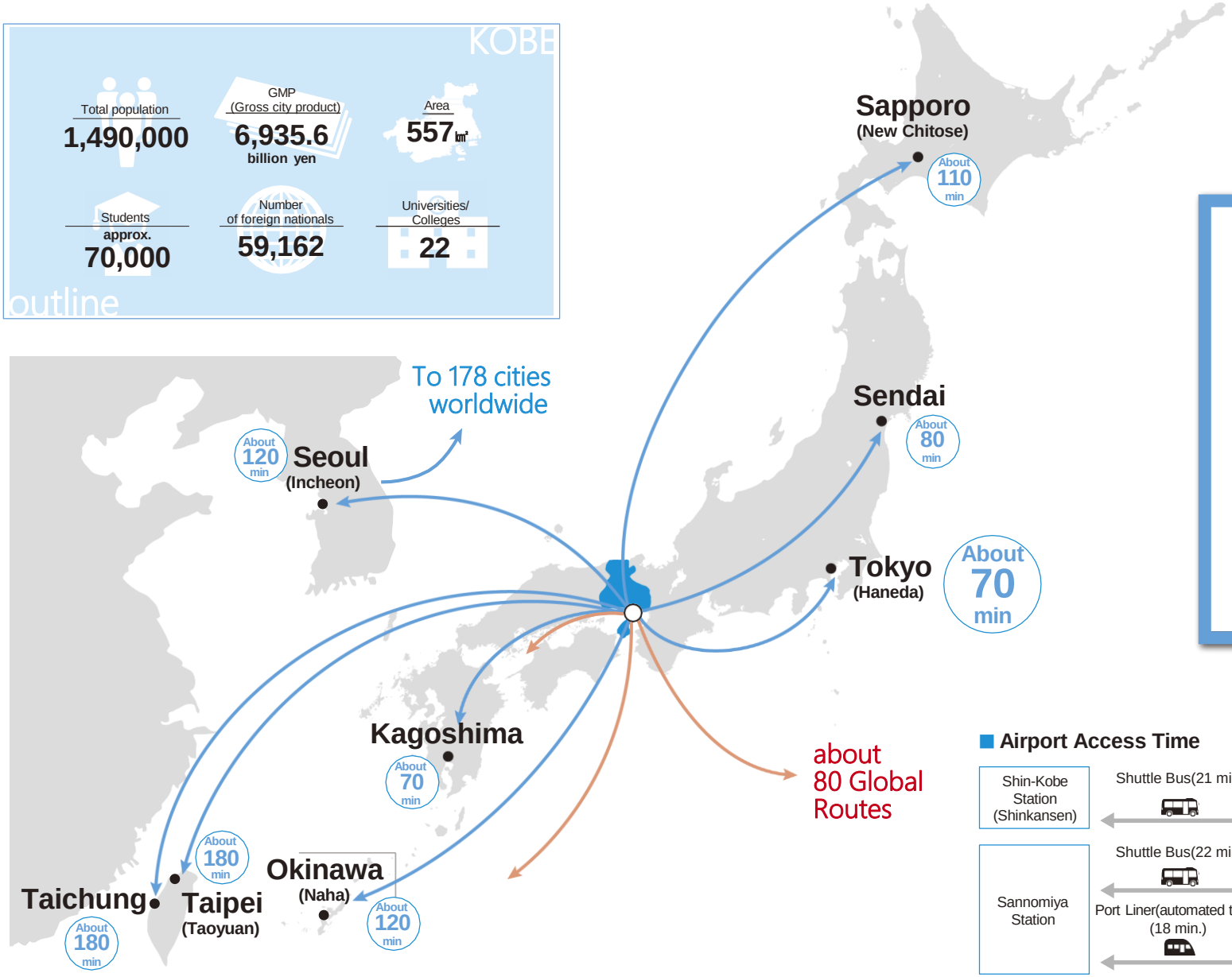
Discover opportunity in Kobe

KOBE CITY of DESIGN unesco Member of the Creative Cities Network

1 About Kobe



Easy Access
to Major Japanese Cities

By land — **Rapid bullet train (Shinkansen)**

Fukuoka 135 min. — Hiroshima 70 min. — Kobe — Nagoya 65 min. — Tokyo 170 min.

Local lines

Kobe — Osaka 20 min. — Kyoto 50 min.

Airport Access Time

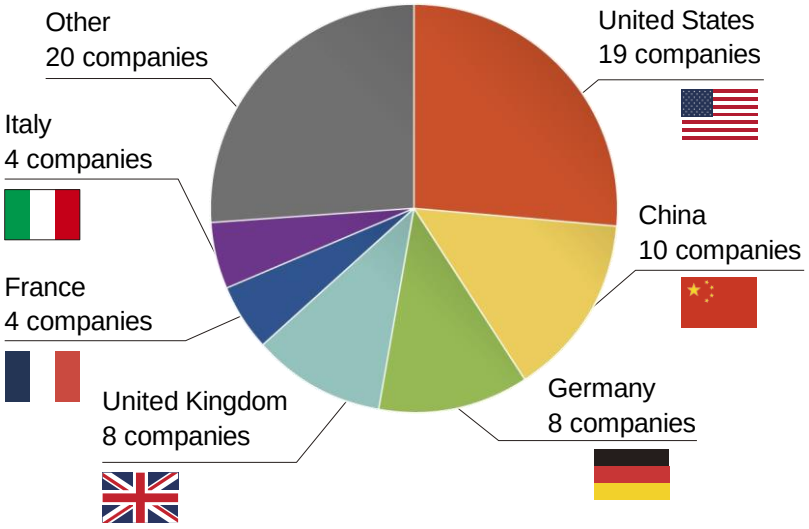
Shin-Kobe Station (Shinkansen)	Shuttle Bus(21 min.)	Kobe Airport	Kobe Bay Shuttle (high-speed ferry) (30 min.)	Kansai International Airport(KIX)
Sannomiya Station	Shuttle Bus(22 min.) / Port Liner(automated train) (18 min.)			

