The background features a series of overlapping circles in shades of green, blue, orange, and pink. Overlaid on these are numerous concentric circles in a light gray color, creating a textured, ripple-like effect. The text is centered within the blue and orange circles.

Sendai City Diversity Promotional Guidelines

July 2025
Sendai City

~Transforming Diversity into the City's Strength~

Diversity-driven Community Development

A pioneer in accessible city planning and multi-stakeholder disaster risk reduction initiatives, Sendai has promoted the creation of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive city with members of the local community through civic engagement.

In the face of major social changes, such as population decline, falling birthrates, and an aging demographic, we are faced with the need to reshape our environment and create a safe and supportive community where everyone can thrive. Our city is also experiencing an increase in diversity as the number of foreign residents, including international students and researchers, grows. We must embrace the concept of inclusive growth, a keyword in global dialogue, and encourage diverse interactions that can spark new ideas and innovation, transforming differences into a source of strength.

A deep sense of pride and affection for Sendai's unique city character—an identity shaped by our historical and cultural traditions, and inclusive values developed with the community—forms the foundation for respecting one another and embracing diversity. A "Sendai-inspired approach to diversity-driven community development" with deep and cohesive connections to the local community is key to enhancing Sendai's presence on the global stage.

In line with these guidelines, we will incorporate diversity into all policies and strive to become a "City Chosen by the World" as outlined in our Basic Plan, by creating a safe and vibrant environment where all can thrive.

Kazuko Kohri

Mayor of Sendai

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Community Development and Diversity in Sendai

Date Masamune, the founder of the Sendai Domain, was known for his enterprising spirit, actively inviting artisans and specialists from around the country and sending the diplomatic Keicho mission to Europe, seeking out international exchange with the world. In the early Meiji period (1880), a regulation in Nagamachi village in Natori district granted equal voting rights to all men and women over the age of 20 who were residents of the village. Around the same time, the private sector was involved in promoting women's education in areas such as teacher training and dressmaking. In 1904, Sendai Medical College welcomed international students, and in 1913, the first female students were admitted to Tohoku Imperial University, establishing a historical foundation for embracing diversity in Sendai.

As Sendai transitioned and developed as a designated city (major city) by government ordinance following Japan's period of rapid economic growth, the city addressed a variety of emerging urban issues in collaboration with local residents, such as accessible city planning, environmental beautification, and a campaign to eliminate the use of studded tires. Sendai declared 1999 as the first year of civic engagement, and this diverse spirit of civic engagement continues to shape the distinct character and charm of Sendai, the "City of Trees."

The strong spirit of civic engagement developed during this time was evident in the recovery and reconstruction of the city after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. Sendai's collaborative approach to disaster prevention and mitigation involving diverse stakeholders garnered recognition from the United Nations, leading to Sendai's designation as a role model city for disaster risk reduction (DRR) and its selection as the host city of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

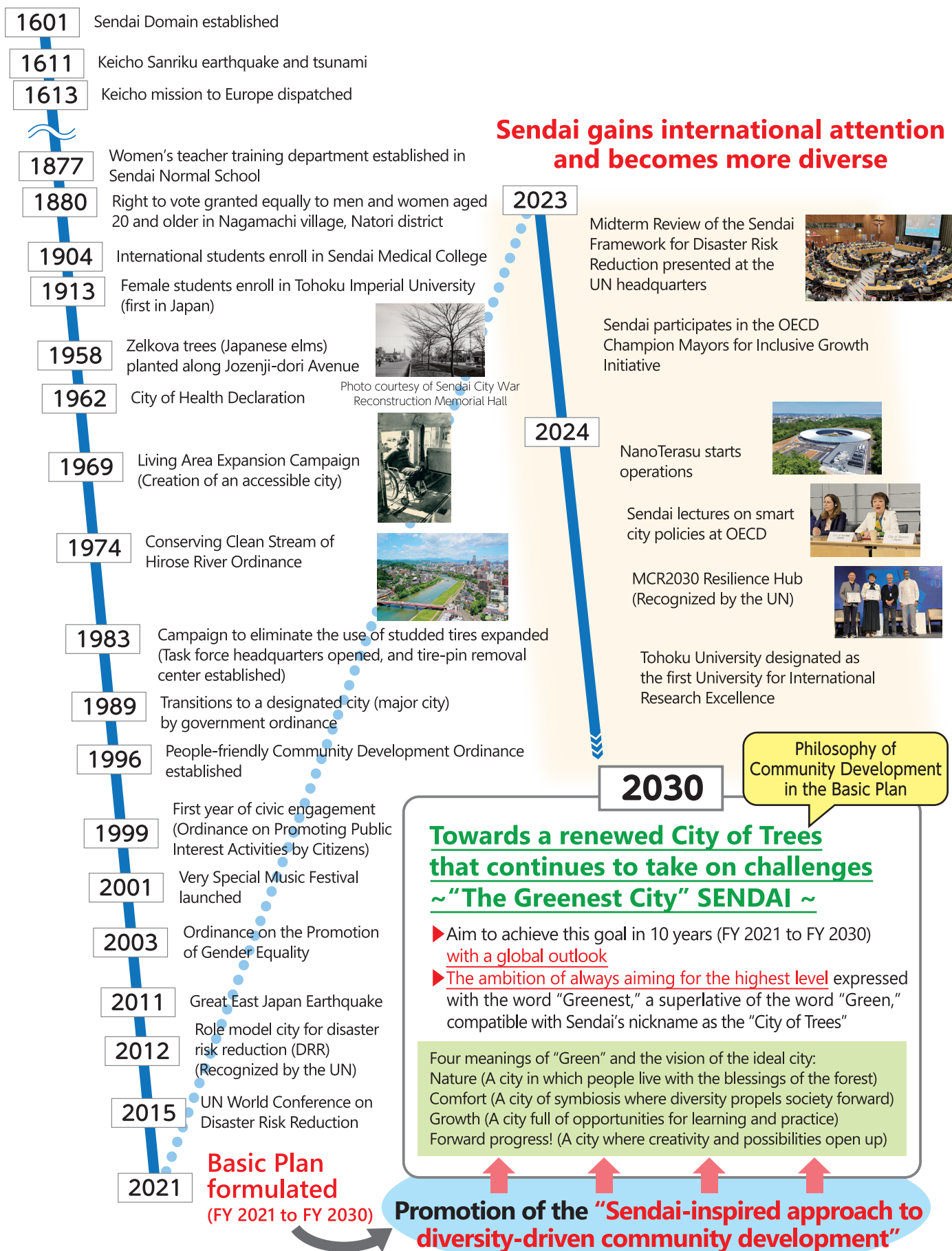
The city's initiatives have been drawing attention from international organizations such as the United Nations and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in recent years. With the launch of NanoTerasu and Tohoku University's designation as a University for International Research Excellence, Sendai is making strides towards becoming a more globally connected and diverse city.

The Basic Plan formulated in March 2021 defines Sendai's urban vision "Towards a renewed City of Trees that continues to take on challenges ~The Greenest City SENDAI~." The addition of the superlative "est" in "Greenest" signals Sendai's ambition to aim for excellence on a global scale.

"Green" embodies four key concepts: nature, comfort, growth, and forward progress (green light!). A city built on diversity, where each person is valued and empowered, drives the realization of Sendai's vision represented by these four words.

