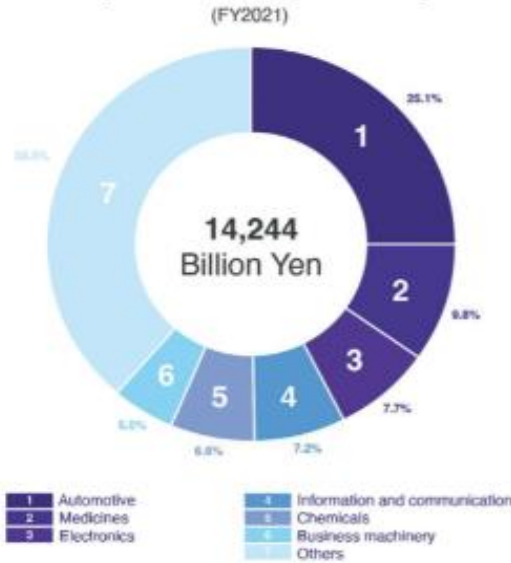


# Japan's Tech Stars Point the Way

## Expenditures by Industry



Source: Statistics Bureau, MIC.

Cutting-edge technology has been one of Japan's economic calling cards for more than 70 years. The island nation has led the world in sectors such as consumer electronics and automobiles, and in crucial developments such as semiconductors, setting the standards of modern, innovative tech growth. Today, in the face of rivals, imitators and cut-price competitors, even the country's most successful companies face all-new challenges. Yet, they remain as vital and important as ever. By allying business traditions with next-gen technology development, firms are finding new ways to lead, according to Scott Callon, CEO of display technology leader Japan Display Inc. (JDI). "Japan, supported by its significant population, excels through a unique blend of profound understanding and unwavering commitment to quality and customer service. This enables the development of products and services that are truly world-class," said Callon. Koichiro Osawa, the president and CEO of NIPPON KAKO-KIZAI

Co., Ltd., prioritizes innovation. "We apply our existing technology to develop new products, of course, but innovations are often inspired by customer requests and our own initiative," said Osawa. Meiwa Corporation President Takashi Yoshida concurred, adding, "Japanese ingenuity allows us to use our resources to the best advantage. Japanese companies also work to meet every customer need 100%." Future planning has also been cited as an essential quality of the Japanese tech industry. "A strength of Japanese businesses is forward thinking—they can plant the seed of the next breakthrough by investing a lot in R&D (research and development) endeavors and always striving to improve," said Takahisa Amemiya, the president of semiconductor specialists FICT Limited. Tadahiro Yoshida, president and representative director of Nihon Kessho Kogaku Co., Ltd., is also proud to play a part in such a industry. "Our plan is to be the most important partner to our clients and produce products that add value for them. We provide our products in the area of semiconductors so we can play an active role in the technological sophistication of the world," said Yoshida. One of the greatest challenges facing Japanese tech manufacturers and trading businesses is competition from lower-cost rivals across Asia. According to Hitoshi Ohira, the president of Midori Precisions Co., Ltd., Japanese businesses must rely on quality standards rather than price cuts to succeed. "Japan excels when catering to very specific requests, depending on the requirements of the client. Japanese companies always listen to the customer's requests and always work to satisfy their needs," said Ohira. While business success is often attributed to innovation and robust practices, the heart of any country's economic growth will always be its education system, working to both champion research and produce the next generation of scientists and leaders. Tomoyuki Sugiyama, the president of Digital Hollywood University, embraces the digital technologies of today and tomorrow. "In recent years, industries everywhere have been grappling with the challenge of how to incorporate artificial intelligence into their businesses. Our challenge within the next few years will be enabling students to use AI in a productive way that benefits them in the long run," said Sugiyama.

## Japan's Pioneering Examples

**Sanipak Company Of Japan, Ltd.** "We have developed the eco-friendly product 'nocco' that releases less CO2 when burned in an incinerator, reducing overall greenhouse-gas emissions. Nocco uses 24% less plastic than regular garbage bags," said CEO Mitsuharu Inoue.

**AISEN Co., Ltd.** "Our sponges have 1,400 filaments per 1 sq cm of surface area, and

they are able to remove even deeper stains due to the extra-fine filaments. Our special techniques make them three times as durable as a similar competitor," said President Kurata Hazutani.

**Tamagawa Seiki Co., Ltd.** "Our sensor's applications tend to be in factories measuring output and speed. Applications also include automobiles and automated mining machines

that work 24/7 and save labor," said President and COO Tadanori Matsuo.

**Takahashi Curtain Wall Corporation.** "Japan is focusing a lot now on reducing CO2, and we have many projects underway contributing to this mission. Just as one example, we added crushed scallop shells to our concrete as a means to mitigate the CO2 emissions released during production," said President Takeharu Takahashi.