“2 Home for Global Businesses

Foreign-affiliated companies with head offices in Kobe

73 companies (4th in Japan)

Source: Toyo Keizai Inc. “2025 the List of Foreign Affiliated Companies”



Foreign-affiliated companies, with branch offices and factories

About **410** companies

Source: Kobe City

P&G

ネスレ Nestlé Good Food, Good Life

Lilly

Boehringer Ingelheim

AIRBUS

umicore shokubai

KEYSIGHT TECHNOLOGIES

ABB

LJUNGSTRÖM ARVOS GROUP

Miele

fives Industry can do it

SIEMENS Healthineers

GADELIUS Established in Japan, 1907

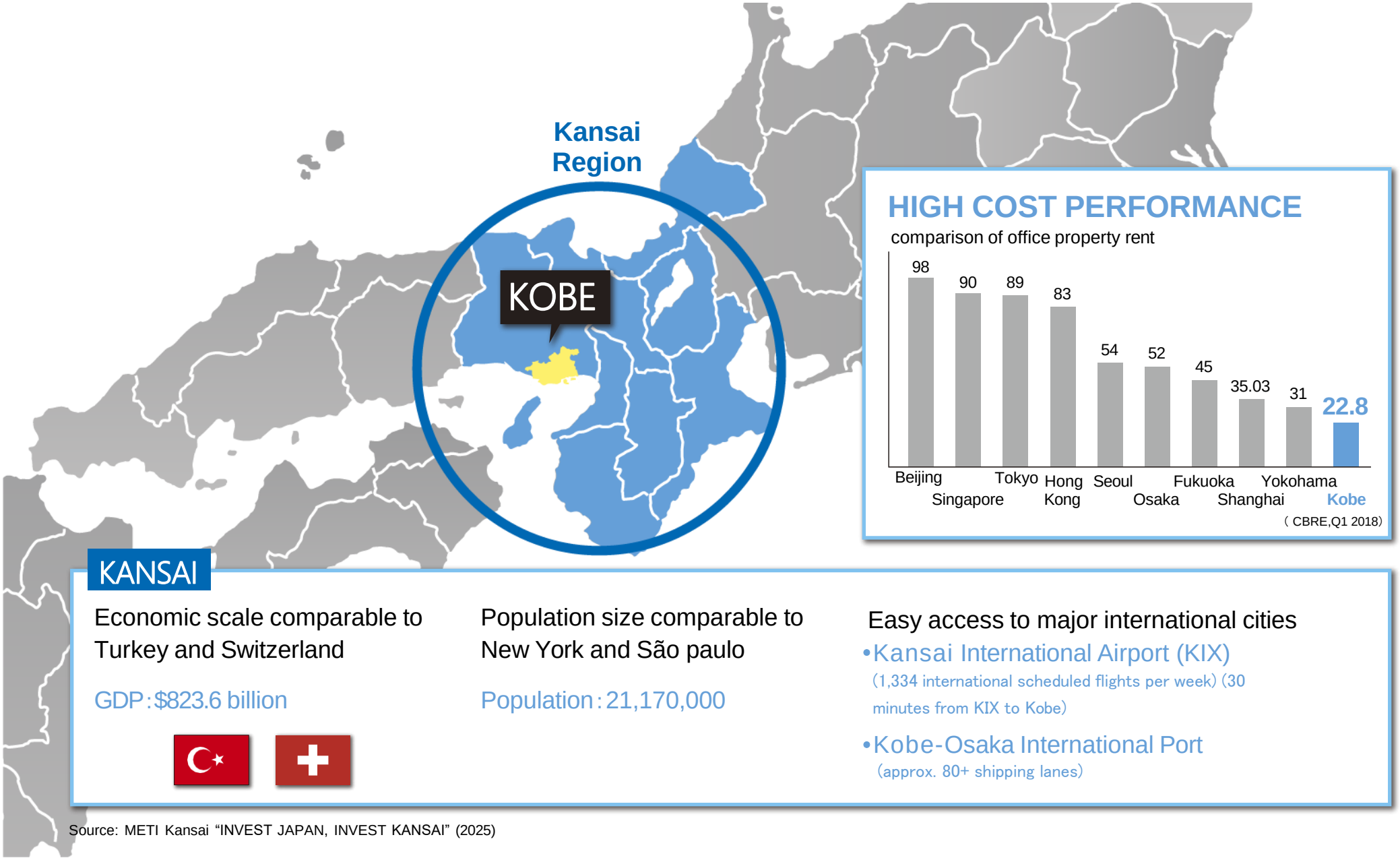
Made for Motion KTR

BOLLFILTER Protection Systems

HIWIN

pp møbler

“3 Strategic Business Location in Asia



HIGH COST PERFORMANCE

comparison of office property rent

(CBRE,Q1 2018)

KANSAI

Economic scale comparable to Turkey and Switzerland

GDP：$823.6 billion

Population size comparable to New York and São paulo

Population：21,170,000

Easy access to major international cities

- Kansai International Airport (KIX)
  (1,334 international scheduled flights per week) (30 minutes from KIX to Kobe)
- Kobe-Osaka International Port
  (approx. 80+ shipping lanes)

Source: METI Kansai “INVEST JAPAN, INVEST KANSAI” (2025)

“4 Industries in Kobe City, Kansai Area

1 Environmental industry, including lithium-ion batteries and hydrogen

・Kawasaki Heavy Industries
・Kobe Steel ・Iwatani ・Panasonic
・Kyocera ・Sumitomo Electric

2 Pharmaceutical industry

・Eli Lilly ・Bayer ・Sumitomo Pharma
・Sysmex ・Takeda Pharmaceutical
・Boehringer Ingelheim ・Eisai

3 Electronic devices

・Panasonic ・Mitsubishi Electric
・Murata Manufacturing ・Shimadzu
・Horiba ・Sysmex

4 Railway cars

・Kawasaki Heavy Industries
・Kinki Sharyo
・Alna Sharyo

5 Steel･Shipbuilding

・Kobe Steel ・Nippon Steel ・IHI Corporation
・Kawasaki Heavy Industries
・Mitsubishi Heavy Industries

6 Aviation･Aerospace

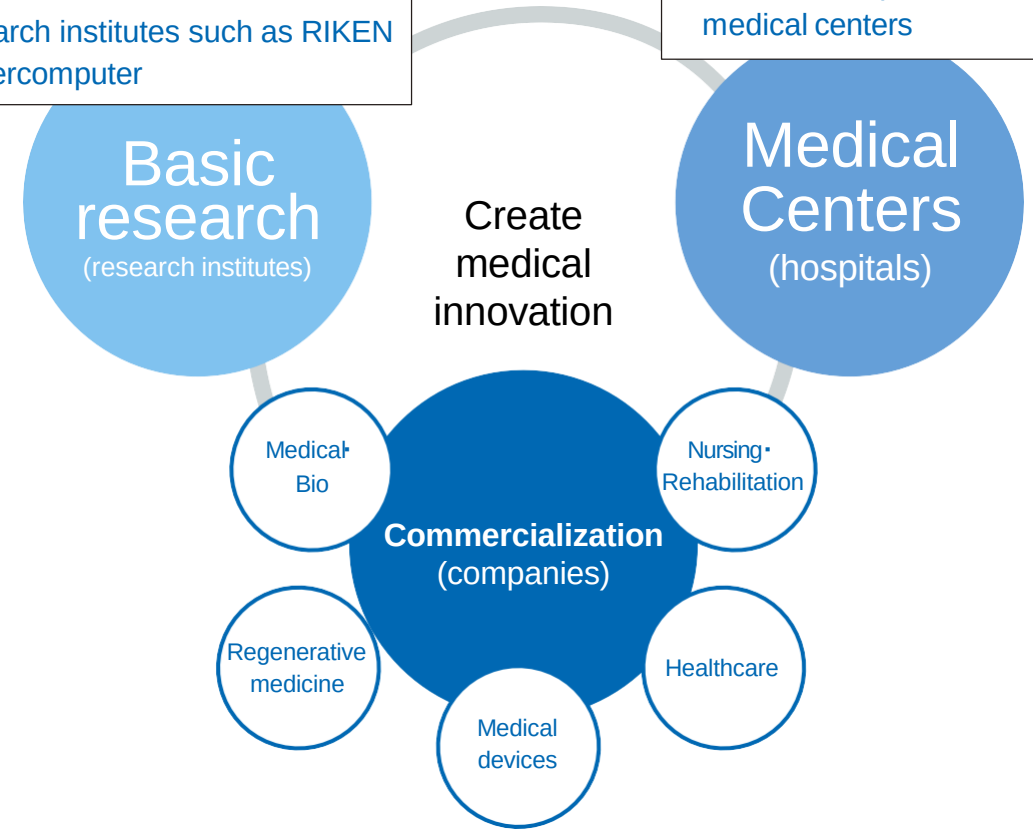
・Kawasaki Heavy Industries ・Kobe Steel
・Mitsubishi Heavy Industries ・ShinMaywa
・Sumitomo Precision Products
・Airbus Helicopters Japan