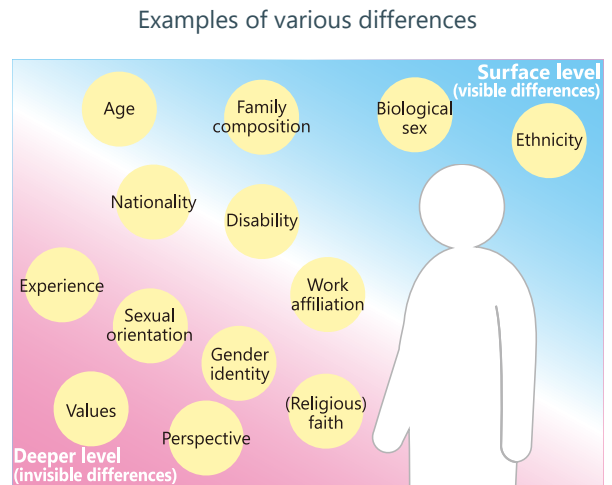
Diversity and inclusion have become key global concepts in the pursuit of a sustainable society. As Sendai enters a new phase of transformation, this guideline has been formulated based on the city's history, culture, and city character, with the aim of realizing the city's vision as "The Greenest City" by promoting a "Sendai-inspired approach to diversity-driven community development" from a global perspective.





(1) Changes in diversity over time

Diversity has been a topic of growing interest since the mid-2000s, particularly in the workplace, where the focus has primarily centered on promoting women's active participation. The term "diversity" in this context referred to "visible differences," such as gender, age, and ethnicity. More recently, however, diversity has expanded to include "deeper and invisible differences," such as values and experience (see figure on the right), with efforts to build inclusive organizations and societies increasingly being recognized as diversity strategies.

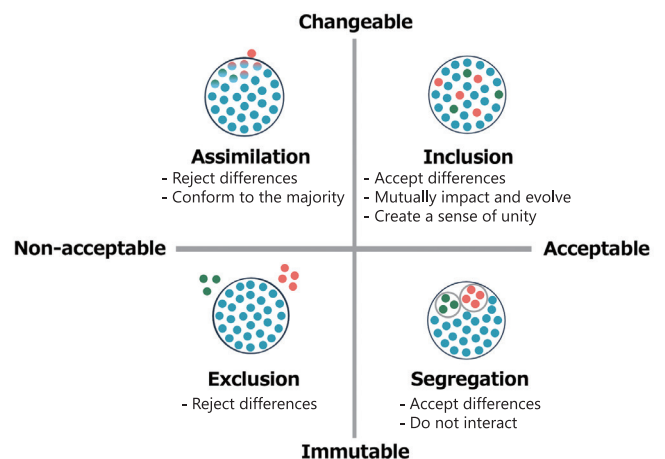


Diversity is also gaining recognition not only within organizations, but also as urban policy. The OECD Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth Initiative, launched in 2016, promotes inclusive growth at the city level. Discussions at the G7 Sustainable Urban Development Ministers' Meeting in 2023 also focused on the creation of diverse and inclusive cities, a reflection of ongoing efforts to connect diversity with urban development.

(2) How differences are accepted in organizations and society

The figure on the right categorizes the degree to which organizations and societies perceive and accept differences into four types. Organizations and societies that do not accept differences and exclude others are classified as "Exclusion." The category "Assimilation" refers to the idea that minorities are expected to conform to the majority without changes to the existing organization or society. In some cases "Segregation" occurs, where different groups stay separated without interactions or change. "Inclusion," positioned in the upper righthand corner of this figure, represents the goal of diversity, where differences are respected to create an improved organization or society.

How organizations and societies accept (or reject) differences



In addition to these four categories, the idea of "Belonging" has emerged in recent years, with an emphasis on individual awareness and the creation of an environment where both majority and minority groups can feel safe and secure and develop a sense of attachment and belonging within an organization or society.

(3) Impact of diversity

Promoting diversity has a variety of advantages. Building communities based on mutual respect where no one is left behind, for example, strengthens residents' sense of belonging and civic engagement, and encourages the formation of social connections and mutual support within that community. By creating an environment that values diverse lifestyles where everyone can reach their full potential, cities become more dynamic and appealing, attracting both talent and investment from within and beyond. Additionally, interactions between people with different values and perspectives serve as a source of new ideas and innovation, and contribute to the sustainable growth of cities.

These various benefits are expected to contribute to the creation of a safe environment where people can live and thrive.

(4) Sendai: A City with Diverse History

Hub for diverse talent

As the hub city in the Tohoku region, Sendai is home to institutes of higher learning, companies and branch offices of the private sector, and national government agencies, creating a steady inflow and outflow of diverse talent and a strong network of connections. Sendai is also actively supporting entrepreneurship as a viable career option, which has resulted in the growth of startup companies that are successful on the international stage. Various initiatives are gaining momentum, including original city-led leadership programs for women in business and a growing interest in opportunities for people with disabilities.

History of civic engagement

Sendai has long engaged in efforts aimed at enhancing its urban appeal, such as accessible city planning and environmental beautification, through collaboration between civic movements and the local government. In 1999, Sendai established the country's first public civic activity support center run by the private sector, which has supported a diverse range of citizen-led activities. After the Great East Japan Earthquake, local groups, civic organizations, and NPOs played a pivotal role in recovery efforts. In recent years, collaborative activities are being promoted to implement ideas from civic organizations and other groups, as well as projects aimed at channeling the creativity of youth into energizing Sendai.

Global outlook

Two years after the Keicho Sanriku earthquake and tsunami struck the Sendai Domain nearly 400 years ago, Date Masamune sent the Keicho mission to Europe with the aim of establishing direct trade with foreign nations. This move can be viewed as an early example of international exchange originating in Sendai.

Tohoku University opened its doors to international students about 120 years ago, and today the city is home to a large number of foreign residents. In 1957, Sendai established a sister city relationship with Riverside in California (U.S.A.), the second city in Japan to do so, and active exchanges continue to this day between Sendai and other cities around the world at the community level. In recent years, the city's disaster risk reduction initiatives have drawn the attention of the international community, and with the launch of NanoTerasu and Tohoku University's designation as a University for International Research Excellence, Sendai finds itself in a period of great change with a global perspective.

(5) Sendai-inspired approach to diversity-driven community development

There is no universal definition for the word “diversity,” as the background and context differ across countries. In these guidelines, diversity-driven community development is defined as an effort to achieve three key conditions: (1) embracing diversity, (2) building equal relationships, and (3) maintaining overall balance.

The ideal city, achieved through the promotion of diversity, is shaped by its historical and cultural background and evolves with the times. As noted in the previous section, (4) *Sendai: A City with Diverse History*, Sendai has a long-standing tradition of respecting and incorporating diversity into city planning, along with a history of sustained initiatives built up over time.

We will promote our “Sendai-inspired approach to diversity-driven community development” by respecting and building upon Sendai’s historical and cultural heritage, as well as our city character to create a diverse and well-balanced city that aligns with Sendai’s identity.

Column

Urban Growth and the “3Ts”

In his 2002 book, “The Rise of the Creative Class,” American sociologist Richard L. Florida highlighted the importance of creativity in urban growth, and identified technology, talent, and tolerance (3Ts) as the three key drivers of sustainable growth through a comparative analysis of U.S. cities.

