



**Sapporo, Blessed by Snow  
City as Mediation**



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# 都市

## City

Incorporated as a city in 1922, Sapporo is the prefectural capital of Hokkaido. Sapporo currently has a population of approximately 1.9 million, or over one-third of Hokkaido's 5.6 million. Sapporo's basis for the creation of media arts has been strengthened by the city's maturity as an urban center, a clean environment, the natural beauty of four distinctive seasons, and development of a cultural pioneering spirit, as the local people have learned to withstand cold winters with heavy snowfalls.

# 文化景観

## Cultural City Scape

Sapporo has a unique basis for urban cultural activities that is closely related to its cold and snowy climate. From spring through autumn, festivals that celebrate seasonal beauty and harvests add color to the city's cultural scenery. Distinctive cultural facilities include Sapporo Concert Hall "Kitara", reputed to have the best acoustic conditions in the country; the vast Sapporo Art Park, in which the School of Design of Sapporo City University is located; Odori Park, a representative festival park in Japan; and Moerenuma Park, designed by a sculptor of international renown, Isamu Noguchi. Many such facilities skillfully incorporate the natural surroundings into their overall design. The marked development of citizen-generated media that Sapporo is currently experiencing, in forms ranging from ICT to digital content and social media, is also attributable to Sapporo's uniqueness.

# CGM都市

## Citizen-Generated Media Center

As the birthplace of Hatsune Miku, the internationally popular Vocaloid singing synthesizer software, Sapporo has a high concentration of leading creators of contemporary Japanese youth culture, as well as of creative industries relating to citizen-generated media (CGM), social media and mobile media. To sum up, Sapporo is an active production center of media arts.

# 3

# 10 Things to know

メディアアート  
の  
シンボル  
ケース

## Media Arts on Display

Sapporo Ekimae-dori Underground Walkway serve as showcases of grass-roots video competitions and the latest media arts. This CGM space, accessible to all, is accelerating people's creative economic activities. Today Sapporo is full of new creative economic possibilities.

4

アイヌ文化

## Ainu Culture

Sapporo possesses in its collective memory the long history and tradition of the Ainu, indigenous people who are believed to have arrived in Hokkaido from northern Japanese Islands. The descendants of Ainu, who have inherited their ancestral tradition, have places of expression in Sapporo's contemporary creative industrial life. Some leaders of the Ainu culture are opening up new possibilities in media arts, starting new trends in tourism, design, arts, handicrafts, food production, traditional music and so forth.

5

クリエイティブ

## Creative Firms

In Sapporo, a large number of designers and creative producers engage in activities that span the globe. The city's creative cluster development policy, intended to nurture and support next-generation creative industries, focuses on media arts as well. In line with the policy, an inter-sector organization, Sapporo Media Arts Lab, has been established. Operated by a management team, public private partnership is expected to be a driving force for Sapporo's creative industries and media arts.

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about SAPPORO

# 観光

## Tourism

Sapporo welcomes visitors from all over the world. More than a century ago, travelers seeking pure air started enjoying fresh mountain air and natural beauty. Since then, tourism has been one of Sapporo's most important economic sectors.

# 7

# 雪

## Snow

Sapporo has a long tradition of winter sports. The city's urban infrastructure was planned and developed in preparation for the Winter Olympics in 1972, which also boosted Sapporo's progress as a city.

# 8

# フエステイ

## Festivities

Sapporo hosts numerous annual festivals including Sapporo Snow Festival, YOSAKOI Soran Festival, Pacific Music Festival (PMF), Sapporo Autumn Fest, and Sapporo International Short Film Festival and Market (Sapporo Short Fest). In Odori Park, situated in the heart of the city, those festivities are communicated to the public via various media. Media artists support and vitalize not only such major events representative of Sapporo but also less conspicuous aspects of Sapporo's sustainable cultural life.