“5 Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster

Asia’s Top Biomedical Cluster

- State-of-the-art research institutes such as RIKEN
- Supercomputer

- 8 advanced specialized medical centers



Number of companies and organizations at KBIC

about **340**

Number of employees

about **12,700**

(As of March, 2023)

List of foreign-affiliated companies

United States
- Nihon Medi-Physics
- Johnson & Johnson
- Progenicyte Japan
- Simco Japan
- IQVIA Services Japan
- Integra Japan
- NEI Japan
- Vector Builder Japan
- Edwards Lifesciences Limited
- TWIST BIOSCIENCE

Germany
- Nippon Boehringer Ingelheim
- provitro AG
- Dürr Dental Japan K.K.
- Siemens Japan K.K.

France
- Texcell Japan

Switzerland
- SKAN JAPAN
- Electrosuisse Japan
- Sucampo Pharmaceuticals

United Kingdom
- Spectris
- IMI Critical Engineering Japan

Belgium
- IBP Technologies

Spain
- Igenomix Japan

China
- BGI JAPAN
- INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR MEDICAL INNOVATION CO.,LTD
- HONDO INNOVATION CENTER CO.,LTD.
- O and R

Hong Kong
- AILSI

Taiwan
- Alley Pin

Korea
- Dexcowin Japan
- Celltrion

Singapore
- Access-2-Healthcare Japan

“6 Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster

Full Business Support

Foundation for Biomedical Research and Innovation (FBRI)
Supported by 10+ coordinators

- Commercialization support
- Business matching support
- Medical institution collaboration support

Regulatory Affairs & PMDA Consultations

- The only biomedical innovation cluster in Japan to have PMDA (Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency) consultation services
- Dedicated coordinators provide assistance and advice on procedures and questions

Revolutionary Achievements of Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster

World’s first iPS cell-based transplant surgery

The world’s first-ever transplant of retinal cells derived from iPS cells to a patient with “age-related macular degeneration,” was performed in Kobe in 2014.

(Image: Dr. Masayo Takahashi, President of Vision Care Inc.)

Surgical Support Robot

A surgical support robot "hinotori ™surgical robot system" was released in 2020.
(Image: Medicaroid Corporation)

World’s First Pulp Regenerative Treatment

Dental nerve regeneration by using tooth cells derived from orthodontically unnecessary teeth such as wisdom teeth
(Image: Aeras Bio Inc. of Air Water Group)

“7 Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster

Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster (KBIC) is Japan’s largest biomedical cluster, developed by the City of Kobe since 1998 through close collaboration among industry, academia, and medical institutions. Located on Port Island, KBIC brings together cutting-edge research institutes, advanced hospitals, and biomedical and healthcare companies within a compact area, enabling rapid collaboration and innovation.

TOTAL 19 facilities as of April,2026

Creative Lab for Innovation in Kobe (CLIK)

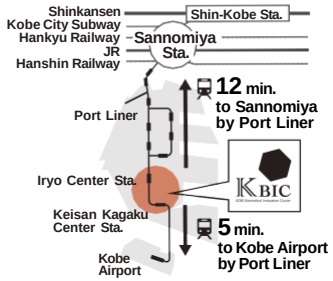
Kobe Medical Device Development Center (MEDDEC)

Integrated Research Center of Kobe University (Bio-Manufacturing Building)

MedTech Innovation Center Kobe (MIC), Kobe University Graduate Research School of Medicine