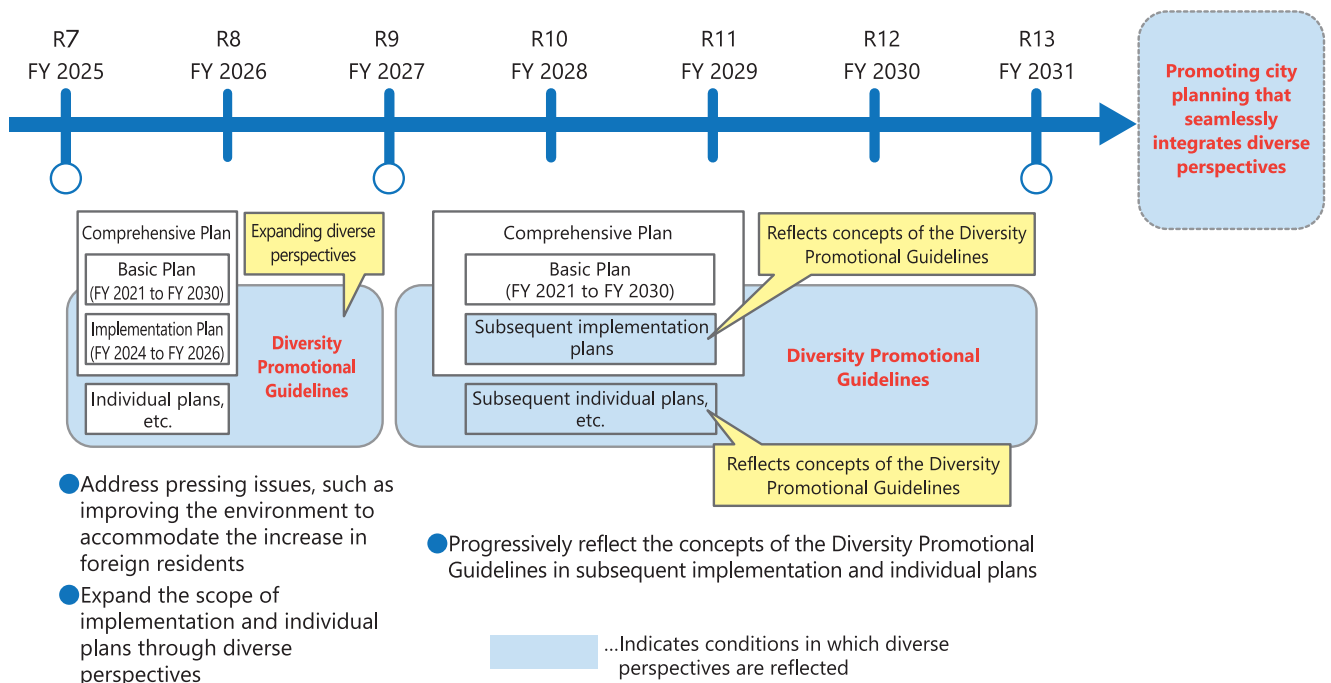
In his later writings, Florida revealed a strong correlation between places that embrace and welcome diversity and those that experience economic growth, emphasizing that without tolerance, cities cannot thrive even with technology and talent, as people tend to move towards more open and inclusive communities that are tolerant of differences in individuals.

With the free flow of people and information across borders, tolerance and openness towards diversity is recognized as an important factor in urban growth.

3 Scope of Guidelines

These guidelines are a compilation of perspectives on diversity that should be integrated when examining and implementing various urban policies. They serve to enhance Sendai's community development vision and policy directions as outlined in the city's Implementation Plan and sector-specific plans formulated by individual departments through the lens of diversity.

Sendai will engage in specific projects immediately following the formulation of these guidelines and will progressively reflect the concepts of these promotional guidelines into revisions of the Implementation Plan and other individual plans by the final year of the Basic Plan (FY 2030). Sendai will build on these collective efforts and promote community development centered on the perspective of promoting diversity from FY 2031 onward.



Basic philosophy

Respect for Sendai's history, culture, and city character

- ▶ Welcoming diverse talent, including the admission of Japan's first female students to the university, along with extensive public and private efforts in women's education, and opening the doors to international students, has laid the foundation for Sendai as an academic city. A culture of respect for diversity and the proactive engagement of the local community have been passed down in the city, exemplified in the country's first accessible city planning and collaborative disaster risk reduction efforts involving diverse groups. Sendai will honor the city's character, including its history, culture, and legacy of civic engagement, transforming these aspects into a driving force to promote the creation of a diverse and inclusive city.

Engagement of diverse actors

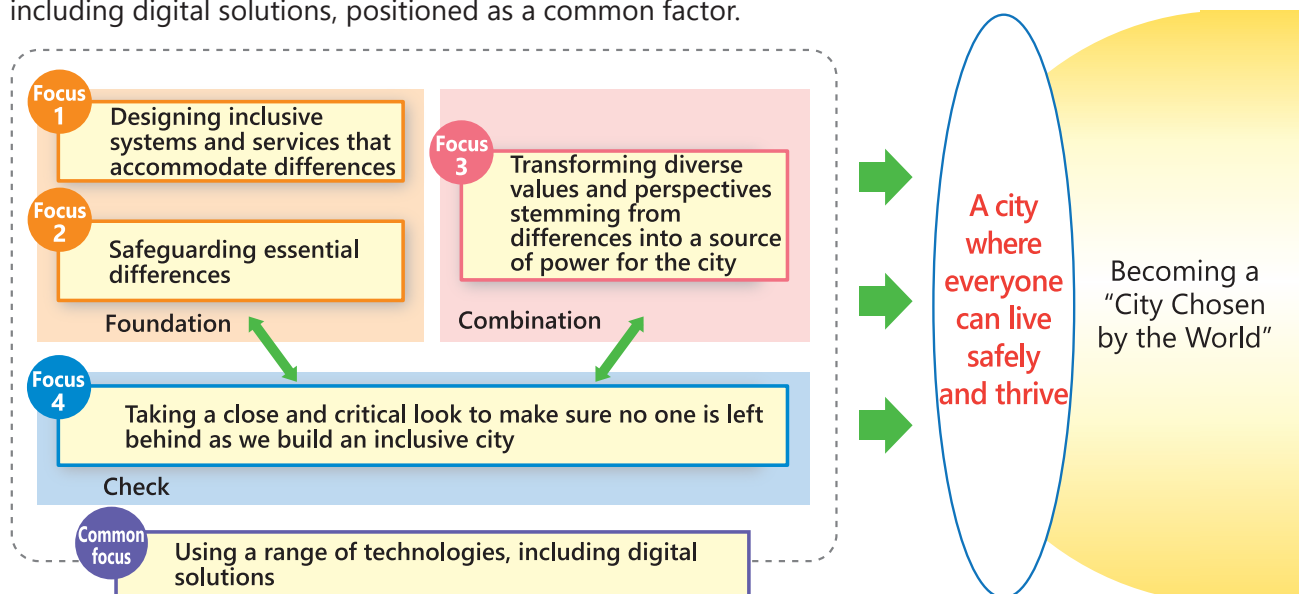
- ▶ New insights and challenges emerge with the involvement of diverse stakeholders and the intersection of various values, ideas, and perspectives, which help to refine policies and address local issues. Sendai will actively examine and implement initiatives that involve people with direct ties to the issues, provide spaces for participation and dialogue in different locations and on various topics, and collaborate with a range of institutions, groups, and businesses.