# 9

# 寛容性

## Tolerance

As a major city in the North that has lived in harmony with the colorful beauty of four seasons and Nature's abundant blessings, Sapporo has nurtured a new culture of values that are somewhat free from Japan's traditional cultural norms. "Free" means sometimes "careless" and sometimes "liberated" from certain fixations or preconceived ideas, thereby demonstrating great tolerance toward others. This also shows in one uniquely Sapporo characteristic of focusing on being progressive, instead of clinging to the past.

# 10



Creative City Sapporo and Media Arts

# Welcome

Freedom, tolerance, a frontier spirit, and collaboration are four key terms that characterize life in Sapporo. Harmony between city and nature is a lesson of wisdom and ingenuity that Sapporo people learned while developing the vast land and living under severe natural conditions. The hardships endured by early settlers who had come to Hokkaido from all parts of Japan in search of freedom have taught later generations to be tolerant toward different cultures.

In 1972, Sapporo hosted the Winter Olympics, an event that served as a giant step toward the city's urbanization and modernization. Since then, with its natural charms of clean air and four distinctive seasons, rich food culture, urban facilities and events of cultural and artistic interest, Sapporo has attracted numerous tourists from not only within Japan but also the rest of the world.

During its 150-year history, Sapporo has developed its urban media functions, absorbing external and advanced cultural trends. The city's cultural diversity and tolerance have nurtured local people's strong interest in other cultures, developing in turn the city as a "mediator" between various peoples. Media arts not only promote next-generation urban information systems but also link the city with its people more strongly, and the people with the city's future and creativity. As a City of Media Arts, Sapporo has many proposals to make.







In this outline, we would like to show you Sapporo's potential, whose core is its urban life evolving in harmony with the natural environment. Indeed, Nature is felt so close at hand in this urban center with a snowfall of six meters in winter. Odori Park, situated at the center of Sapporo with its population of 1.9 million, is the city's representative public park and the venue for various events. This is also a media space that people can use to express themselves. Media arts should not be confined within the walls of art galleries; they should blossom in cities as media, to express today's cultural diversity.

Thanks to digital media, barriers of expression that have traditionally existed in music, publishing, broadcasting and so on are being eliminated, and means of expression are becoming widely available to the general public. We are proud of ordinary residents with creative aspirations who enrich the city's cultural life. They are active users of new social media and creators of digital cultural products of the highest quality.

Sapporo is a center of food processing where Hokkaido's delightful food ingredients are made into attractive products, as well as of many media promotion projects. It is also a production center of cultural know-how unique to a cold climate ("Snow-how"), new ideas, expertise and new media.

Sapporo aims to be a media city linked with the world. How does a city function as media? Media arts are the frontiers that offer the leading answer to this question. Sapporo's media arts, including people's media and grass-roots contests and other activities, can lead the enhancement of the city – from improving its townscape to enabling people to feel more comfortable, secure, peaceful and happier.

Sapporo wishes to engage in global exchange with other cities. As information exchange develops among creative citizens everywhere, applications will be produced that contribute to creative cities around the world.

## Sapporo as Mediation



## Spirit of Freedom

Sapporo is much younger than other cities in Japan. However, Sapporo had long existed before its history as a municipality began, as the Ainu origin of its name suggests. The traditional culture of the Ainu, the indigenous people of all of Hokkaido, is an important point of reference that guides us all in Hokkaido with regard to our relationship with Nature and how we should realize a sustainable society. Animism, whose elements are found in the local dietary habits and other domains, is the origin of Sapporo people's behavioral patterns and spirit of freedom that is premised on awe of Nature.

The spirit of freedom, premised on harmony between humans and Nature and the ability to open a path where before there was none, resonates with Sapporo's entrepreneurship. The remarkable development of IT venture businesses in Sapporo in the 1990s is a concrete example. The IT industrial cluster called Sapporo Valley gave rise to a series of companies that lead Japan's information and communication technologies. At present, Sapporo's entrepreneurship is alive in mobile content, digital games and CGM companies.



