

1 . Target and KPI

Sendai Startup Ecosystem Acceleration Plan



Welcome to
SENDAI : Capital of Social Innovation

**Sendai Startup Ecosystem
Acceleration Council
Chairperson Kazuko Kohri
(Mayor of City of Sendai)**

We at the “Sendai Startup Ecosystem Acceleration Council“ would like to create a future in which many Social Innovators solve a variety of issues in Japan and abroad, balance business and sociality, and create a succession of startups that challenge the world from Sendai and Tohoku. We combine the various issues facing Tohoku, which are called “show case of contemporary social issues,” and the rich regional resources of this area to create highly economically efficient projects and revitalize Tohoku. In addition to revitalizing the local economy in Sendai and Tohoku, we aim to create a future where people living in Sendai and Tohoku can live richer by solving social issues.

The startup ecosystem in Sendai and Tohoku began immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. In the Great East Japan Earthquake, which was said to occur once in a millennium, there were figures of people trying to solve social issues with entrepreneurship with the philosophy of “for the community” and “for society.” In 2013, the City of Sendai was declared “Japan’s most startup-friendly city ” in order to foster the movement brought about by the earthquake. The Sendai Startup Support Center and one of the largest entrepreneurial events in the region, “SENDAI for Startups!”, started at this time. In 2015, Sendai City was designated as a Special Zone for Social Innovation and a Special Zone for Demonstrating the Future of Technology, and the first wide-area acceleration program in the entire Tohoku region was launched in 2017. Furthermore, Tohoku University and the business community have taken the lead in preparing various support measures to accelerate startup support.

The Sendai City Center Rebuilding Project has been launched to accelerate the accumulation of new startups, with the central area of Sendai City as the base, with several projects already having begun. The construction of the world’s first next-generation synchrotron radiation facility for industrial use, is built on the Aobayama campus of Tohoku University and the science park formed around it is also underway. This facility will produce startups that utilize the latest technology and serve as a base for innovation creation. We will further develop the International Industrial Promotion Agreement with Oulu, the Republic of Finland, where we have been deepening exchanges since 2005, further strengthen cooperation in events and programs on the theme of start-up support, and create an environment where startups can challenge the world from Tohoku.

The Sendai Startup Ecosystem Promotion Plan is not a “pie in the sky.” Students, youth and women, have begun to gather and become visible and realizable. Sendai’s startup ecosystem is about to blossom. Startup ecosystem initiatives have begun in a number of cities. However, Sendai City’s overwhelming strength is its ambition, which seeks to balance solving social and local issues with the feasibility of business, as well as the accumulation of state-of-the-art technologies and research seeds possessed by universities, etc. There are networks in the six prefectures of Tohoku and in Japan and overseas that can be deployed in areas with the above challenges. We are convinced that if the private sector, universities, and governments work together and build up this movement steadily, a number of world-changing startups will be created from Sendai and Tohoku. They will grow into a city where social innovators gather from around the world with the help of startups, industry, academia, and government. I would like to create a future where not just anyone living in Sendai and Tohoku, but one where people around the world can live healthily and happily.

1. Target and KPI



Makoto Kaiwa
Chairman of
Tohoku Economic Federation

“Our mission is to create value-added industries in Tohoku and Niigata. We will further strengthen cooperation through councils to promote the growth of local industries. 2020 is the tenth year since the Great East Japan Earthquake. We believe that startup ecosystem hub cities will be the impetus for this innovation.”



Hideo Ohno
President of Tohoku University

“We will create innovation through outstanding academic research, create new social value in partnerships with various sectors as a university together with society, and lead the transformation to open up the future. We aim to create 100 companies. The council will work together with stakeholders to form one of the country's leading ecosystems and to create an area where people who face challenges, especially young people, can live and work.”



Hidefumi Kobayashi
President of
The 77 Bank, Ltd.

“Fostering local industries is the mission of banks. As a financial institution rooted in the region, we want to create a powerful company that will drive the local economy and create new jobs. We will use the various functions and networks of banks as well as the financial side of things to strongly support the entrepreneurial challenge.”

