Nishikawa, he remained at KEK as physics department head, guiding the physics programme at the new accelerator.

His leadership was not confined to particle physics. In 1980 he was appointed director of the new PARMS Particle Radiation Medical Science Center of the University of Tsukuba, utilizing protons from the 12 GeV synchrotron's booster. With the new centre on the right track, he moved to the Science University of Tokyo in 1984 and devoted himself for many years to the education of young students.

*With unwavering resolution, Professor Suwa was one of the guiding lights who lifted the Japanese high energy physics community from obscurity following World War II to its present world position. Much as his diligent and persevering work was appreciated by his colleagues and students, his noble and unselfish spirit will be even more sorely missed.*