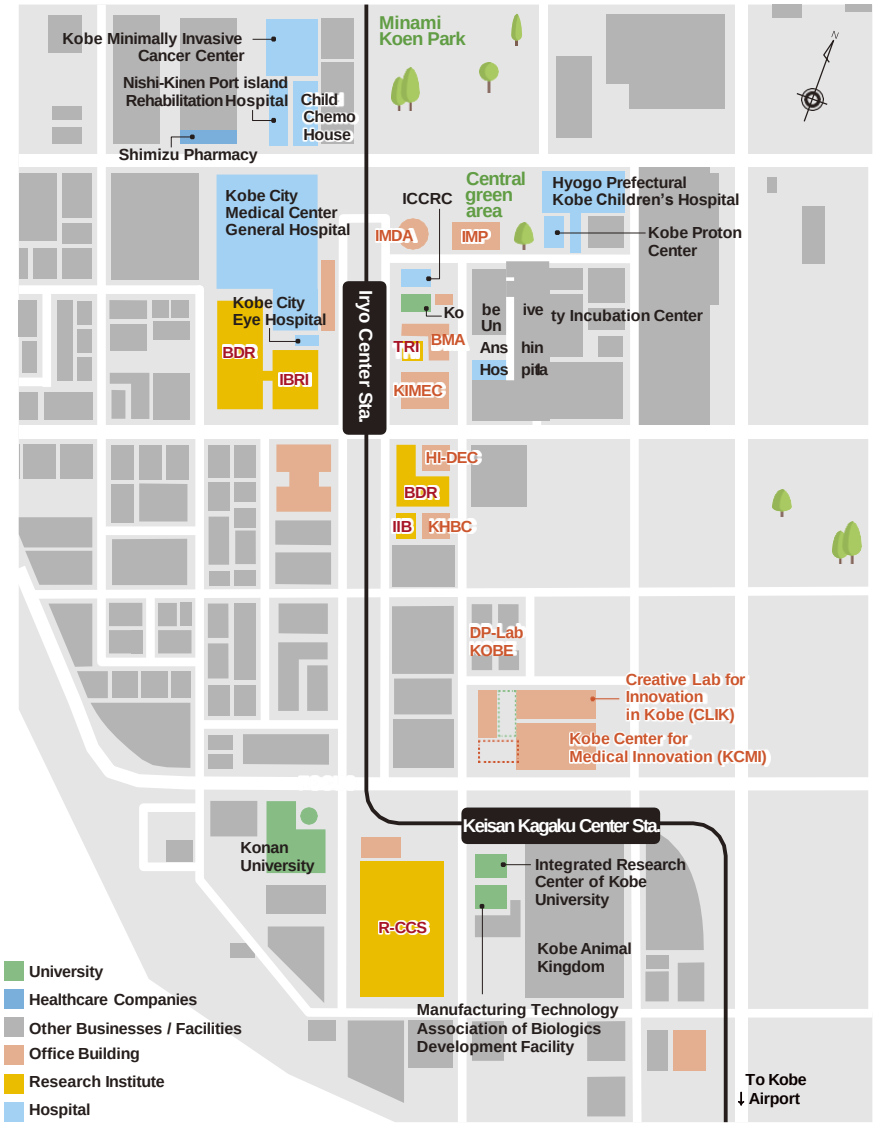
Easy Access

KOBE Port Island



Well Connected Locally and Globally

downtown Sannomiya	Shin-Kobe Station(Shinkansen)
12 min. (direct)	Approx.30 min. (one transfer)
Kobe Airport	**Tokyo (Haneda Airport)**
5 min. (direct)	Approx.70 min. (direct)



“8 Hydrogen Smart City Kobe Initiative

Hydrogen Smart City Initiative

Aims to achieve a decarbonized society through a hydrogen cluster, in collaboration with individuals and businesses.

Main Initiatives

- Promotion of hydrogen mobility
- Support for the development of hydrogen stations
- Development of new hydrogen energy utilization technologies
- Entry of local SMEs into the hydrogen industry
- Carbon neutrality in various industries

Achievements

2014 Launch of Hydrogen Project Initiatives

2015 The world’s first demonstration projects
(Hydrogen CGS, World’s first Liquid Hydrogen Supply Chain establishment)

2022 Establishment of the world’s first Liquefied Hydrogen Supply Chain

Demonstration Project for the Development of a Hydrogen Energy Utilization System (CGS)

- Gas turbine power generation using hydrogen fuel to supply electricity and heat
- The electricity and heat generated will be supplied to Kobe City-related facilities

Provided by Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd., NEDO subsidy project
Conducted by Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd., Obayashi Corporation

Establishment Demonstration Project for Hydrogen Supply Chain

An ongoing demonstration project to transport liquefied hydrogen by sea between Australia and Kobe, and unload it at the port

Provided by HySTRA, NEDO subsidy project
*NEDO: New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization

“9 Hydrogen Smart City Kobe Initiative

Hydrogen Stations

- Three Hydrogen Stations established in the city
- Hydrogen stations are in operation; one urban-style station and the other station is accessible to commercial vehicles as well

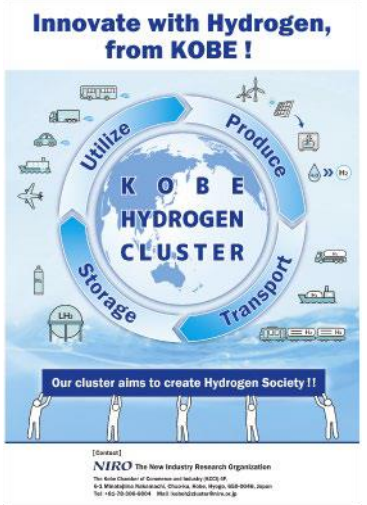
Provided by Air Liquid Japan

New Training Center to be a Hydrogen Energy Dissemination Base (Iwatani Corporation)

- A center for the realization of a decarbonized society through the use of hydrogen
- Aims to develop diverse human resources to promote the hydrogen energy business

Kobe Hydrogen Cluster

30+ SMEs that are aiming to enter the hydrogen industry, are engaged in research and product development in collaboration with each other and with universities and other academic institutions.



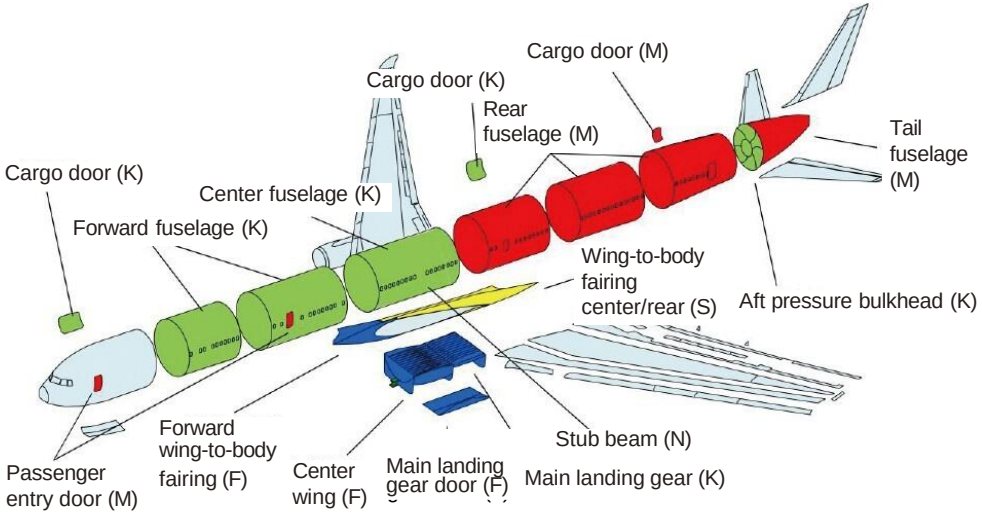
Activities

Workshops	Hold seminars 4 to 5 times annually by inviting hydrogen experts
Site Tours	Offer tours of state-of-the-art hydrogen demonstration facilities and research institutes
Consortium Activities	Develop new products by combining the areas of expertise of participating companies
PR Activities	Participate in exhibitions and publicize activities in professional journals

“10 Aerospace Industry

Kobe, home to aircraft manufacturers and top aero engine suppliers, plays a significant role in the aerospace industry. With one aircraft comprising up to three million components, ensuring high safety and technical standards is crucial. Companies in the city meet these stringent requirements.

