

Hiroshima Prefecture Foreign Entrepreneurship Activity Promotion Project: Application Guide

1. Purpose of the Project

The Foreign Entrepreneurship Activity Promotion Project (hereinafter referred to as the "Startup Visa") is a system designed to strengthen the international competitiveness of Japan's industries and establish hubs for international economic activities.

Based on the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) Public Notice Concerning the Foreign Entrepreneurship Activity Promotion Project (METI Public Notice No. 256 of 2018; hereinafter referred to as the "Public Notice"), Hiroshima Prefecture has formulated a Foreign Entrepreneurship Activity Management Support Plan and received certification as a "Foreign Entrepreneurship Promotion Implementing Body."

By utilizing this system, foreign nationals aiming to start a business within Hiroshima Prefecture are granted permission to reside in Japan for the purpose of business preparation.

2. Target Applicants

Foreign nationals who intend to start a new business within Hiroshima Prefecture.

3. Eligible Business Fields

- ① Sectors leveraging industry clusters in automobiles, general machinery, steel and metal products, electrical appliances, semiconductors, and related industries.
- ② Sectors leveraging the prefecture's strengths, such as automotive industry technologies, in the health and medical sectors.
- ③ Environment and energy (environmental business) sectors utilizing environmental technologies and carbon recycling technologies.
- ④ Digital sectors utilizing industry-academia-government collaboration initiatives originating from manufacturing technologies such as the automotive industry.
- ⑤ New tourism sectors maximizing a wide range of tourism resources, such as the picturesque archipelagos of the Seto Inland Sea, seafood, and culinary assets like citrus fruits.
- ⑥ Sports sectors utilizing sports resources, such as the rich natural environment and professional sports teams.
- ⑦ Any other business fields deemed appropriate by the Governor of Hiroshima Prefecture.

3. Workflow of the Project

(1) Application for Confirmation of Startup Preparation Activities

Hiroshima Prefecture will verify and confirm startup preparation activities in accordance with the Hiroshima Prefecture Foreign Entrepreneurship Activity Promotion Project Implementation Guidelines (hereinafter referred to as the "Guidelines").

A. Submission Method

Documents to be Submitted at the Time of Application:

Foreign nationals seeking to apply for confirmation of their startup preparation activity plan (hereinafter referred to as the "Applicant") must submit an Application for Confirmation of Startup Preparation Activities (Form No. 1) along with the following attached documents:

- ① Startup Preparation Activity Plan (a document detailing the startup preparation activity plan stipulated in Public Notice, Article 5, Paragraph 4) (Form No. 1-2)
- ② Applicant's Resume/Curriculum Vitae (Form No. 1-3)
- ③ Written Pledge Regarding Compliance with the Hiroshima Prefecture Foreign Entrepreneurship Activity Promotion Project Implementation Guidelines, etc. (Form No. 1-4)
- ④ Documents clarifying the Applicant's place of residence for one year following entry into Japan or change of status of residence
- ⑤ Documents clarifying the Applicant's living expenses for one year following entry into Japan or change of status of residence
- ⑥ Documents verifying that the Applicant falls under either sub-item (a) or (b) of Public Notice, Article 5, Paragraph 6, Item (1), Sub-item ⑤
- ⑦ A copy of the Applicant's passport
- ⑧ In addition to the documents listed in the preceding items, any other documents deemed necessary by the Governor

※ At the Time of Application for Renewal Confirmation:

Those wishing to apply for confirmation of the renewal of their startup preparation activity plan must submit an Application for Confirmation of Startup Preparation Activities (For Renewal) (Form No. 2) along with the following attached documents:

- ① Startup Preparation Activity Plan (For Renewal) (a startup preparation activity plan detailing the matters set forth in Public Notice, Article 5, Paragraph 5, Item (1)) (Form No. 2-2)
- ② Documents clarifying the Applicant's place of residence for the six months following the renewal of the period of stay
- ③ Documents clarifying the Applicant's living expenses for the six months following the renewal of the status of residence
- ④ In addition to the documents listed in the preceding items, any other documents deemed necessary by the Governor

The formats for the submission documents can be downloaded from the following Hiroshima Prefecture website:

<http://www/site/innovation-archive/hiroshima-startupvisa.html>

Submission Method:

When submitting documents, either of the following persons (① or ②) must bring them directly to the <Submission Destination>.

Please note that submissions by mail or other remote methods are not accepted.

① The Applicant in person.

② An attorney (Bengoshi) or administrative scrivener (Gyōseishoshi) who has notified the Hiroshima Regional Immigration Services Bureau through their respective bar association or administrative scriveners association. However, if the Applicant is currently outside of Japan, the person may be someone commissioned by the Applicant to establish a business office in Japan (if the agent is a corporation, an employee thereof).

*If person ② is submitting the documents, please submit materials clarifying their relationship with the foreign national, as well as documentation proving their professional standing.

<Submission Destination>

Innovation Promotion Team, Commerce, Labor and Industry Bureau, Hiroshima Prefecture

Address: 2nd Floor, East Building, Hiroshima Prefectural Government, 10-52 Motomachi, Naka-ku, Hiroshima City, Hiroshima Prefecture 730-8511

E-mail: syo-innovkan@pref.hiroshima.lg.jp

Phone: 082-513-3353

Office Hours: 8:30 AM to 5:15 PM (Closed on Saturdays, Sundays, national holidays, and the New Year holiday period)

B. Confirmation of Startup Preparation Activities

Hiroshima Prefecture will confirm whether the applied-for startup preparation activities fall under either Article 5, Paragraph 6, Item (1) or (2) of the Public Notice, after seeking the opinions of individuals possessing expertise in business startup and management.