Harmony between humans and Nature ensures an environment optimal to the productivity of the ICT industries, which requires high levels of concentration. In the late 20th century, Sapporo shifted the focus of its urban development policy to the promotion of information industry and the development of a foundation for cultural and artistic activities by controlling the excessive development of industrial production facilities in urban areas. This move complies with the spirit of freedom premised on awe of Nature and its blessings.

In Sapporo, there are no large chemical plants or industrial zones. This is because the people of Sapporo have opted for the protection of their superb natural environment and quality of life in the community, over economies of scale based on mass production and consumption, established values of the 20th century. In other words, the people of Sapporo have chosen preserving their living environment in harmony with nature, rather than achieving higher targets for production and consumption activities.

In the early 21st century, Sapporo has come to be known as the city richest in natural blessings in Japan. In fact, in a recent opinion poll, Sapporo was voted the first city the Japanese would think to be attracted.

# Sustainable Urban Infrastructure

In the late 20th century, Sapporo City government and local citizens envisaged and adopted a plan for sustainable urban infrastructure for the 21st century. As the major city farthest from the central government in Tokyo, Sapporo considered early development of information networks and ICT infrastructure as an inevitable challenge. Today, the geographical and temporal barriers have been removed, with Sapporo's information networks solidly linked with Tokyo as well as the rest of the world. The networks constitute the basis for a new phase in Sapporo's globalization.

In many parts of the world, the notion of a "good" life in a city is associated firstly with the city's economic superiority or concentration of industries. In Sapporo, a good life means a quality life. It is not a life of extravagance. A good life in Sapporo is about being authentic and essential and pursuing one's happiness. Sapporo's creative industries include down-to-earth food, green design and fashion industries that have been created not only within the boundaries of content production and media industries but also in people's daily spheres, nurtured and developed to make a profit. Innovation is promoted by new creative businesses based on new ideas mainly circulated via social media and mobile media, instead of conventional mass media-dependent content production and media industries. Media arts in Sapporo, as a driving force for a Creative City, will yield many positive results that can contribute to the world in various ways.



# Time in Abundance in a City

Sapporo has little traffic congestion. To be sure, in winter heavy snowfalls can sometimes disturb urban road traffic. However, Sapporo's urban traffic and snow removal systems are operated based on the world's best logistics. Traveling from the city center to the countryside takes only about half an hour to one hour. The annual snowfall of six meters is a precious cultural asset for Sapporo. For residents, and all the more for visitors, snow is the key to excellent ways of communing with Nature via winter sports and hot springs in winter. As spring arrives in May, the surrounding greenery signals the beginning of another life cycle. Summer brings about a humidity-free clarity that pleases all senses. Mountains covered with colored autumn leaves offer breath-taking views and deep emotion. Sapporo's fresh air and open scenery will calm you down and de-stress you, unlike in any other urban center. You might even think that time has stopped. Here, it is not the effort to keep running and racing against time that is celebrated. Sapporo's productivity is supported by a quiet intensity that flows out of the tranquility of time in the city. We tend to believe that a cold climate is ideal for conceptualization and development of ICT and media arts.

