

# Guidance on the Implementation of the Business Startup Program for Foreign Nationals in the Sendai City National Strategic Special Zone

## 1. Program Objective

This Program aims to encourage foreign nationals to engage in business startup activities in Sendai City by allowing foreign nationals who fulfill landing examination standards for entrepreneurial foreign nationals to enter Japan, through procedures taken by Sendai City including its confirmation that such foreign nationals' business plans for business startup activities are reasonable and reliable.

## 2. Persons Eligible for the Program

Foreign nationals starting a new business in Sendai City are eligible for the program.

- In principle, foreign nationals currently in Japan with different statuses of residence may not use this program.

## 3. Eligible Businesses

Eligible businesses are those which are expected to strengthen the global competitiveness of industries of Sendai City and/or to promote job growth in the city, and which fall within the following industry sectors.

### (1) Knowledge-creating industry

(e.g. semiconductor-related businesses, software development, content production, robot-related businesses, etc.)

### (2) Industries related to health, medicine, public welfare, and education

(e.g. drug discovery venture businesses, medical technology development, regenerative medicine, development of welfare equipment, education-related businesses such as language education, etc.)

### (3) Industries related to environment, energy, and disaster prevention

(e.g. development of clean energy, next-generation power-storing technology, provision of products and services associated with disaster-prevention, etc.)

### (4) Industries related to trading and tourism

(e.g. businesses contributing to the development of sales channels of products made in Sendai City, businesses associated with attracting foreign tourists, etc.)

## 3. Program Process

### (1) Application for confirmation of business startup activities

#### A. Documents to be submitted

Sendai City confirms business startup activities.

For this confirmation, you must submit the following documents in accordance with the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Business Startup Program for Foreign Nationals in the Sendai City National Strategic Special Zone (hereafter, the "Guidelines").

Documents to be submitted at the time of application:

- (i) Application Form for Confirmation of Business Startup Activities (Appended Form No. 1)
- (ii) Plan for Business Startup Activities (Appended Form No. 1-2)
- (iii) Time Schedule of Business Startup Activities (Appended Form No. 1-3)
- (iv) Applicant's Resume (Appended Form No. 1-4)
- (v) Written Pledge (Appended Form No. 1-5)
- (vi) Documents clarifying where the applicant will be residing for six months after arrival in Japan (e.g. a copy of the lease contract)
- (vii) A copy of the applicant's passport
- (viii) Other necessary documents (e.g. a document showing the applicant's cash deposit balance, such as a copy of his/her bank passbook)

- The forms for documents (i) to (v) above can be downloaded from the following website.

URL : <http://www.city.sendai.jp/startup-sogyo/jigyosha/kezai/jigyosho/joho/startupvisa-english.html>

Please make sure that either of the following persons brings the application documents to the designated point of contact. Please also note that application documents will not be accepted by mail or any other method.

**Persons who may bring in application documents**

- (a) Applicant himself/herself
- (b) An attorney at law or certified administrative scrivener (*Gyoseishoshi*) who has notified, through the bar association or certified administrative scrivener association of the attorney at law or certified administrative scrivener, the director of the regional immigration bureau having jurisdiction over the area where such association is located. However, if the applicant is abroad, this person must be the one (or a staff member, in the case of a corporation) who has been entrusted by the applicant with the establishment of a place of business in Japan.
  - If application documents are to be submitted by a person falling under (b), please also submit documentation that shows the relationship between this person and the applying foreign national, and that verifies this person is in such position.

Please submit application documents to the following point of contact:

Corporate Support Desk, Startup Support Section, Innovation Promotion Department, Economic Affairs Bureau, Sendai City Government

- Address: 9th Floor, Sendai Park Building, 3-6-1, Kokubun-cho, Aoba-ku, Sendai 980-0803, Japan
  - E-mail: [sendai-startupvisa@city.sendai.jp](mailto:sendai-startupvisa@city.sendai.jp)
  - Telephone: 022-214-8278 (in Japanese)
  - Office hours: 09:00 to 17:00 on weekdays (closed on Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays, and any other non-business day of the Sendai City Government Office)
- \* Please let us know in advance that you are submitting an application.

**B. Confirmation of a plan for business startup activities**

Sendai City will confirm that the business startup activities applied for conform to each of the requirements provided in (a) to (d) of item (i) of Article 18 of the Order for Enforcement of the National Strategic Special Zone Act (hereafter, the “Enforcement Order”), after soliciting opinions of persons with knowledge of business management.

For instance, after soliciting opinions of professionals such as small and medium enterprise management consultants, Sendai City examines and confirms whether such business startup activities are suitable in terms of strengthening the global competitiveness of industries and developing a base for global economic activities in the national strategic special zone, and whether the business plan for such business startup activities is reasonable and reliable.

In the plan for business startup activities, you must state the type and contents of your business, specific plan details up to the commencement of business, the amount of funds required for starting up the business, and the methods of procuring such funds. Please prepare the plan using the prescribed form.

If the applicant is found to be an organized crime group member, or a similar party, falling under item (iii) of Article 2 of the Sendai City Ordinance for the Elimination of Organized Crime Groups (hereafter, an “Organized Crime Group Member, etc.”), his/her application cannot be accepted. If the applicant is found to be an Organized Crime Group Member, etc. after his/her application has been accepted, such acceptance will be revoked retrospectively.

(2) Issuance of the “Certificate of Confirmation of Business Startup Activities”

Upon finding that the application for confirmation of business startup activities is suitable and fulfills all the requirements prescribed in (a) to (d) of item (i) of Article 18 of the Enforcement Order (hereafter, the “requirements”), the Mayor of Sendai City will issue the “Certificate of Confirmation of Business Startup Activities” (Appended Form No. 2).