Regional expansion

- ▶ It is important to enhance the understanding of local communities and encourage changes in behavior in order to create a well-balanced, diverse and inclusive city. Initiatives will be implemented that allow people to engage with and understand diversity through a variety of opportunities.
- ▶ Sendai's initiatives will be shared to generate momentum for promoting diversity in civic and business activities. The city will promote this across communities through partnerships between the public and private sectors in order to incorporate the ideas and agility of the private sector into the creation of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive city.

Focus of action

Based on the basic principles above, the following four perspectives are set as essential considerations when examining and implementing policies, with the use of various technologies, including digital solutions, positioned as a common factor.



Focus 1

Designing inclusive systems and services that accommodate differences

The fundamental goal of promoting diversity is to build a society where differences do not disadvantage or exclude people. Sendai strives to create a city where people from all backgrounds can live safely and comfortably, by deepening people's understanding of various differences and developing considerate, flexible systems, services, and regulations that reflect diverse values and needs.

[Recent trends]

In addition to promoting accessible development in accordance with the People-friendly Community Development Ordinance, Sendai has been striving to prohibit discriminatory treatment and provide reasonable accommodations in line with the Act for Eliminating Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities and the Ordinance to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability and create a comfortable and inclusive society for people of all abilities. Sendai has also promoted measures to address diverse needs, such as the development of multilingual documents for administrative procedures and improving web accessibility on the city's website. Recent efforts include the introduction of a system recognizing same-sex partnerships and the adoption of universal design for the city's designated garbage bags (see column on page 10).

Future directions

① Eliminate disadvantages

- ◆ We will actively create opportunities to listen to the opinions of different stakeholders impacted by policies and systems in order to implement and review measures to address disadvantages resulting from differences.
- ◆ We will consider what actions can be taken to respond to the needs of individuals with differences, and take appropriate measures within feasible limits (reasonable accommodations).
- ◆ We will incorporate the principles of universal design, which is user-friendly and accessible to all (see column on page 10).

② Emphasize treatment that is equal and equitable

- ◆ Standard, one-size-fits-all support may not resolve disparities due to individual differences. We will be mindful of equitable treatment by adjusting support to meet individual needs as required.
- ◆ We understand that efforts to accommodate minority groups may generate feelings of inequality or anxiety for majority groups, and we will take necessary action to provide adequate explanations and information.

Focus 2

Safeguarding essential differences

Everyone has a diverse range of traits and roles in society, and each individual also has their own unique differences.

Understanding the values, opinions, ideas, and potential needs of each person and respecting one another is crucial.

Sendai aims to create a city where diversity is respected through actions to better understand differences and by creating systems that offer a diverse range of options.

[Recent trends]

To help people better recognize and understand differences, Sendai has implemented a range of awareness and educational programs in different fields, such as workshops on multiculturalism and inclusion, and education on international understanding and welfare services through moral teachings and inquiry-based learning in schools. The city also supports the development of work environments tailored to the specific needs of individual employees, such as the introduction of childcare leave, flexible work hours, remote work, and daytime emergency service teams (which better accommodate workers' lifestyle, while responding to higher daytime emergency needs). Sendai has also introduced measures to address food allergies in school meals, and more recently, has been focused on supporting the development of new menu options to accommodate diverse food cultures (vegan, vegetarian, and halal dietary requirements).

Future directions

① Promote awareness of differences

- ◆ We recognize that every citizen possesses their own unique differences and that multiple intersecting differences within an individual may give rise to specific needs or lead to disadvantages.
- ◆ We create various opportunities for learning, simulated experiences, and spaces for dialogue and exchange between people from different backgrounds to help citizens and businesses develop a deeper understanding of the considerations and approaches needed to respect, accept, and acknowledge the differences in each other.
- ◆ With the understanding that employees come from different backgrounds, we strive to promote an understanding of diversity, develop mechanisms that reflect multiple perspectives in policies, and create an environment where individuals can maximize their potential.

② Respect differences

- ◆ We promote initiatives to provide flexible options tailored to individual traits and life events, such as childcare, caregiving, and other situations.
- ◆ Recognizing that promoting diversity requires people to respect one another and create an inclusive environment rather than focus on assimilating minority groups, we strive to increase opportunities for communities and organizations to engage with diverse needs and perspectives to encourage a shift in awareness.
- ◆ We make an effort to provide clear explanations to address any concerns citizens may have about changes that may arise from respecting differences. Additionally, we acknowledge and incorporate meaningful insights from majority groups to promote a balanced approach to the creation of diverse and inclusive communities.

Universal Design

Universal design is a concept formally introduced in 1985 by Ronald Mace of North Carolina State University (U.S.A.) to refer to the act of designing cities and living environments so that they are accessible to as many people as possible, regardless of age, gender, or physical condition.

One example of universal design is the use of pictograms, which are signs displayed to show information or alert people. Pictograms were widely used even before the idea of universal design was introduced, notably with the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games.

The Japan National Stadium, which served as the venue for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, is an excellent example of improving accessibility for a diverse range of people by incorporating the perspectives of users from the design phase through workshops and other activities. The inclusion of features such as accessible restrooms, wheelchair-accessible seating with unobstructed views, and ample space for nursing rooms and stroller areas, all demonstrate careful attention to the needs of a wide range of users.

■ Examples of universal design incorporated into the Japan National Stadium

[Inside restrooms]



①Emergency call button: A cord-type button is installed at lower heights near the floor in restrooms in case of a fall.

②Toilet seat: Seats are adjusted to a higher position to accommodate an increase in the average height of Japanese people and the needs of users from other countries.

[Handrails]



To prevent falls, horizontal bars are installed with gaps of 110 mm or less so that the space is too narrow for children's heads to fit through.

Photo courtesy of the Japan Sport Council

Focus 3

Transforming diverse values and perspectives stemming from differences into the city's strength

As people from diverse backgrounds interact, their collective knowledge, experiences, and perspectives spark new ideas and innovation and create a positive cycle that attracts new talent and investment. By embracing and respecting differences and inspiring one another in a positive way, we turn differences into a strength. This ensures that everyone, regardless of background, has opportunities to grow and from the city's diversity, and ultimately paves the way for a vision of "inclusive growth" that enables the entire region to thrive.

[Recent trends]

After the Great East Japan Earthquake, Sendai and the Tohoku region witnessed a surge in entrepreneurship inspired by a desire to help others and contribute to local communities. To support this movement, Sendai City launched the startup support center, "ASSISTA." As the entrepreneurial landscape has expanded and evolved, initiatives such as the "SENDAI Global Startup Campus," a program for developing global talent that will drive the next generation of innovation, and "Sendai Startup Studio," a one-stop support hub, have been introduced. The city is also collaborating with local residents to create vibrant interactive spaces in the city center where people from all walks of life can interact, such as by reimagining the future of public spaces near Aobadori Station and the redevelopment of Kotodai Park and Jozenji-dori Avenue. Sendai City is also engaged in co-creation projects between industry, academia, and the government with the Consortium for the Sendai-City x Tohoku University Smart-Frontier.