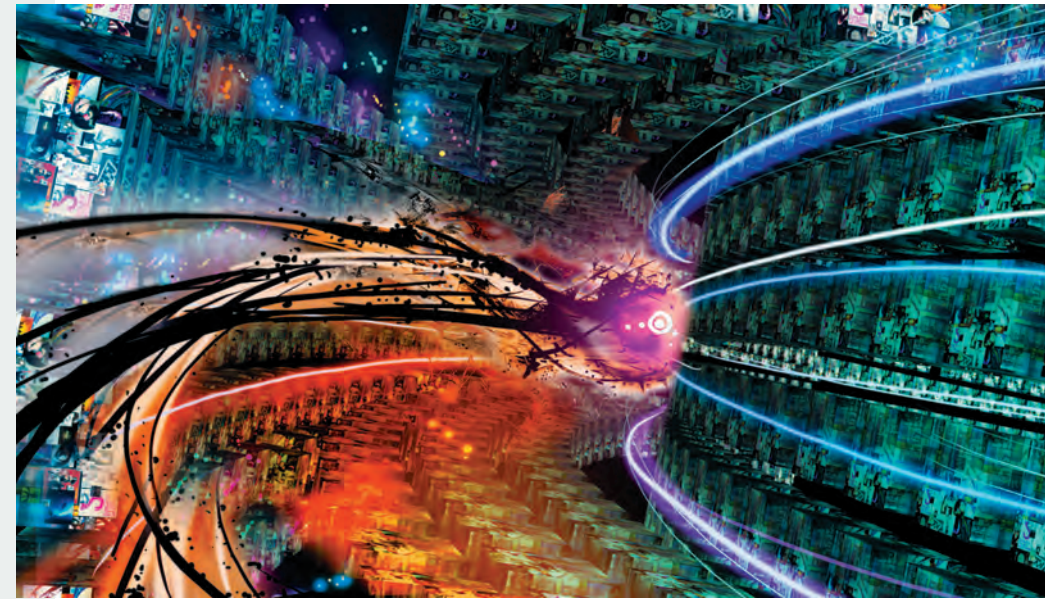


New Chitose Airport, the largest in Hokkaido, is well connected with the rest of the world with direct flights to many Asian destinations and via Narita Airport and Asian hub airports. The 50-km distance between Sapporo and New Chitose Airport can be covered in 37 minutes by express train. Flight times from this airport are 1.5 hours to Tokyo and 4.5 hours to Shanghai and Hong Kong. From Sapporo, you can leave for a meeting at 10:00 a.m. in Tokyo the same morning.

New Chitose Airport boasts a level of convenience among the highest in the country in terms of all that is required of an airport, including global and domestic access.

As the world gets smaller, regions take on growing value. People around the world are seeking new “charms” for cities. Here lies a great opportunity.

As a City of Media Arts, Sapporo will have sophisticated urban information media technologies to actively draw out value from the media arts ahead of the times to contribute to next-generation creative cities. New visions of urban festivities and media will be born through this endeavor. Infrastructure for the information networks necessary for this purpose will be best reinforced by cultural investments and creative capital augmentation.



Child of Eden ©2010 Ubisoft Entertainment

## Sapporo's Mission as a City of Media Arts

In 2014, an international arts exhibition covering media arts will be inaugurated, and Sapporo Media Arts Lab, operated by public private partnership, by will be the driving force that promotes Sapporo's creative city development policy as a whole. New creative industrial clusters, which will lead the new creative economy, will reflect comprehensive cultural activities related to agriculture, fisheries and handicrafts, instead of separate groups of activities concerned only with images, music, digital content, and so on. Developing a new framework that organically links those different artistic and cultural activities is a meaningful investment in future value, which enables media arts to make a great creative contribution to the 21st century. The development of various applications centering on media arts should contribute to creative cities the world over.

# Creative Milieu of Tolerance

People in Sapporo, with its heavy snowfalls in winter, engage in snow removal in urban areas and confront snow barriers personally. From this experience, they learn that one cannot control Nature. The people of Sapporo have personally acquired the attitude of accepting Nature as is, to realize their minimum daily urban activities, instead of denying the limits imposed by Nature. Housing, commerce, food and beverages, and all other urban services are available in Sapporo. It is possible to purchase a tract of land in a mountain resort zone and have a sophisticated environment-friendly house or build a traditional ecologically optimal log house. Sapporo welcomes creative people who wish to settle down in Sapporo as the base of their creative activities, away from the noise of a great city and unsatisfactory living conditions. Sapporo offers the best possible living conditions, a spirit of freedom and tolerance, traditional expertise and contemporary abilities. At the heart of Sapporo's central district, many international hotels and convention centers are in operation, welcoming visitors from all over the world with open arms. Sapporo's tourism and hospitality offer excellent services, as in other parts of Japan. Sapporo as a City of Media Arts will inspire the creativity of people the world over and serve as the foundation of the next-generation creative economy.



