

PRESS RELEASE

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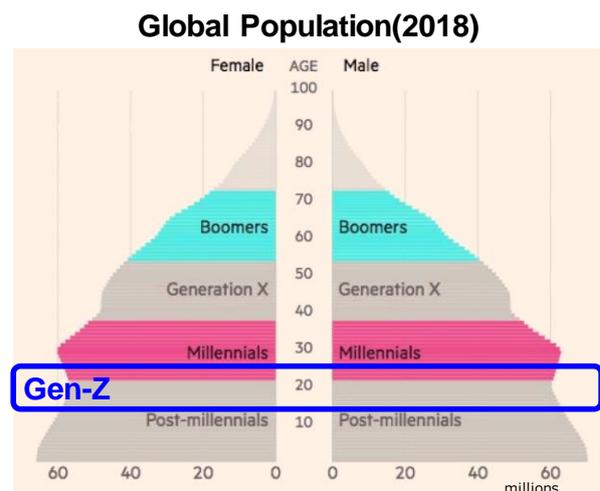
Ajinomoto Co., Inc. to Establish a Dedicated Organization for Creating Businesses That Target Gen-Z Co-Creation of Value with Startups and Universities

TOKYO, March 30, 2021 – Ajinomoto Co., Inc. (“Ajinomoto Co.”) will establish a Generation Z Business Creation Department in its Food Products Division on April 1, 2021.

Generation Z (“Gen-Z”), born between 1995 and 2009, numbers approximately 1.3 billion people worldwide, accounting for a significant proportion of the global population (see figure below). Characterized by strong interest in topics such as the global environment, social contribution, sustainability, and respect for diversity and individuality (according to Ajinomoto Co. research), Gen-Z is a key force in the creation and spread of value for the well-being of future generations. Gen-Z will soon be the mainstream generation. Aiming to be a “solution-providing group of companies for food and health issues,” Ajinomoto Co. considers Gen-Z to be a core target that will serve as the basis for building a business model for new food styles and advanced food marketing, which will lead to better mental and physical health and greater social value.



Generation Z Business Creation Department
New Business Development Team members and
Team Leader Yusuke Yamada (second from left)



Source: UN Population Division Graphic by Cale Tilford, ©FT

Ajinomoto Co. will therefore establish the Generation Z Business Creation Department, which will be a dedicated organization for creating new business targeting young people. The department will seek out the values and true desires of Generation Z to accelerate the creation of businesses around the world that provide value by helping to resolve food and health issues. This is the first Gen-Z business creation department to be established in Japan’s food industry (according to Ajinomoto Co. research).

In establishing the department, Ajinomoto Co. has formed the New Business Development Team to get more closely acquainted with the values of Gen-Z and investigate businesses that are grounded in its lifestyle patterns. To do so, a management-track employee in his thirties has been appointed as leader, and three employees in their twenties have been selected as team members through internal recruiting. Unconstrained by the framework of existing businesses, these members will freely conceptualize from the perspective of Gen-Z and consumers to systematically conduct business planning and development, and promote market acceptance for speedy business creation. Tasks will include development of products in new fields and new channels as well as a new business model that utilizes digital technology.

In a departure from a conventional office, the new department’s activities will be based at SHIBUYA QWS,* a co-creation facility on the 15th floor of Shibuya Scramble Square. Located in a spot that has strong ties with Gen-Z, the department will promote commercialization by co-creating new types of value with startups, universities and other parties, with plans to launch new products or services for Gen-Z during fiscal 2021.

Ajinomoto Co. will continue in its aim to be a “solution-providing group of companies for food and health issues” through advanced initiatives that are in touch with diversifying lifestyles and eating habits.

*SHIBUYA QWS: A co-creation facility for generating ideas and new businesses that lead to social value through the gathering and interaction of diverse people, based on the concept of “an intersection of possibilities that questions the world from Shibuya” (QWS stands for Question with Sensibility).



SHIBUYA QWS

Reference

Press release dated February 26, 2021:

“Ajinomoto Co., Inc. Announces Changes in Its Organization and Personnel”

https://www.ajinomoto.co.jp/company/en/ir/news/news-20210226-01/main/0/link/2021_0226-1_E.pdf

The Ajinomoto Group, unlocking the power of amino acids, aims to resolve food and health issues associated with dietary habits and aging, and contribute to greater wellness for people worldwide.

Based on the corporate message “Eat Well, Live Well.”, we have been scientifically pursuing the possibilities of amino acids to aim for future growth by creating new value through sustainable and innovative solutions for communities and society.

The Ajinomoto Group has offices in 35 countries and regions, and sells products in more than 130 countries and regions. In fiscal 2019, sales were 1.1000 trillion yen (10.1 billion U.S. dollars). To learn more, visit www.ajinomoto.com.

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