1. Target and KPI

Sendai and Tohoku will create world-changing startups and become a city where social innovators gather from around the world

SENDAI : Capital of Social Innovation

In the Sendai and Tohoku regions, the number of entrepreneurs aiming to solve social issues has increased in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Sendai City's new opening rate is the second highest in government-designated cities *, expanding the base of entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, by utilizing the accumulation of industry-academia-government funds,
we will develop the startup ecosystem in Sendai and Tohoku,

and create startups that contribute to solving domestic and overseas issues

by utilizing the research results and technological seeds of universities from the advanced areas of issues, Tohoku.

300+

Startup creation
(2020-2024)



400+

Collaboration
with local
companies
(2020-2024)



100+

Global
collaboration
(2020-2024)



50+

Startup Visa
(2020-2024)



5 billion yen+

Funding
amount
(2024)



1+

Unicorn
company
(2024)



2. Organizations and Roles of each organization

Realization of social innovation
GOOD GROWTH

Fostering core startup companies
Nurturing many core startups in the region in various aspects such as job creation, human resource development, and industry-academia collaboration.

Domestic and foreign MOU signing municipality and Support organization

Growth support, matching support, attracting entrepreneurial personnel and start-ups, etc.

Startup creation and support
Support for commercialization of world-class research seeds owned by Tohoku University, etc., second establishment of local companies, support for new business expansion, implementation of entrepreneurship education.

**Financial institution
Venture capital**

77 Bank, etc.
Growth support, financing, venture investment, matching support, CFO personnel, etc.

Sendai Startup Ecosystem Acceleration Council
Comprehensive support by strengthening the industry-academia-government network

**University
R & D corporation
College of technology**

Tohoku University, etc.

**Companies
Economic organizations
Accelerators**

Tohoku Economic Federation, Sendai Keizai Doyukai, Sendai Chamber of Commerce MAKOTO, IMPACT Foundation Japan, etc.

Entrepreneurship education
Research results / technical seeds
Open innovation
CXO human resource development, etc.

Collaborative research, open innovation, Venture investment, growth support, Matching support, Hands-on support, entrepreneurial base, etc.

**User
Citizens**
Demonstration support, living lab, user interviews, etc.

**Public support organizations
Profession and Specialists**
Tohoku Headquarters, Organization for Small & Medium Enterprises and Regional Innovation
Sendai City Industrial Promotion Organization

**Government
Prefecture
Municipality**

Tohoku Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry, City of Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture

Entrepreneurship awareness, seminars, growth support, environmental improvement
Acceleration program, Support human resource development, etc.

Professional advice, entrepreneurship base, subsidy, market development, etc.

3. Leader of the Ecosystem building

MAKOTO Inc.

CEO Tomohiro Takei

There are business opportunities in the region that Tokyo entrepreneurs are not aware of. I want to create a world-class business from Tohoku and be able to say to people around the world, "It's time to give back." Create a strong business to protect your weaknesses. I want to make Tohoku the ideal home for such challengers.



ENRISE CORPORATION Inc.

CEO Katsuhiro Ago

In Sendai and Tohoku, there are many excellent young people with local love. We want to be a place to train engineers who are overwhelmingly lacking in rural areas, and to support those challenges in a way that gives them expertise. I hope that there will be businesses from Sendai and Tohoku that can aim for the world, not just the local region.



Sendai Development Commission Inc.

CEO Koichi Hongo

To make Sendai attractive, it is necessary to create an environment where various people can take on challenges. This is not an era when the government creates a city, but one where people who live in the city and who work there make the city. I want to create a Sendai-like entrepreneurial ecosystem together.



IMPACT Foundation Japan

CEO Takashi Takekawa

Entrepreneurs are born where there is a chance to innovate within "challenges" and when there is a sense of crisis. Sendai and Tohoku, which experienced the Great East Japan Earthquake, are the areas that satisfy both of these conditions more than anywhere else in Japan.



Sendai Keizai Doyukai

Entrepreneurship support chairman

Conno Print Inc. CEO Ryuichi Hashiura

Entrepreneurs are apt to dream, but from a manager's point of view, we want to create entrepreneurs who have both a dream and an abacus. I want to be an entrepreneur who offers various business advice.



NTT East Director and General Manager of Miyagi Business Division

Hiroshi Nakamura

Sendai will accelerate the formation of an ecosystem triggered by the installation of next-generation synchrotron radiation facilities. We want to create a mechanism to fully utilize the assets of the Group and connect them to new businesses, services, and products. The NTT Group wants to work on such town planning in Sendai.