Place of issuance: Startup Support Section, Economic Affairs Bureau, Sendai City Government  
(9th Floor, Sendai Park Building, 3-6-1, Kokubun-cho, Aoba-ku, Sendai)

If it is found that your application is not in order or does not fulfill all or some of the requirements, the Mayor of Sendai City will issue (by mail) the “Notification of Result of Confirmation of Business Startup Activities” (Appended Form No. 3) to you, notifying that the “Certificate of Confirmation of Business Startup Activities” will not be issued.

(3) Application for issuance of a Certificate of Eligibility, and decision on the period of resident status

After you receive the “Certificate of Confirmation of Business Startup Activities,” please apply to the immigration bureau having jurisdiction over the area of your residence for issuance of a Certificate of Eligibility within three months, which is the validity period of the “Certificate of Confirmation of Business Startup Activities.”

(4) Implementation of business startup activities

After you are granted the “Business Manager” status of residence, please submit the Notice of Landing (Appended Form No. 7) to Sendai City within five days of your arrival in Japan, and engage in business startup activities during a period of within six months of your stay.

During the period in which you engage in business startup activities, you will be subject to at least three interviews to check on the progress of your plan for business startup activities. At such interviews, you may be asked to submit documents clarifying the progress of implementing your business startup activities\*.

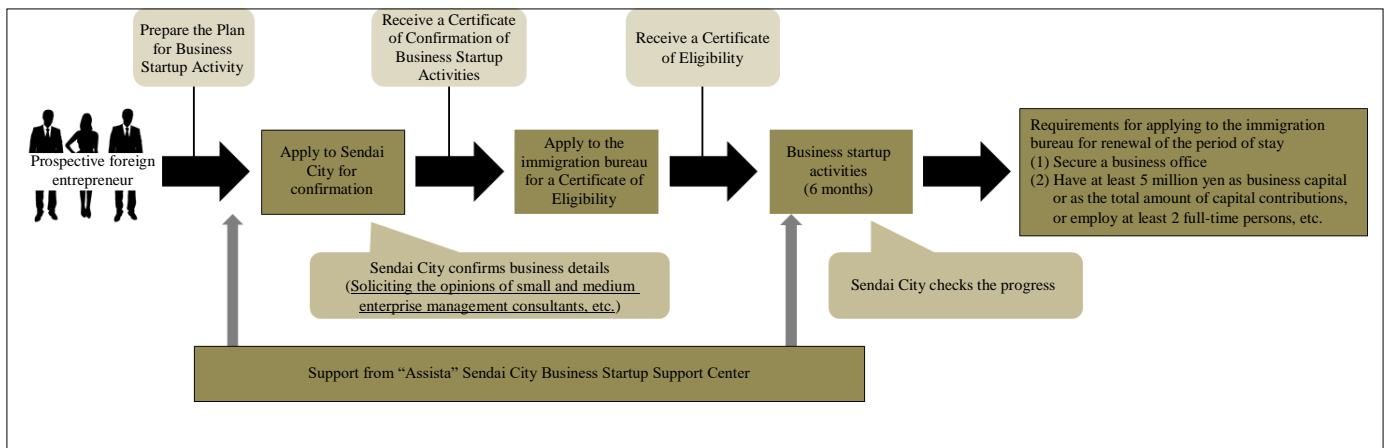
\* E.g.: Office lease contract, staff employment contracts, contracts with business partners, your savings deposit passbook, etc.

You can consult with “Assista” Sendai Startup Support Center, if you have any problems concerning your business while engaging in business startup activities. Please contact the Startup Support Section, Economic Affairs Bureau, Sendai City Government to make an appointment for a consultation.

(5) Renewal of the period of stay

After arrival in Japan, if you are going to continue staying in Japan beyond the six-month period of stay to manage your business, you must complete applicable procedures for renewing the period of stay at the regional immigration bureau having jurisdiction over the area of your residence.

If it becomes difficult for you to continue your business startup activities during the six-month period of stay, or if you are not permitted to renew your period of stay under the “Business Manager” status of residence, you will be required to return to your original country. Please make sure to keep enough money to return to your country (equivalent to a one-way airfare to your country) separate from the funds for your business.



#### 4. Changes in Application Details

If there is any change in the details of the application for confirmation of business startup activities to Sendai City after the application has been made, please submit the following documents to the application desk immediately.

Documents to be submitted:

- (i) Notice of Change (Appended Form No. 1-6)
- (ii) Documents confirming the changed matter (e.g. the latest version of documents initially submitted at the time of applying for confirmation)

Reference: case of change in the details of the application for confirmation of business startup activities (example)

- Change in the applicant's address, contact details, etc. in Japan

#### 5. Revocation of the Confirmation of Business Startup Activities

If, during the period from the day of issuance of the "Certificate of Confirmation of Business Startup Activities" to the completion of procedures for renewing the "Business Manager" status of residence, the recipient of such certificate falls under any of the following items, the certificate may be revoked.

- (i) It is found that the relevant confirmation of business startup activities was issued on the basis of a false application, submission of documents with false statements, or other fraudulent acts.
- (ii) The applicant is found to be an Organized Crime Group Member, etc.
- (iii) At the time of, for example, checking the progress of the plan for business startup activities, Sendai City's request for explanations, submission of documents, or other necessary action is not met without justifiable reason.

Please note that the issued certificate must be returned immediately, if the confirmation of business startup activities is revoked and upon issuance of the "Notification of Revocation of Confirmation of Business Startup Activities" (Appended Form No. 5).