# Creative Business Ideas



While the world is becoming increasingly smaller, Sapporo-born media arts and related creative industries are in their awakening period. In addition to existing major media and content companies, media arts entities are actively exploring new cultural industries, creating value ahead of the times. There are an increasing number of success stories in this area.

We seek and detect new talent and content for Sapporo's creative industries. In Sapporo, there are well-established businesses that offer digital materials (photography, video images, sound, etc.) to support content creation and expression by professionals and amateurs alike, such as Datacraft, Crypton Future Media and New Peak Film). The environment in which quality digital materials are provided for content production is similar to that of local homemakers who prepare creative dishes with fresh ingredients available in Sapporo.

Cooking is a basic activity in which ordinary people can express their creativity. Sapporo has a well-established digital material supply industry, which has in turn given birth to archive businesses that handle photographs, video images and audio materials created by digital material users and entered in competitions.

As players in the content business expand from conventional media publishers to general users and consumers wishing to reach out in their own way, this trend is developing Sapporo into a center of a new creative economy. A major factor for the global popularity of Japanese media artists and "Cool Japan" deriving from Japanese sub- and pop-cultures is the cultural creativity of Japanese youth.

Hatsune Miku, the globally popular singing voice synthesizing software, was marketed by Sapporo-based Crypton Future Media in 2007. The software has developed into a range of user-generated image and character businesses involving creation and competitions beyond the original sphere of music. Concerts by Hatsune Miku, an international virtual singing idol, are always fervently received.

# Steps to Becoming a Creative City

City of Sapporo enforces various project with a citizen towards a creative city.

City of Sapporo invited "iSummit" (International conference for Creative Commons) the first time in Asia. (2008)

Sapporo Media Arts Forum organized for "Media Arts Festival in Sapporo" of Agency for Cultural Affairs. (2010)  
CGM(Citizen Generated Media) Digital Signage was installed at a Sapporo Ekimae-dori Underground Walkway. (2011)





 dreamcat115  
iSummit'08\_0730key\_03  
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dreamcat/2715628999/in/set-72157606416257132>

“Sapporo Odori 500-m Underground Walkway Gallery” in the concourse connecting the Odori and Bus Center subway stations(2011)

"The fanon as the expression act" which displays Sapporo Biennale pre-exhibition in 2011.

In November, 2011, Creative City Sapporo Exective Committe organize International Symposium for theme of "Media Arts and a Creative Cities".