Future directions

① Confidently express differences in a safe environment

- ◆ Creating a foundation of psychological safety—where individuals are accepted for who they are and are able to express their true selves—in communities and organizations is key to unlocking the positive aspects of diversity. We strive to create an inclusive environment that embraces diversity.
- ◆ We view differences in viewpoints, opinions, and perspectives as opportunities to improve systems, policies, and initiatives and actively listen to the voices of stakeholders and minority groups.
- ◆ We aim to communicate, through various channels, the belief that differences should not be seen as obstacles to overcome but as valuable assets, and ensure that this mindset is shared across communities.

② Create spaces for dialogue and interaction

- ◆ We develop mechanisms that encourage the participation of diverse stakeholders in the consideration and implementation of systems, policies, and projects, ensuring that a variety of viewpoints, opinions, and perspectives are represented.
- ◆ We encourage creative engagement and constructive dialogue among citizens with diverse traits and background. We strive to create inclusive spaces for dialogue and interaction where people of all ages, genders, nationalities, and abilities feel welcome to participate.
- ◆ We provide opportunities for individuals to voice their ideas and express themselves to channel the unique skills and talents of individuals into innovation.
- ◆ We will develop appealing and accessible public spaces and enhance urban infrastructure to encourage dynamic interactions between diverse communities.

③ Drive innovation by combining diverse elements

- ◆ We expand perspectives and talent pools by combining different fields to drive the creation of new ideas and innovation that go beyond conventional frameworks. We actively design a range of collaborative measures, integrating various perspectives such as gendered innovation, promoting cross-sectoral and interdepartmental cooperation, and partnering with civic organizations, private companies, universities, and other groups.
- ◆ For companies to strengthen their competitive edge, it is essential to integrate imaginative ideas from a diverse group of people to drive innovation and create new values. We encourage diversity-driven management, especially in local small- and medium-sized companies, to create a local economy where people from all different backgrounds, careers, and experiences can use their skills and thrive.
- ◆ With innovative technologies and ideas, startup companies create entirely new products and services, while also addressing social issues. We encourage the creation of transformative industries including business models with far-reaching worldwide influence, by strengthening support for startup companies, including global expansion.

Column

“Superkilen” Park: Embracing diverse cultures to encourage interaction

Superkilen, a park located in the Nørrebro district of Copenhagen, Denmark, is a unique space filled with playground equipment from around the world, such as an Australian hammock, an Afghan swing, a Thai boxing ring, and a Japanese-inspired octopus slide.

Home to immigrants from over 50 countries, this district faced frequent conflicts due to cultural and lifestyle differences for many years. The city converted a former national railway depot into a 30,000-m² linear park in 2012, as a space for residents to connect.

The park’s equipment and facilities were chosen through field studies in over 60 countries around the world and input from local residents. By using the park, residents can engage with diverse cultures in a positive way, with the aim of creating a sense of harmony within the community.



Source (Left, view from a hill in the park): <https://www.visitcopenhagen.com/copenhagen/planning/superkilen-park-gdk707822>

(Right, Japanese-inspired octopus slide) [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:K%C3%B8benhavn_-_Superkilen_\(30882438352\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:K%C3%B8benhavn_-_Superkilen_(30882438352).jpg)

Focus 4

Taking a close and critical look to make sure no one is left behind as we build an inclusive city

As humans, we are less likely to notice things that do not concern us, so it is essential to make a conscious effort to keep an eye on whether anyone is being left behind.

To strengthen awareness and support for those who are being left behind, we must build on past community development efforts driven by civic engagement and develop various connections and support systems within local communities.

We aim to create a society where no one is left behind by combining the initiatives outlined in Focus 1 to 3 with the ongoing checks and assessments in Focus 4.

[Recent trends]

Surveys to understand the realities and support needs of individuals who have withdrawn from society (known as *hikikomori* in Japanese), as well as the challenges facing children and youth, have been conducted to ensure that their perspectives are reflected in policies. Sendai is also involved in operating a disability awareness portal website, promoting use of gender-inclusive language in the city's publications, and implementing various educational campaigns. Local groups, such as neighborhood associations, volunteers and civic groups also work together to watch over the elderly and persons with disabilities, conduct safety patrols, and create spaces for children. The "Sendai Children's Foundation" was established to support the development of child-friendly spaces as one of its key initiatives.

Future directions

① Visualize the reality

- ◆ We collect data related to the promotion of diversity using digital tools and other technologies to analyze the current situation and challenges, and encourage dialogue and communication between diverse groups by making the data publicly accessible whenever possible.
- ◆ In addition to analyzing existing data, we also consider what data is needed by incorporating insights from experts and others.

② Recognize unconscious bias and break free from preconceived stereotypes

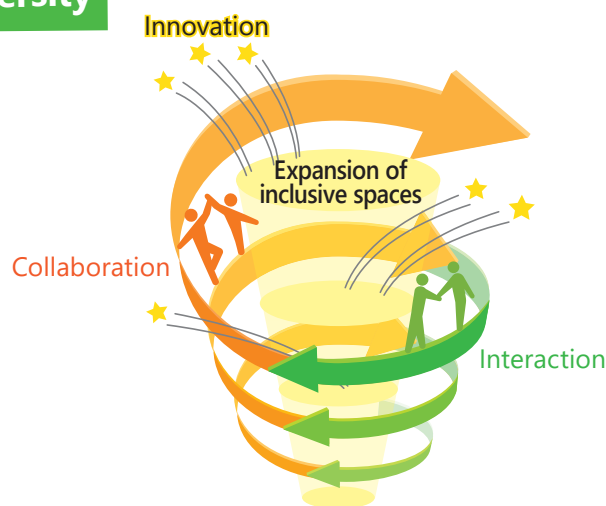
- ◆ We acknowledge that differences extend beyond visible traits, such as gender, ethnicity, and age, to include internal and more subtle aspects, such as values and experiences.
- ◆ We understand that the terms "minority" and "majority" can shift with changes in historical periods, geographical locations, and social contexts, and are fluid in nature.
- ◆ We will continue efforts to deepen our understanding, raise awareness, and correct "unconscious bias," recognizing that everyone is subject to it.

③ Promote the creation of an inclusive city where everyone can live a safe and comfortable life

- ◆ Given that every person has distinct needs and requires different kinds of support, and the ways they showcase their abilities also differ, it is important to approach the sustainable development of a diverse and inclusive city from the perspective of mutual support, where everyone cares for and is cared for by others.
- ◆ We are committed to transforming diversity into an even more powerful force by creating a city where diversity is respected and embraced, where people feel a sense of attachment to the community and have safe and comfortable spaces that they feel that they belong.
- ◆ We create various spaces in the community in cooperation with local residents through civic engagement where people from all walks of life are welcomed and supported to cultivate relaxed, casual connections and an inclusive mindset.

Positive cycle created by diversity

Creative interaction and constructive dialogue emerge in safe and comfortable spaces where differences are respected, evolving into mutual support and collaboration, and ultimately lead to solutions to social issues and spark innovation.