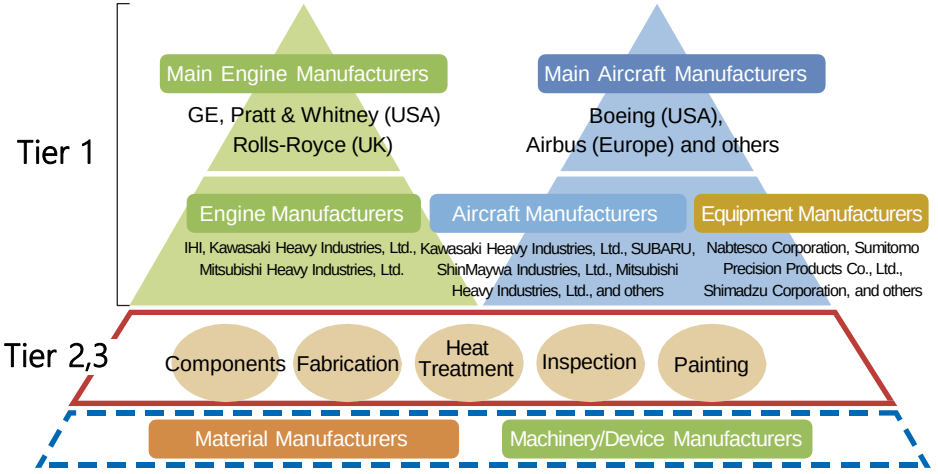
Aircraft Parts



- :Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. (M) (Rear fuselage, Tail fuselage, Passenger entry door)
- :Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. (K) (Forward fuselage, Center fuselage, Cargo door, Aft pressure bulkhead)
- :SUBARU (F) (Center wing, Main landing gear door, Wing-to-body fairing (forward))
- :ShinMaywa Industries, Ltd. (S) (Wing-to-body fairing (center/rear))
- :Nippon Corp. (N) (Center fuselage components)

Source: Japan Aircraft Development Corporation

Aircraft Supply Chain Structure



Kobe Steel, Ltd., TORAY, and others Yamazaki Mazak Corporation, and others

Source: The New Industry Research Organization

“11 Aerospace Industry

Leveraging the concentration of aircraft-related manufacturers to support the entry of SMEs

KOBE AREA

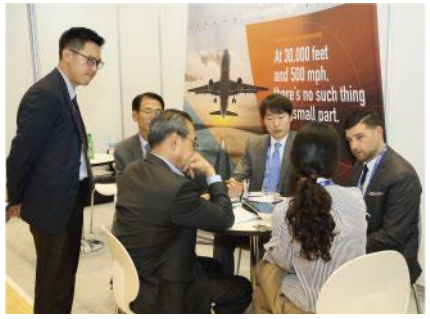
About 20 Kobe-based companies participate in the Aircraft clusters

KAN
KOBE AERO NETWORK

Aircraft non-destructive testing training center (the only one in Japan)

Biennial Engine Forum Kobe, an international exhibition and meetings

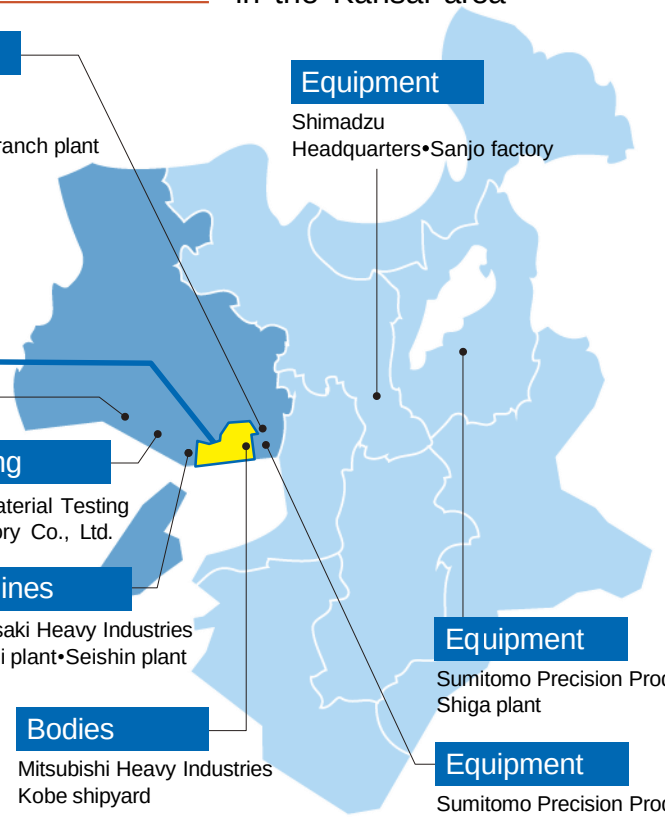
Sponsored by: advanced business events



ENGINE FORUM KOBE

KANSAI AREA

Major companies supporting the aircraft industry in the Kansai area



Airframes
ShinMaywa
Konan plant
and Takarazuka branch plant

Equipment
Shimadzu
Headquarters•Sanjo factory

Materials
Kobe Steel
Takasago factory

Testing
Kobe Material Testing Laboratory Co., Ltd.

Engines
Kawasaki Heavy Industries
Akashi plant•Seishin plant

Equipment
Sumitomo Precision Products
Shiga plant

Bodies
Mitsubishi Heavy Industries
Kobe shipyard

Equipment
Sumitomo Precision Products
Headquarters•plants

“12 IT/Tech Industry

Accelerate the emergence of innovation by supporting start-ups

Empowering Students with Skills for Next-Gen Industries! Advanced Digital Talent Development Program

To foster talent that will drive Kobe’ s future economy, the City of Kobe is building a comprehensive talent development framework through collaboration with universities, educational institutions, companies, and external experts—leveraging the city’s unique strengths.

Positioning AI and digital technologies as core infrastructure for next-generation industries, Kobe provides an end-to-end program covering everything from awareness and interest-building to hands-on practical experience. The program includes regular AI-related events, overseas study tours to Silicon Valley that broaden students’ perspectives through interaction with local students and engineers, and collaborative development projects where students and companies work together to solve real business challenges.

Through these initiatives—supported by the Microsoft AI Co-Innovation Lab—students from diverse academic backgrounds, both in the sciences and humanities, gain practical skills and experience, enabling them to grow into highly capable digital professionals.

Microsoft AI Co-Innovation Lab in Kobe

Japan’s first and Asia’s only location where Microsoft engineers provide free support for the development of innovative AI solutions and applications.

Kobe Smart City Initiative

This initiative leverages digital technology and data to solve urban and community challenges while improving quality of life. Through collaboration among industry, government, and academia, Kobe provides real-world testbeds and end-to-end support—from identifying challenges to demonstration and implementation. Successful solutions developed in Kobe are increasingly scaled and adopted by other cities across Japan, positioning Kobe as a leading smart city platform.

