KOBE BIOMEDICAL INNOVATION CLUSTER
KOBE, a global hub for healthcare

In response to the Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 1995, the Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster (KBIC) was founded to bring research centers, clinical institutes and innovative companies together to take healthcare to the next generation. KBIC is the best example of the transformation of Kobe into a global leader in healthcare innovations.

KBIC has chosen the simple hexagon as its logo, because each vertex represents the source of its success: Business, Culture, Government, Infrastructure, Nature, and People.
Innovative strategy for innovative healthcare

Based on its quick success, the KBIC has become a model cluster in Japan and Asia. The cluster is a dense concentration of research centers, medical institutions and companies. The KBIC gives access to diverse organizations who can strengthen your basic research or translate it into a commercial healthcare product.
Excellent place to work and live

With just over 1.5 million residents, Kobe ranks as the sixth largest city in Japan by population, but is also surrounded by nature, with the sea to the south and mountains to the north. Historically, it has been a major economic hub for trade and manufacturing and has long been one of the first choices for multinationals in Japan.
New model for healthcare solutions

The KBIC brings together three major groups for innovation in healthcare:

- **Basic research** (Research institutions)
  - RIKEN Center for Biosystems Dynamics Research
  - RIKEN Center for Computational Science (K computer)
  - R&D centers for biomedical research

- **Clinical application** (Hospitals)
  - Highly advanced medical institutions
  - Health promotion
  - Nursing care and rehabilitation

- **Industrialization** (Companies)
  - Drug & biotechnology
  - Regenerative medicine
  - Medical device
Clusters 8 medical institutes that provide highly advanced medical treatments and help translate basic and clinical research into commercial products.

In 2001, RIKEN, Japan’s largest comprehensive research organization broke ground in KBIC. Since then, several university campuses and research institutes have opened inside the Cluster.

Japan proudly hosts K computer, which Graph500 ranked as number one for big data processing performance. K computer is just one reason why the KBIC is one of the best places in the world to conduct simulations for drug discovery and other healthcare challenges. A successor to the K computer is scheduled for 2021.

**Medical area**

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**R & D area**

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**Simulation area**

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Taking your research to the next level
Success builds on success

Every year, more and more companies are joining the KBIC, strengthening our diversity and expanding our impact. Companies are of all sizes and types, including venture, small- and middle-sized, and multinationals.

Number of companies and employees

Companies: 350 (as of Mar. 31, 2019)  
Employees: 9,400 (as of Mar. 31, 2018)

Economic Impact on Kobe city


Company Breakdown (as of Mar. 31, 2019)

- Medical device: 27.0%
- Pharmaceutical: 14.8%
- R & D support: 15.6%
- IT & software: 4.8%
- Medical institutions: 2.8%
- Universities: 3.4%
- Logistics: 2.3%
- Medical care & rehabilitation: 4.5%
- Health promotion: 9.1%
- Nursing care & rehabilitation: 8.2%
- Universities: 3.4%
- Other: 7.4%

Success builds on success
Healthcare Innovation

The KBIC promotes "Translational Research" for the clinical application of basic research.

The KBIC is home to the Foundation for Biomedical Research and Innovation (FBRI), which aids at every step from the point of a scientific discovery to the release of a commercial healthcare product, with strengths in regenerative medicine, medical devices, and pharmaceuticals.

- Regenerative medicine
- Medical devices
- Pharmaceuticals
Japan is a global leader in regenerative medicine, and the KBIC is a leader in Japan, with strengths in cell development and cell processing. In 2014, two members of the KBIC, RIKEN and the Institute of Biomedical Research and Innovation, with the cooperation of Kobe City Medical Center General Hospital, announced the world’s first transplant of an induced pluripotent stem cell product into a human patient. Other stem-cell-based regenerative therapies are also being developed at the KBIC.
As a super-aging country, Japan is investing heavily in robotics and other medical devices for the unique health challenges that are emerging with its demographics. Therefore, the KBIC has assembled many companies and organizations with expertise in medicine, engineering, and industrialization for new solutions to minimally invasive treatments, value-based healthcare, and elderly care. The KBIC provides a synergistic environment for these companies to realize their goals.
The region of Kansai, of which Kobe is a member, has long been a powerhouse in pharmaceuticals. K computer is the most prominent example of how the KBIC can assist in pharmaceutical solutions, but so too are the many universities, research institutes and medical centers found in the Cluster. Its super-aging society has made healthy longevity a high priority in Japan, and the KBIC is a major beneficiary of resulting policy.
Supporting you and your goals

The KBIC was created to build a vibrant network between industry and academia for innovation in the healthcare sector. We will help you make your ideas into commercial solutions.

FBRI
Foundation for Biomedical Research and Innovation at Kobe

Carries out fundamental research and provides support for

- Network building on global network
- Industry-academia collaboration
- Business matching
- Incubation

Medical Innovation through collaboration

Basic research (Research institutions)
Clinical application (Hospitals)
Industrialization (Companies)
Since its inception, the KBIC has built a new model that we want to see spread not only to Japan, but to Asia and the world. It has revitalized the city of Kobe following the devastating Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 1995 by transforming Kobe into a global biomedical hub.

The KBIC has built a large conglomerate of research institutes, companies and medical centers that together have written a blueprint for translating an abstract idea into a commercial solution for healthcare. This is symbolized by where the KBIC stands, which was first an empty plot of land that is now full of research centers, medical institutes and companies.

Many developed countries are experiencing dropping birthrates and aging populations, but none more so than Japan. Japan has made preparation for this demographic change a policy priority, and the KBIC is using its vision to show countries how to solve the accompanying healthcare challenges.

The key to this success is our vibrant network, which continues to grow. Join us in our journey.

We succeed when you succeed

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