Column

Sendai's Very Special Music Festival

The Very Special Music Festival, where people of all abilities enjoy music together, uses the power of music to open people's minds, creating "barrier-free hearts." This street corner-style concert, which started in Sendai in 2001, has since spread throughout Japan. The festival promotes the value of accepting and respecting individual differences under the slogan, "everyone is different, and everyone is beautiful."

The Very Special Music Festival creates spaces where people both with and without disabilities can mingle and interact naturally by turning the entire city into a stage. This is made possible with the support of many people who provide accessible support, sign language and written interpretation services, and rest areas. The festival, which showcases the brilliance of diverse personalities through the power of music, embodies the spirit of Sendai, the city of music, and has grown into an irreplaceable initiative that nurtures emotional connections and an awareness of inclusivity as citizens support one another.



Photo courtesy of the Very Special Music Festival
Executive Committee SENDAI

Using a range of technologies, including digital solutions

The interactivity and immediacy of digital tools and other technologies expand the potential of communication and help to ensure equity and improve accessibility.

The combination of knowledge, experiences, and values of diverse groups is a catalyst driving the development of new technologies. It is important to examine new technologies from multiple angles to address potential ethical, legal, or societal concerns, with diverse perspectives and opinions playing a key role in strengthening reliability. Sendai aims to achieve growth across communities through the intersection of diversity and innovation.

[Recent trends]

Sendai aims to create a “Full Digital City Hall” through digital transformation to increase accessibility and put people first in administrative services with diverse points of contact that allow for close, meaningful interactions. This initiative is designed to improve quality of life and generate new values by expanding online procedures, eliminating the need to visit government offices in person or complete paperwork. In response to the expected increase in foreign residents, Sendai is promoting the use of automated translation at service counters and on websites using digital tools, as well as online processes for pre-registration and submission of information for moving abroad. The city also provides personalized information and services based on the interests and needs of residents and visitors through local portals and other platforms, and is working with the Consortium for the Sendai-City x Tohoku University Smart-Frontier to test and implement new services.

Future directions

① Create a cycle for data-based assessments and policy planning

- ◆ The use of publicly available data and personal data with individual consent offers numerous advantages including improving services to improve the quality of life for local residents. By sharing and analyzing a wide range of data, we can create a cycle for policy planning, assessment and improvement to promote diversity in society.

② Improve accessibility for citizens and encourage public engagement

- ◆ We achieve greater equity and improve accessibility by adapting to the unique needs, perspectives, and lifestyles of all citizens through the use of digital tools and other technologies.
- ◆ We provide more options for civic engagement and create a welcoming environment for diverse groups to get involved through the use of online platforms and other tools.

③ Promote the development of new technologies

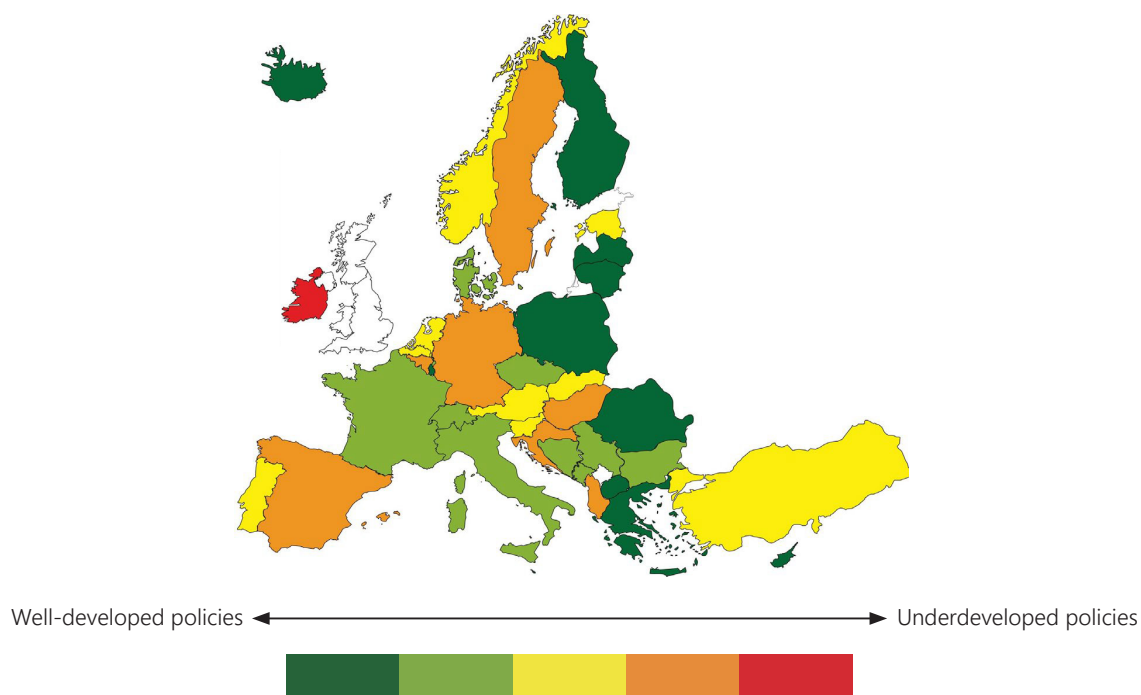
- ◆ New values are generated when individuals with diverse expertise and values come together to co-create. We promote the development of new and inclusive technologies and establish frameworks that amplify the synergy between diversity and innovation.
- ◆ We create supportive environments where multiple perspectives can be considered in the verification process to help startup companies that are working to address social issues to commercialize their innovative ideas and original technologies.

Data Use: European initiatives

To address diverse challenges and move towards the creation of a better society, it is necessary to collect and openly share data on current conditions and progress. In Europe, the European Union (EU) has successfully spearheaded efforts to disclose data across borders using standardized indicators, which enable comparisons that help identify issues and improve the quality of initiatives.

For example, Eurydice, the EU's education information network, consolidates and centralizes information on the educational systems in each country. This network is designed to encourage mutual understanding of different educational systems and promote international student exchanges through the publication of comparative studies on specific topics, as well as education-related indicators and statistics.

- Color-coded map released by Eurydice showing the status of multilingual support services for international and other students in EU countries



*The colors used to shade countries on the above map range from red to dark green and illustrate the level of policy development. The closer a color is to dark green, the more robust the country's policies.