Kobe Startup Ecosystem

Support Agencies

NVCC, BIG Impact, 500, BRI, Future Venture Capital, Be a Great Small 中小機構, JETRO Kobe, 公益財団法人 神戸市産業振興財団, 兵庫県信用保証協会, 神戸新聞社, Winc, community link, INNOVATION DOJO, みなとキャピタル株式会社, KUC KOBE UNIVERSITY CAPITAL, GAOGAOゲート, adlibworks, KUI Kobe University Innovation

Financial Institutes/Developers

SMBC, みなと銀行, JFC 日本政策金融公庫, DBJ 株式会社日本政策投資銀行, 商工中金, 三井住友信託銀行, 阪急阪神不動産, 野村證券, 三菱地所, 三菱商事

Universities

神戸大学, 兵庫県立大学 UNIVERSITY OF HYOGO, KIC 神戸情報大学院大学, 甲南大学, 関西学院大学 KWANSEI GAKUIN UNIVERSITY

Corporates

sysmex, asics, Kawasaki Powering your potential, NORITZ, Hankyu 神戸阪急, Shintetsu, PASONA, 神姫バス, 三菱重工機械システム, SHIOYA TOCHI CO.,LTD. Property Management and Development, TOA, ユーハイム Juchheim, BANDO

Economic Organizations

神戸商工会議所 The Kobe Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 兵庫県商工会議所連合会, 神戸経済同友会

（As of January, 2025）

“14 What We Offer For Startups

STEP1

STARTUP VISA

MAX

2 years

Preparation
to setup
your startup

STEP2

Subsidy

MAX

JPY **8** mil
(USD 52K)
For 3 years

- Renovation Fee
- Office Supply
- Renting Fee
- Labor Cost

STEP3

Community Space

ANCHOR
KOBE

KIP
HYOGO

*Startup Visa holders
are free to use

STEP4

Program

Kobe Global
Startup Support

STEP5

Funding

HKSF
HYOGO KOBE STARTUP FUND

“15

From Global to Kobe

“Kobe Global Startup Support (KGSS) ”

Hands-on support for global startups entering Japan and establishing business in Kobe.

Business Matching

- Our dedicated team with an extensive local network **connect startups to the right business partners**
- Support smooth communication between them

Matching Events & Networking

Organize Corporate–Startup Matching Events

Feel free to apply from the QR code if you are wishing to receive support!

Support is subject to certain conditions.

“16 Living Environment

Comfortable Living Environment

Abundant nature with a climate that offers cool summers and warm winters.
Seasonal leisure activities such as Arima hot springs and sake breweries in Nada.

Education

Many international schools are located in the city with a multicultural educational environment

8 International schools

- Canadian Academy
- Deutsche Schule Kobe International
- Kobe Chinese School
- Kobe Korean Junior High School
- Kobe Korean Elementary School
- Marist Brothers International School
- St. Michael's International School
- Kobe Korean Senior High School

Canadian Academy

A prestigious K-12 educational institute with approximately 700 students

Deutsche Schule Kobe International

German government-accredited infant and primary education institutions located only in Kobe and Yokohama nationwide

KENTO Center

A learning support and care center for bilingual children

Medical

- English-speaking hospitals are available, including seven hospitals that provide interpreters to accompany patients during their hospital visits
- Rated #1 for nine consecutive years for emergency medical center care in Japan

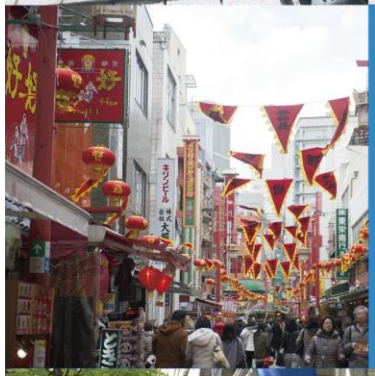
Kobe City Medical Center General Hospital

Convenience

- Less commuting crowds compared to Tokyo
- Kobe International Community Center offers various information and daily life counseling in many languages

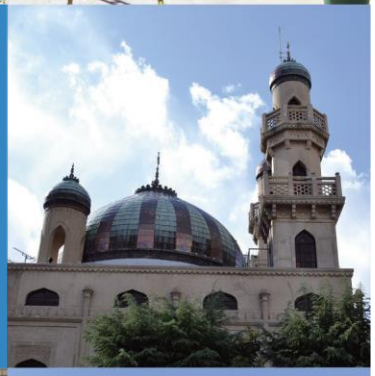
Kobe International Community Center

“17 Living Environment



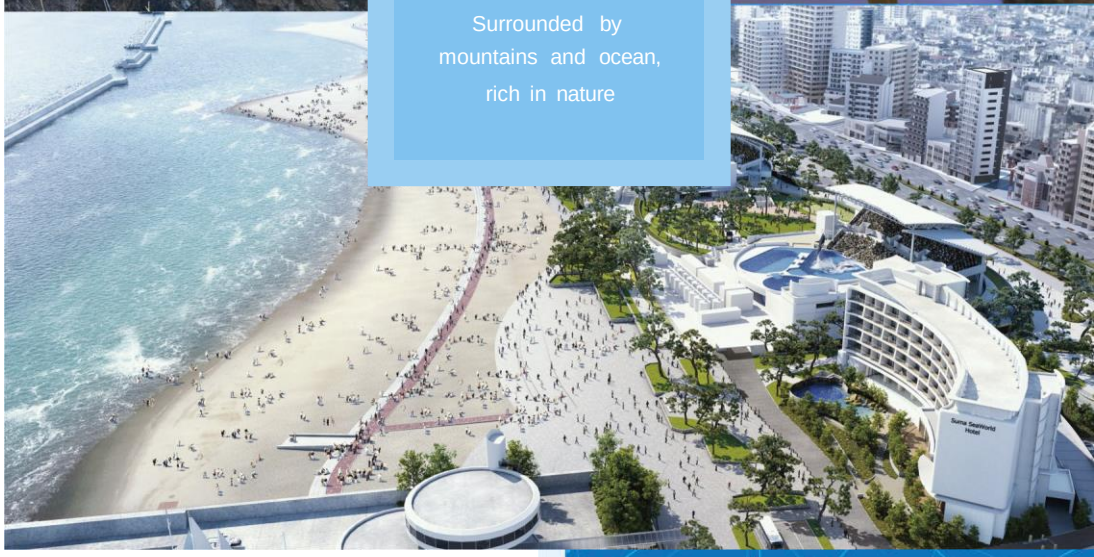
Community

Various international communities such as Western, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese



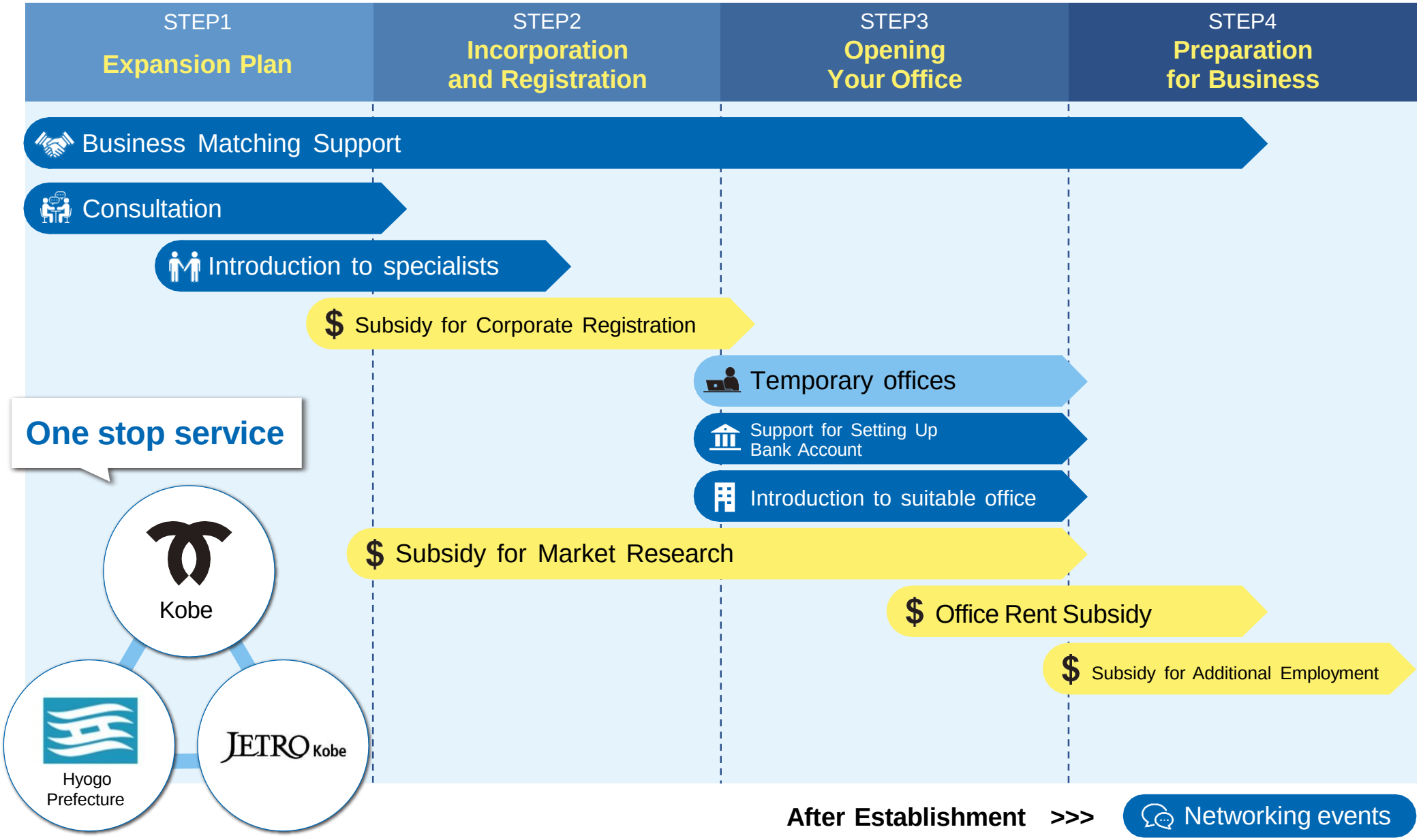
Nature

Surrounded by mountains and ocean, rich in nature



Support System

Warm support for an expansion into Kobe



“19 Support System

Support system for foreign and foreign-affiliated companies that operate globally

Each support system has eligibility requirements imposed by Hyogo Prefectural Government, Kobe City Government and the JETRO.

Office Rent Subsidy System

[Kobe City]

- Area: All areas of Kobe City
- Subsidy amount: Up to 25 % of rent (utilities and taxes excl.)
- Maximum amount: JPY 1,500/㎡ per month; JPY 10,000,000 per year
- Max. Subsidy period: 3 years

  (5 years when a space of 1,500㎡ and more is rented)

[Hyogo Prefecture]

- Subsidy amount: Up to 25 % of rent (utilities and taxes excl.)
- Maximum amount: JPY750/㎡ per month; JPY1,000,000 per year

  (JPY 1,500/㎡ per month; JPY 10,000,000 per year if 10+ new full-time employees are hired)
- Maximum subsidy period: 3 years

Prefectural Corporate Enterprise Tax Reduction [Hyogo Prefecture]

- Area: All areas of Kobe City
- Reduction rates: A 1/2 of prefectural corporate enterprise tax
- Period: 5 years
- Requirements : Large Enterprises:10 + new full-time employees

  SMEs:5 + new full-time employees

Additional Subsidy for Employment [Kobe City]

- Requirement: Five or more permanent employees (Kobe citizens)
- Maximum amount: JPY 100 mil.

Kobe City	Site for accumulating business functions *2
･Requirement: Newly moving into Kobe City *1 Indefinite-term full time employee: JPY 1,200,000/ person Other: JPY 200,000/ person	･Requirement: Newly employed Kobe citizens *1 Indefinite-term full time employee: JPY 1,000,000/ person Other: JPY 150,000/ person

*1 Unemployment insurance and other requirements apply.

*2 City area around Sannomiya station, Shin-Kobe, Motomachi. Kobe, Port Island, etc.

Employment Subsidy [Hyogo Prefecture]

- Requirement: 10 + new full-time employees (if SMEs 5 new full-time employees)
- Maximum subsidy: JPY 600,000 per person (JPY 300,000 per person only if SMEs hire part-time employees residing in Hyogo)
- Maximum amount: JPY 300 million

Company Start-up Support [Hyogo Prefecture]

Subsidy for Corporation Registration Fee

- Maximum subsidy: 50% of qualifying expenses
- Maximum amount: JPY 200,000

Subsidy for Market Research Fee

- Maximum subsidy: 50% of qualifying expenses
- Maximum amount: JPY 1,000,000

Free Temporary Offices [JETRO Kobe]

- Maximum Use Period: approx. 3 months

“20 In Companies' Own Words

Oerlikon Japan Co., Ltd.

President and Representative Director

TSUYUKUBO, Haruhiko

Q1. Why did you choose Kobe for your location?

A. Our branch in Osaka relocated to Kobe for more convenient access to our customers in the Kansai areas as well as for convenience for visitors from overseas.

Q2. What are the reasons for your decision?

A. The reason is the various means of transportation connecting Kobe with other parts of Japan, including railroads, airlines, and buses, as well as convenient access to the Kansai International Airport for overseas travel.

Q3. How do you see your decision in retrospect?

A. Surrounded by the sea and mountains, the business district and residential areas are closely integrated and employees and visitors from abroad can enjoy the exotic atmosphere of the city. I think this kind of environment is also important for our work.

Gripple Japan K.K.

Managing Director

MAKINO, Takahiro

Q1. Why did you choose Kobe for your location?

A. To penetrate the market, our head office decided that we needed to interface with our customers and be grounded in our activities. We do not choose the capital city for our business in other countries; instead, we tend to look for a location where we can engage in steady business and steady growth. For that reason, we chose the vibrant Kansai region.

Q2. What are the reasons for your decision?

A. We chose Kansai as a candidate because of its convenience for importing. We took into consideration the vitality of the city for creating a loyal customer base to put down roots in the region, and we were impressed by the warmth of the people in Kobe, and therefore we chose Kobe.

Q3. How do you see your decision in retrospect?

A. The Kobe Airport and the shinkansen from Shin-Kobe Station are extremely convenient even for business trips to distant places. The food is delicious, and the people from the UK headquarters who come to Japan 4-5 times a year are always happy to come back.

Knorr-Bremse Rail Systems Japan Ltd.