# Role of University and Sapporo Media Arts Lab

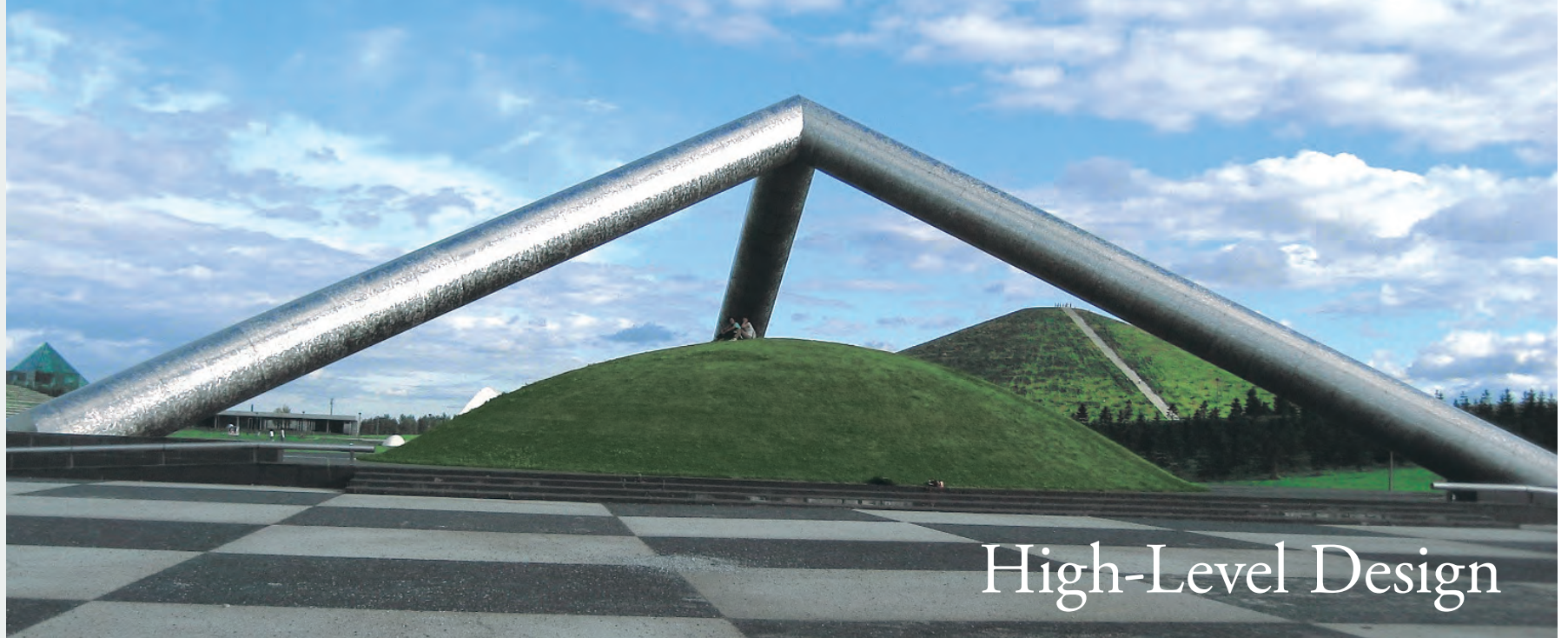


In 2006, Sapporo City established the School of Design at Sapporo City University, with a course in media design. In its wide-ranging curricula and workshops related to media arts, students study the contemporary media environment and its interaction with the living sphere, covering a whole spectrum of media-related themes from mass media to the advent of social media.

The School's unique campus situated within Sapporo Art Park district is the "stage" for the growth and progress of young students who will lead the exploration of various design domains and Sapporo's next-generation media arts city development. The students, motivated by their desire to accumulate knowledge and examine the relationships between community contribution and cities and media arts, play an important role in the promotion of the local creative industries.



Sapporo Media Arts Lab is a research and development organization jointly operated by public private partnership. The organization promotes international artistic expositions and events, supports creative industries, and contributes to the training of local media artists and creators. Media Arts Lab also provides creative assistance to the local agricultural, fishery, food-processing and tourism sectors as constituents of the traditional industrial foundation, and organizes creative clusters for linkage and creative inspiration based on media arts in the framework of cultural and environmental educational programs. The organization also provides support in the form of assistance to creative business experts and workshops for entrepreneurs. Sapporo Media Arts Lab, an inter-sector driving force that promotes Sapporo's future creative city development policy, advises the city government on creative city development, organizes the Sapporo Media Arts International Conference, and manages the media arts section at the International Art Exposition. The Lab is expected to promote media arts as the core of Sapporo's creative city development. More importantly, the organization is charged with the mission of developing applications for media arts-based creative cities, through which Sapporo Media Arts Lab is expected to greatly contribute to urban information system development and a next-generation media business strategy making in Asia and the rest of the world.



## High-Level Design



Moerenuma Park, whose master plan was designed by a sculptor of international renown, Isamu Noguchi, is an impressive space born out of a plan to transform with green belts a landfill site that had received a total of 2.7 million tons of waste. The Park received the Good Design Award of Japan in 2002. Design is closely related to a locale's culture and ambience. Sapporo's design explores its own unique place within the sphere of Asia design. How can one enrich a snowed-in interior space? The cold climate is key; in Scandinavia, it has given birth to characteristic furniture, interior ornaments, and lighting and audio equipment. In Sapporo, a next-generation design industry incorporating advanced technologies and values deriving from media arts will be born shortly.

