

ICT strategy center for realizing a sustainable smart city and self-sustaining cycle.

Fukushima, Japan



“Aizuwakamatsu Smart City” project to maintain a stable population, which is needed to sustain the vitality of the local area, through urban development, human resource training and job creation.

In Aizuwakamatsu City in Fukushima Prefecture, the municipal government has undertaken their “Aizuwakamatsu Smart City” project. Their goal is to maintain a stable population of about 100,000, which is needed to sustain the vitality of the local area, through urban development, human resource training and job creation. So far, in cohort with businesses and the University of Aizu, the municipal government has poured its efforts into congregating the analytics industry and ICT companies.

Analytics is drawing attention as a core technology even for cyclical economies and an essential tool for building the infrastructure environment for the various projects within the city. Moreover, the human resources are in demand. Luckily, the University of Aizu is tops in Japan for both the number of researchers and students in the computer sciences, but disappointingly about 80% of their graduates have to hunt for jobs outside of the prefecture.

This project laid the groundwork for reversing that and steering Aizuwakamatsu into a desired future by building an office that will serve as the strategy center for all of that said above. The plan is to draw businesses from the ICT industry, have them take on and train university students and, in the process, create new and advanced models for utilizing them as human resources. This will hopefully interest and attract other industries, and establish a self-sustaining cycle of regional regeneration.

A place for gathering intellectual minds from around the world and educating students amidst interactivity in the area

The facility itself consists of a 3-story office wing of steel construction and a single-story activity wing made of wood. The office wing has CLT exteriors and wood interiors, some of which originated from locally sourced materials. The activity wing used local lumber products for the structure and its interior and exterior finishing materials.

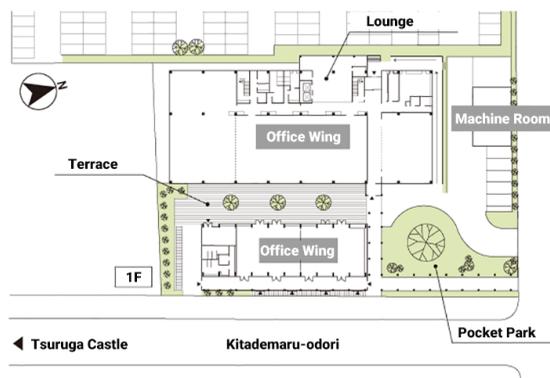
A terrace is located between the activity and office wings to keep them functionally separated and provides space for socializing and enjoying the four seasons of Aizuwakamatsu. The office wing is to the rear where it is away from the road and has column-free rental rooms with a 15 m span that are designed to facilitate layout changes using movable separators and partitions.

Moreover, every floor has a lounge that functions as a semi-public space where tenant-businesses can interact. In order to temper the exposure to direct sunlight, vertical louvres made of CLT are installed on the first to third floors on the west side of the building. Sunlight exposure is additionally controlled by greening, as evergreen vines of Asian jasmine are grown between louvres.

A total of 17 tenant-businesses from inside and outside Japan have been decided, including a venture launched by the University of Aizu and the world's largest consulting firm, Accenture plc.



■ Floor plan



■ Self-sustaining cycle envisioned by AiCT Smart City

Japan's future

- Networking with and amongst incoming businesses and people
- Business model creation and proving via collaboration of local businesses

A castle town with a history and culture

- Networking with and amongst incoming businesses and people
- Business model creation and proving via collaboration of local businesses

Aizu's dreams

- Congregation of ICT businesses
- Shared support for local industries
- Halted outflow of jobs and human resources
- Economic growth and educated manpower residing in the city
- Startups

Tenant Companies

- Big data
- Analytics
- AI, IoT, DMO*
- Business ventures launched by the University of Aizu

Installed Products