Managing Director

KIM Peter

Q1. Why did you choose Kobe for your location?

A. Locally rooted sales activities and after-sales follow-up are indispensable to earn the trust of customers in the Kansai area. For that reason, we expanded to Kobe City.

Q2. What are the reasons for your decision?

A. In order to support our business partners in the Kansai area, we thought we could maximize the location’s merits by setting up the office in Kobe City.

Q3. How do you see your decision in retrospect?

A. Such factors as the convenience of the office and the surrounding environment have exceeded the expectations of not only the employees working in Kobe but also those coming from Tokyo on business trips.

※The titles are as of the time of business establishment in Kobe City.

“21 Transforming Downtown Kobe: A New Urban Heart

SANNOMIYA STATION AREA (DOWNTOWN)

Toward the realization of Sannomiya as the gateway to the beautiful port city of Kobe, large-scale redevelopment is underway, centered on the station area. Guided by the concept of “a people-centered, comfortable city,” Kobe aims to create a downtown that people want to visit, work in, and live in—and one that continues to grow and evolve.

Sankita Street and Plaza
Immediately north of the station, a newly developed street and plaza integrate with surrounding buildings, creating a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Kobe Sannomiya Twin Gate Building (Phase II)
Planned following the completion of the phase I

1

Kobe Sannomiya Twin Gate Building (Phase I)
Completion scheduled for December 2027

Sannomiya Deck (Pedestrian decks) developed in phases from fiscal year 2027 onward
A spacious, pedestrian-priority plaza will be created to generate vibrancy. New pedestrian decks will also be developed, enhancing connectivity between the station and city.

(Tentative name) JR Sannomiya New Station Building
Scheduled to open in fiscal year 2029

Kobe Sannomiya Hankyu Building
Opened in April 2021, this building serves as a hub where companies, research institutions, universities, and startups gather and interact, fostering cross-industry innovation.
※Business Square “ANCHOR KOBE” is located here.

Plaza Space on the South Side of the New JR Sannomiya Station Building

Scheduled for completion in fiscal year 2029

2 **City Hall No.2 Building Redevelopment Project**
Scheduled for completion in fiscal year 2029

1 Building a Major Bus Terminal in Western Japan

A multifunctional complex integrating a bus terminal with a hall, library, hotel, and office spaces.

TWINGATE

2 Renewing Kobe City Hall

A symbolic mixed-use complex is being developed, integrating civic functions with public spaces, offices, hotels, and commercial facilities to energize downtown Kobe.

WATER FRONT AREA

Enhancing the Appeal of Kobe’s Waterfront
～An Area Offering Diverse Attractions, Worthy of Port-City～

At Shinko Pier No.2 (TOTTEI), GLION Arena Kobe opened in April 2025, bringing new waterfront vibrancy, with an adjacent marina and diverse activities expected to animate the area in coming years.

Key Waterfront Facilities

Kobe Port Tower

Reopened in April 2024 after renovation

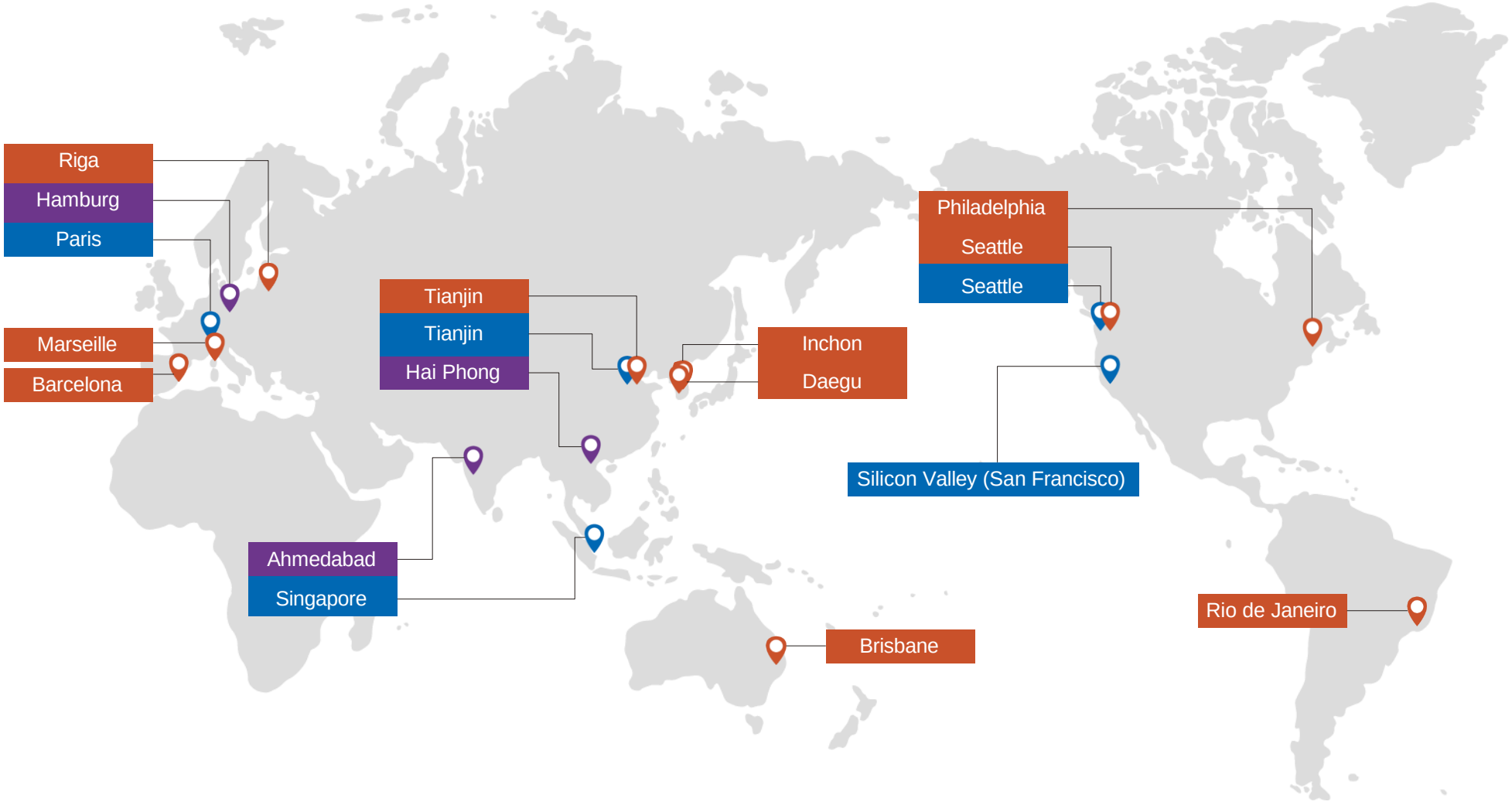
GLION Arena Kobe

Opened in April 2025

TOTTEI PARK

Marina (Concept Image)

KOBE Global Network



BE KOBE

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