For example, examinations and confirmations will be conducted after consulting with Small and Medium Enterprise Management Consultants or similar experts to determine whether the startup preparation activities align with the purpose of the Startup Visa, and whether the business plan pertaining to said activities is appropriate and feasible.

The Startup Preparation Activity Plan requires details such as the type and content of the business, a specific timeline leading up to the commencement of business, and the amount of capital required to conduct the startup preparation activities along with its procurement method. Therefore, please ensure it is prepared in accordance with the prescribed formats.

(2) Issuance of the "Certificate of Confirmation of Startup Preparation Activity Plan"

When an application for confirmation of startup preparation activities is deemed appropriate and the activities are recognized as meeting the requirements under Article 5, Paragraph 6, Item (1) or (2) of

the Public Notice, Hiroshima Prefecture will issue a Certificate of Confirmation of Startup Preparation Activity Plan (Form No. 4; hereinafter referred to as the "Certificate of Confirmation") or a Certificate of Confirmation of Startup Preparation Activity Plan (For Renewal) (Form No. 4-3; hereinafter referred to as the "Renewal Certificate of Confirmation").

<Issuance Location>

Innovation Promotion Team, Commerce, Labor and Industry Bureau, Hiroshima Prefecture
(2nd Floor, East Building, Hiroshima Prefectural Government, 10-52 Motomachi, Naka-ku,
Hiroshima City, Hiroshima Prefecture)

Please note that if the application contains deficiencies or is deemed not to satisfy all or part of the relevant requirements, Hiroshima Prefecture will notify the applicant that the Certificate of Confirmation (or Renewal Certificate of Confirmation) will not be issued.

(3) Acquisition (or Renewal) of Status of Residence and Reporting of Residence Status

Recipients of the Certificate of Confirmation (or Renewal Certificate of Confirmation) must apply for the issuance of a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) at the Hiroshima Regional Immigration Services Bureau within the 3-month validity period of the certificate.

After receiving the official decision granting (or renewing) the "Designated Activities" status of residence, the applicant must promptly report this to Hiroshima Prefecture by submitting the Report on Acquisition (Renewal) of the "Designated Activities" Status of Residence (Form No. 5).

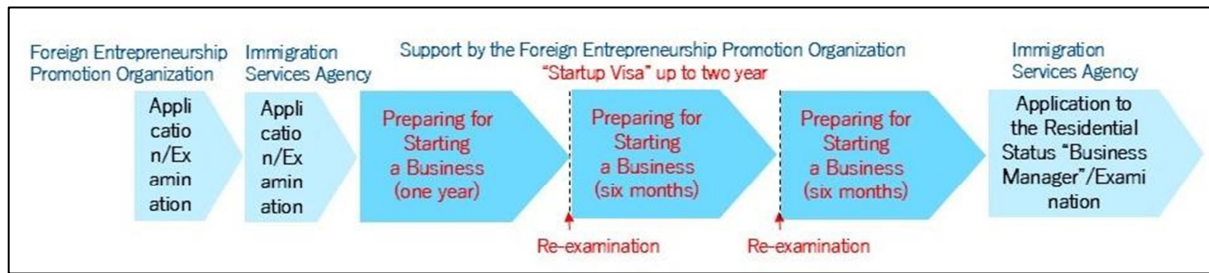
(4) Startup Preparation Activities

Those who have received the decision granting (or renewing) the "Designated Activities" status of residence must report to Hiroshima Prefecture promptly after landing in Japan (or, for those who already hold a different status of residence, promptly after permission to change to the "Designated Activities" status has been granted).

During the startup preparation period, you will be required to participate in an interview (ⓧ) with Hiroshima Prefecture once a month to verify the progress of your startup preparation activities. At that time, you may be requested to submit documentation providing clear evidence of your activities, such as office lease agreements, employee hiring contracts, business partner contracts, and bank account passbooks.

(ⓧ) Experts with specialized knowledge in startup and business management, such as Small and Medium Enterprise Consultants, may also be present during these interviews.

<Overall Process Workflow>



4. Changes to Application Details

If any changes occur in the details of your application after submitting the application for confirmation of startup preparation activities to Hiroshima Prefecture, please promptly submit the following documents to Hiroshima Prefecture. (e.g., when the Applicant's residence in Japan, contact information, etc., changes)

<Documents to be Submitted>

Notification of Change (Form No. 3)

Please attach documentation confirming the details of the change (e.g., the latest version of the materials submitted at the time of the confirmation application).

5. Revocation of Startup Preparation Activity Plan Confirmation

If a recipient of the Certificate of Confirmation (or Renewal Certificate of Confirmation) falls under any of the following circumstances during their startup preparation activities, the issuance of the certificate may be revoked:

- (1) When it is discovered that the confirmation was obtained through a false application, other fraudulent acts, or submitted documents containing misrepresentations.
- (2) When it is discovered that the Startup Preparation Activity Plan is not being implemented, and there is no prospect of launching the business.
- (3) When it becomes impossible to continue the Startup Preparation Activity Plan.
- (4) When the Startup Preparation Activity Plan (including modified details notified under Article 4, Paragraph 3) clearly ceases to satisfy either Item (1) or Item (2) of Public Notice, Article 5, Paragraph 6.
- (5) When the recipient refuses to cooperate with surveys or inquiries regarding progress verification of the Startup Preparation Activity Plan without justifiable grounds.

Please note that if the confirmation of the Startup Preparation Activity Plan is revoked, a Notice of Revocation of Startup Preparation Activity Plan Confirmation (Form No. 6) will be issued, and the recipient must immediately return the issued Certificate of Confirmation.