Created with "Mobility Scoreboard: Higher education background report 2022/2023, Eurydice report"

5 Focus on Promotion

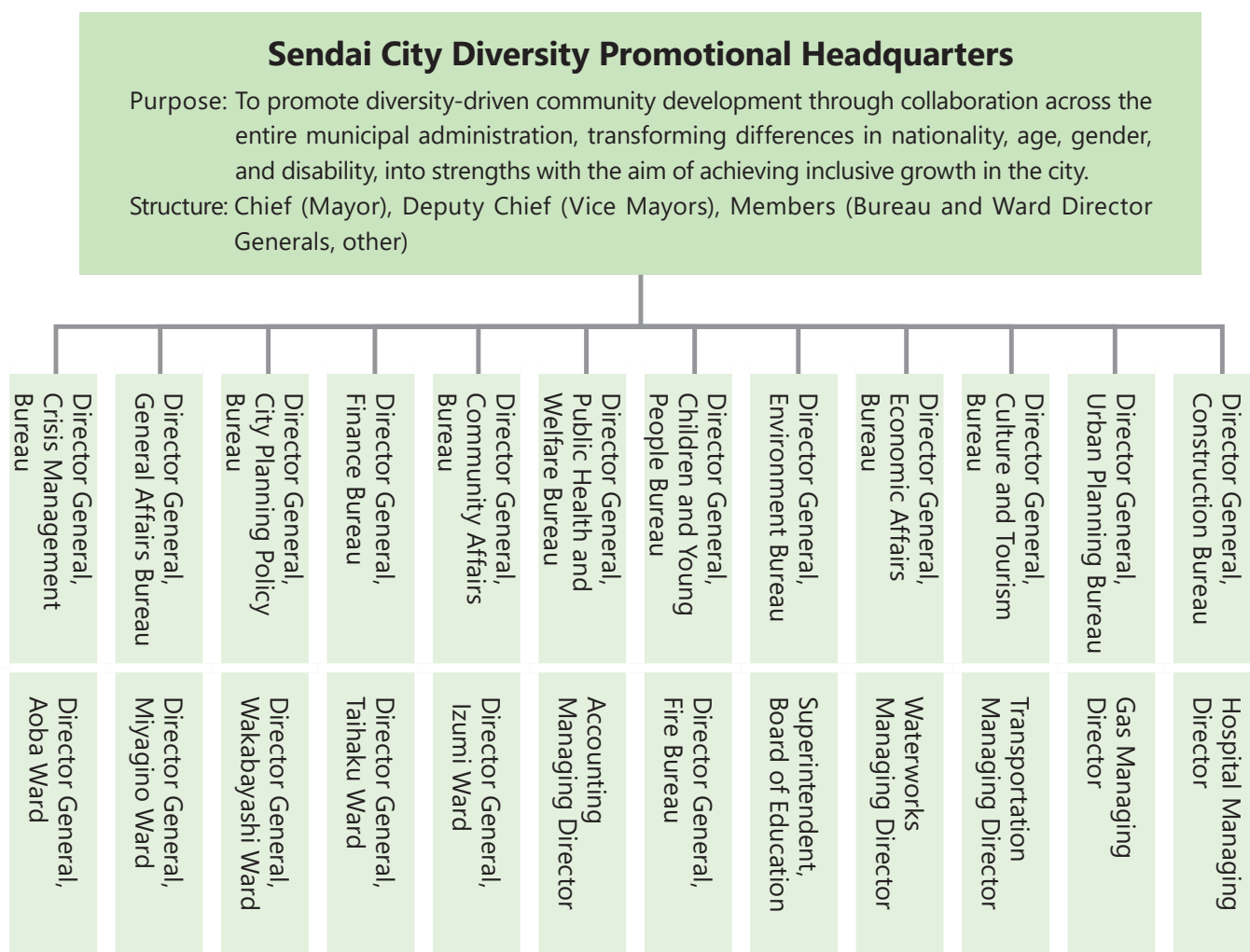
(1) Raising awareness through practical applications

To promote diversity-driven community development, Sendai incorporates diverse perspectives into various city plans and policies, and ensures that awareness and consideration for diversity are reflected in interactions at service counters and in other public service settings. The city will cultivate a deeper understanding of diversity by clarifying the promotional guidelines, sharing case studies, and strengthening staff training, and will develop practical learning opportunities to encourage changes in behavior.

Sendai will compile and regularly publish a wide range of data from various sectors in a data book that will serve as indicators for diversity-driven community development.

(2) Promotional system

The Sendai City Diversity Promotional Headquarters, led by the Mayor with the Vice Mayors as Deputy Chief and all bureau and ward director generals as members, will convene meetings to review progress and discuss strategies for promoting diversity with the involvement of the entire municipal administration. Efforts to formulate and implement specific measures will be promoted through broad cooperation, including interdepartmental projects and collaboration with external organizations.



Glossary

Barrier-free ... P14

This concept aims to eliminate barriers (obstacles) in all areas that impede the participation of people with disabilities, the elderly, pregnant people, and parents/guardians with children in society, and include not only physical obstacles, but also social, institutional, and psychological barriers.

Basic Plan ... Inside cover, P1, P2, P6

A blueprint for city planning in Sendai, which outlines the city's vision and corresponding policy directions to achieve that vision.

Campaign to eliminate the use of studded tires ... P1, P2

This civic movement started in Sendai to improve the severe dust pollution (known as the "Sendai Desert") caused by the widespread use of studded tires since the 1960s. Various initiatives taken to phase out studded tires soon spread throughout the city, including the establishment of a task force under the leadership of the mayor and the opening of a free tire-pin removal center in 1983. The "Studded Tires Regulation Act" was enacted in 1991, which led to a nationwide ban on their use.

City character ... Inside cover, Table of Contents, P1, P5, P7

This refers to the individuality and distinctive qualities of a city. In Sendai, this includes concepts such as the "city of trees," "city of learning," "disaster-resilient and environmentally-friendly city," and "inclusive city."

City of Health Declaration ... P2

Declaration by Sendai to create a city where citizens can live healthy and culturally.

Conserving Clean Stream of Hirose River Ordinance ... P2

A local ordinance enacted by Sendai to preserve the beautiful, shared public resource of the Hirose river's clear waters and ensure its legacy for future generations. The ordinance clarifies the duties of citizens, businesses, and the city in protecting the river's waters and includes provisions for the preservation of the natural environment and water quality.

Consortium for the Sendai-City x Tohoku University Smart-Frontier ... P11, P15

A framework for collaboration between industry, academia and government involving Sendai City, Tohoku University and private companies working to promote smart cities in various fields. Efforts are being made to create advanced services by integrating data across multiple sectors and proposing recommendations for regulatory reforms to the government, in order to address local issues based on the needs of citizens.

Daytime emergency teams ... P9

These emergency teams work only during peak daytime hours, when there is a higher volume of emergency calls, as opposed to the standard 24-hour emergency teams. This approach is an effective response to the growing demand for emergency services and allows employees who may find night shifts difficult for personal reasons to work as emergency responders, making good use of their qualifications and experience and promoting diverse working styles.

First year of civic engagement ... P1, P2

1999 was declared to be the "first year of civic engagement," marked by the enactment of the Ordinance on the Promotion of Public Interest Activities by Citizens and the establishment of Japan's first public civic activity support center run by the private sector.

Full Digital City Hall ... P15

The "Sendai DX Promotion Plan 2024-2026" envisions the creation of a "Full Digital City Hall" that will not only introduce advanced technologies, but also promote human-centered digital transformation to improve livability and generate new value.

G7 Sustainable Urban Development Ministers' Meeting ... P3

This ministerial-level meeting includes the participation of the G7 countries (Japan, U.S., U.K., Canada, Germany, France, Italy) and the EU, which are joined by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Urban 7 (U7) as observer organizations to discuss policies for sustainable urban development. The first meeting was held in Potsdam, Germany in 2022, followed by the second meeting in Takamatsu, Japan in 2023.

Gendered innovation ... P12

This concept was advocated by Professor Londa Schiebinger of Stanford University in 2005. It involves integrating analysis on gender differences and intersectionality into research and development processes in the fields of science and technology to drive innovation. The addition of this new perspective is expected to lead to new developments and excellence.

