

【NEWS RELEASE】

March 24, 2025

Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation

Partnership Agreement with Avispa Fukuoka to Contribute to Community Revitalization

TOKYO, March 24, 2025 - Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, Ltd. (President & CEO: Akihiro Fukutome, hereinafter "SMBC"), a subsidiary of Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, Ltd. (President & Group CEO: Toru Nakashima, hereinafter "SMBC Group"), concludes a "Web3 Community Co-Creation Partner" agreement (hereinafter the "Partner Agreement") with Avispa Fukuoka, Ltd. (President & CEO: Kozo Yuki, hereinafter "Avispa Fukuoka") with the aim of contributing to community revitalization through sports.

SMBC has been a sponsor of several sports activities, such as Nippon Professional Baseball Organization's "the Nippon Series", a Japanese national rugby team, "D.LEAGUE", and others that share the mutual mindset as the SMBC Group's management philosophy and values. Furthermore, SMBC has contributed to corporate sports by joining the "W-League" (*1), and worked to strengthen and expand support for those who engage in sports through the "University Sports Support Program" (*2).

Through these sports-related initiatives, SMBC reaffirmed that sports have multifaceted aspects that contribute to the acceptance of diverse values and the fostering of a sense of unity, and recognized that these characteristics help revitalize local communities and drive "Japan's regrowth". SMBC Group, which has set "Create social value" as one of its pillars of management in the current Mid-Term Management Plan, will take on the challenge of revitalizing communities through sports as an initiative that contributes to solving social issues by utilizing the characteristics of sports, in addition to its existing sports-related initiatives.

Avispa Fukuoka, which belongs to the "J.League" (*3), aims to be the soccer club most dedicated to addressing social issues in Japan, and has launched the "FUKUOKA TAKE ACTION!" (*4) to solve social issues in cooperation with partner companies, local governments, schools, and other various organizations. In addition, Avispa Fukuoka has launched Japan's first sports DAO (*5), "Avispa DAO" (*6), and is working to create a new sports community leveraging Web3.

SMBC will work to revitalize communities through sports, starting with the Partner Agreement with Avispa Fukuoka, which is actively working to solve social issues and create new communities. First of all, SMBC plans to emphasize topics such as establishing a new academy scholarship program and fostering the development of sports-related industries by promoting sports data utilization, while actively engaging our community in these efforts. In addition, the know-how and solutions developed through the initiatives with Avispa Fukuoka will not only be utilized in SMBC Group's existing sports initiatives but also be distributed across various regions in Japan, leading to the acceleration of initiatives to create social value through sports.

*1 Joining the W-League

Please kindly refer to the news release: (https://www.smbc.co.jp/news_e/pdf/e20240423_01.pdf)

*2 University Sports Support Program

Please kindly refer to the news release: (https://www.smbc.co.jp/news_e/pdf/e20240508_01.pdf)

*3 J.League

Japan Professional Football League

*4 FUKUOKA TAKE ACTION!

Please kindly refer to the special website: (<https://avispsyaren.com/>)

*5 DAO

An abbreviation for Decentralized Autonomous Organization. An organizational structure that leverages blockchain technology to operate autonomously without a centralized management authority, aiming for self-governance by its participants.

*6 Avispa DAO

Please kindly refer to the white paper: (<https://nine-eel-b88.notion.site/avispadao-wp>)

END