



NEWS RELEASE

Digital Garage Begins Support for Startups in Fukuoka Region in Cooperation with the Fukuoka Directive Council

~Support will range from establishment of new companies to assistance with global expansion~

Digital Garage, Inc. (TSE first section: 4819; HQ: Tokyo; Representative Director, President Executive Officer and Group CEO: Kaoru Hayashi; DG) and the Fukuoka Directive Council (Chairman: Yutaka Aso) have agreed to begin support for startups in the city of Fukuoka. DG and FDC will cooperate as part of the FDC Launch Program (FLAP) which began in September 2017, with DG organizing entrepreneurial education activities and operational support for startup companies in the Fukuoka region, as well as contributing to employment and economic development in the regional economy.

In May 2014, Fukuoka City was named as a National Strategic Special Zone for Global Startups & Job Creation. Since then, they have proactively encouraged creation of startups. In October of the same year, a “startup cafe” was opened within the city where persons interested in founding a corporation can seek advice and meet others. Due to these efforts, the region now has one of the highest ratios of startup creation in Japan (7.04% as of 2015, ranking number one* among Japan’s 21 major cities). In addition, the “Tenjin Big Bang” project in the city’s Tenjin district will continue until 2024, focusing on the creation of Fukuoka-based corporations, as well as the attraction of other corporations to the area.

With operation of projects such as the co-working space DG717 in San Francisco and the Open Network Lab accelerator program, DG possesses the experience and know-how to support startup companies, while also holding a rich network of investors both in and outside of Japan. DG will use its know-how and success in supporting startups worldwide to work with FDC and begin the following initiatives in Fukuoka City:

- Establish of an accelerator program that will link Fukuoka startups with global corporations.
- Work with startups through the R&D open innovation organization DG Lab (<http://www.dglab.com/>) to hold experiments demonstrating cutting edge technology in the fields of Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence, VR/AR, Security, and Biotechnology.
- Cooperation with the venture capital firm DG Daiwa Ventures.

As a first step in these activities, a conference entitled “The Present and Future of Fukuoka Fintech” will take place on October 3rd (Tue) at Fukuoka Growth Next (2-6-11 Daimyo Chuo-ku, Fukuoka-city, Fukuoka <https://growth-next.com/>). The conference is an opportunity for large corporations and startups to deepen understanding of fintech business initiatives and blockchain, a technology that has recently drawn attention as the core technology behind Bitcoin.

[Event Details]

Date: October 3, 2017 (Tue) 6 PM - 8 PM

Location: Fukuoka Growth Next (<https://growth-next.com/>)

Theme: The Present and Future of Fukuoka Fintech (tentative title)

Organizers: Fukuoka City/Fukuoka Directive Council/Digital Garage Inc.



Digital Garage



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Participation Fee: Free of charge

Speakers: To be announced

Beyond the above activities, DG will work with FDC from multiple perspectives to explore and grow the entrepreneurial culture of Fukuoka City.

*Source: Fukuoka Asian Urban Research Center, "Fukuoka Growth July 2016" http://urc.or.jp/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/FukuokaGrowth2016_07.pdf