Great East Japan Earthquake ... P1, P2, P4, P11

This disaster was caused by an earthquake that occurred at 14:46 on March 11, 2011, approximately 130 km east-southeast of Oshika peninsula in Miyagi prefecture, at a depth of 24 km. The earthquake's magnitude of 9.0 matched that of the 1952 Severo-Kurilsk earthquake, the largest in Japan's recorded history. According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), it ranks as the fourth largest earthquake in the world since 1900.

Implementation Plan ... P6

This plan defines specific goals and measures aimed at ensuring the steady promotion and effectiveness of the Basic Plan, based on the principles of community development, the vision for the city, and the direction of measures to achieve what is outlined in the plan.

Keicho mission to Europe ... P1, P2, P4

Diplomatic mission sent by Date Masamune to the King of Spain and the Pope of Rome, requesting the dispatch of Christian missionaries to the Sendai Domain and to establish direct trade with Novaispania (Mexico).

Keicho Sanriku earthquake and tsunami ... P2, P4

Earthquake that struck on December 2, 1611 (October 28 of Keicho 16), causing a significant number of fatalities in Mutsu province, as documented in historical records.

Living Area Expansion Campaign ... P2

This campaign to improve welfare in Sendai, which started in 1969 with one wheelchair user and one student volunteer, expanded nationwide after facility improvements at the 1970 Osaka Expo. They eventually sparked a national movement driven by people with physical disabilities to improve their living environments. These campaigns, which started in Sendai, grew into a nationwide movement.

MCR2030 Resilience Hub ... P2

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)'s "MCR (Making Cities Resilient) 2030" initiative aims to establish safe and resilient cities around the world by 2030, which also aligns with the goal of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Select cities with demonstrated success in disaster risk reduction and resilience share their expertise and support other cities. In October 2024, Sendai became the first city in Japan to be recognized under this initiative for its achievements in disaster-resilient community development and its role in promoting the Sendai Framework.

NanoTerasu ... P1, P2, P4

NanoTerasu, a 3GeV high-brilliance synchrotron radiation facility, is often likened to a "giant microscope capable of analyzing material structures at the nanoscale." The facility began operations at Tohoku University's Aobayama New Campus in April 2024.

OECD Champion Mayors for Inclusive Growth Initiative ... P2, P3

This network organization of city mayors was launched by OECD in 2016 to address regional inequalities and disparities and promote inclusive economic growth. Sendai's mayor joined in 2023, recognized for her efforts in promoting disaster-resilient community development, empowering women and youth, and supporting entrepreneurship.

Ordinance on the Promotion of Gender Equality ... P2

This ordinance was enacted with the aim of creating a city with character and appeal by promoting activities in the public interest carried out voluntarily by citizens. Following a complete revision in 2015, an ordinance on supporting collaborative city planning was enacted.

Ordinance on the Promotion of Public Interest Activities by Citizens ... P2

This ordinance was enacted with the aim of promoting activities in the public interest carried out voluntarily by citizens with the aim of creating a city with character and appeal.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) ... P1, P2, P3

OECD is an international organization established in 1961 by 18 European nations, the U.S., and Canada. It conducts analysis and research on global macroeconomic trends, trade, development aid, and emerging fields, such as sustainable development. Japan became a member in 1964.

People-friendly Community Development Ordinance ... P2, P8

An ordinance enacted to promote the development of barrier-free environments for facilities like buildings, roads, and parks, to ensure that they are accessible and user-friendly for everyone, including the elderly and people with disabilities.

Role model city for disaster risk reduction (DRR) ... P1, P2

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) selects and certifies cities that implement practices that can serve as models for disaster risk reduction around the world as part of their global disaster risk campaign, "Making Cities Resilient." Sendai was recognized in October 2012 as the second city in Japan for its pre- and post-disaster efforts in disaster risk reduction and recovery, especially the city's efforts in community-based disaster reduction and empowering people to take action.

SENDAI Global Startup Campus ... P11

This Sendai City program is designed to train youth from Sendai and the Tohoku region into becoming globally competitive startup professionals.

Sendai Medical College ... P1, P2

Established in 1887 as the medical department of the Second Higher School, the department became Sendai Medical College after it separated from the school in 1901. In 1912, the college became part of the School of Medicine at Tohoku Imperial University.

Sendai Normal School ... P2

Predecessor to the Miyagi University of Education.

Tohoku Imperial University ... P1, P2

Predecessor to Tohoku University.

UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction ... P1, P2

This United Nations conference is dedicated to discussing global disaster risk reduction strategies. Following the first conference in Yokohama in 1994 and the second in Kobe in 2005, Sendai hosted the third conference from March 14 to 18, 2015. The "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030" was adopted at this conference as the global blueprint for disaster risk reduction until 2030.

University for International Research Excellence ... P1, P2, P4

Universities with the potential to develop internationally competitive research and to apply research outcomes to drive economic and social change. Such universities can receive support from the university fund for up to 25 years for their "Research System Strengthening Plan for Universities for International Research Excellence." Tohoku University was the first school in Japan to be accredited in November 2024.

Process of Formulating the Sendai City Diversity Promotional Guidelines

Date	Details
June 2, 2024	1st Sendai City Diversity Promotional Council Meeting (Keynote speech by Mayor of Sendai, topics for discussion presented by member TAMURA Taro)
August 22, 2024	2nd Sendai City Diversity Promotional Council Meeting (Exchange of views on the draft version of the guidelines outline)
October 9, 2024	3rd Sendai City Diversity Promotional Council Meeting (Exchange of views on the draft interim version of the guidelines)
October 22 to November 25, 2024	Publication of the Sendai City Diversity Promotional Guidelines (Interim Draft) and open period for public comments
December 26, 2024	4th Sendai City Diversity Promotional Council Meeting (Exchange of views on the draft final version of the guidelines)
March 2025	Formulation of the Sendai City Diversity Promotional Guidelines

Members of the Sendai City Diversity Promotional Council

(Titles omitted)

	Name	Affiliation
Chair	OSUMI Noriko	Vice President, Tohoku University
Vice Chair	ISHII Satoshi	Vice President and Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Tohoku Institute of Technology
Committee Member	UDAGAWA Naoko	Professor, Graduate School of Law / Graduate School of Publicpolicy, Tohoku University
Committee Member	OIKAWA Miki	CEO, Pola Inc.
Committee Member	ONO Shizuka	Senior Manager, Public Relations Department, HERALBONY Co., Ltd.
Committee Member	KOBAYASHI Ryohei	CEO, ElevationSpace Inc.
Committee Member	KOMIYA Ninako	President, Sendai Mitsukoshi Ltd.
Committee Member	TAMURA Taro	Director, Institute for Human Diversity Japan
Committee Member	BITTI Davide	International Exchange Officer, Global Engagement Division, Tohoku University
Committee Member	FUKUDA Daisuke	President, Fukuda Shokai Ltd.
Committee Member	HONZU Manami	Professor, Graduate School for Teacher Training, Miyagi University of Education
Committee Member	MALY Elizabeth	Associate Professor, International Research Institute of Disaster Science, Tohoku University

Affiliations and titles are current as of the time of committee appointment (as of June 2, 2024).



Artwork featuring circles in different shapes, sizes, and colors, reflecting differences in individual thoughts and values, created during "Sendai Diversity Festival 2024."

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