Sapporo's fashion business is characterized by the consumer-initiated Sapporo Collection, which cannot be found elsewhere in the world. The Sapporo Collection is a particularly successful regional fashion event in Japan. The event is special in that it not only enjoys the participation of well-known brands and nationally developed fashion groups but also the participation of local citizens, who demonstrate their own creations. This energizes the local apparel industry and in turn creates a new market for consumer-generated fashion.

Designs and fashion trends are often inspired by Sapporo's seasonal changes and natural scenery: the vivid green of spring expressing vitality, the whiteness and coolness of snow, the various nuances and shapes of colored autumn leaves, the crystals of snow reflected in jewelry designs, trees in the mountains transformed into novel furniture ... Sapporo's nature is a source of endless inspirations that enrich urban life.

In other words, the originality of designs, colors, materials, patterns, functions and lifestyles created in Sapporo suggests the potential of the city's future creative industry. AINU design pendants, chiemoku inc. letter openers, foldable wooden sleds—all are examples of new designs derived from the Sapporo lifestyle.



# Sapporo

HOKKAIDO

札幌

# Facts

## Location

Sapporo is located in the southwest corner of Hokkaido, the northern most island of Japan. With a population of approximately 1,900,000, Sapporo is the fifth largest city (in terms of population) in Japan after Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka and Nagoya.

Total Area: 1,121.12km<sup>2</sup>

Sapporo is the twentieth largest city in Japan in terms of area, as of April 1, 2009)

Dimensions: East-west 42.30 km, north-south 45.40 km

Latitude and Longitude:

North - 43° 11' N.lat.

South - 42° 46' N.lat.

East- 141° 30' E.long.

West - 140° 59' E.long.

## Origin of Sapporo's Name

The name of Sapporo is said to be derived from the Ainu language--"Sari-Poro-Pet" (River lined with large reed bed) or "Sat-Poro-Pet" (Large dried-up river).

## Symbols of Sapporo City

Tree: Lilac

Flower: Lily of the valley

Bird: Cuckoo

## Access

For access from outside of Hokkaido, travel by air is most common. New Chitose Airport is connected to a network of airports throughout Japan, including Tokyo (Haneda and Narita), Nagoya, and Osaka (Itami and Kansai).

Main Air Routs and Approximate Flight Times (To New Chitose Airport)

Tokyo (Haneda) – Sapporo: 90 min.

Nagoya – Sapporo: 100 min.

Osaka (Itami) – Sapporo: 115 min.

Fukuoka – Sapporo: 155 min.

Trains and buses connect the New Chitose airport with Sapporo. The rapid-transit train operated by Japan Railways departs from New Chitose Airport Station every 15 minutes, and the commute to JR Sapporo Station takes 36 minutes. By bus, it is approximately 60 minutes via expressway to the central downtown area.

There is also an overnight sleeper train, operated by Japan Railways, that runs from Osaka station and Ueno Station (Tokyo) to Sapporo. Ferries are regularly operated between outside of Hokkaido and the ports of Tomakomai, Otaru.

## Climate

Average temperature (2010): 9.8°C (49.6°F)

Highest temperature (2010): 34.1°C (93.4°F)

Lowest temperature (2010): -12.6°C (9.3°F)

Cumulative Precipitation (2010): 1,127.6 mm

(52.16 in)

Cumulative Snowfall (2010): 490 cm (192.91 in)

## Population

Current Population: 1,921,831 (as of October 1, 2011)

Sapporo's total population accounts for 35% of the total population of Hokkaido and 1.5% of the total population of Japan.

Population Based on Age (April 1, 2011):

Youth Population (0-14 years old) – 226,334 (11.9%)

Working Population (15-64 years old) - 1,283,528 (67.4%)

Elderly Population (64 years old and older) – 394,753 (20.7%)

Average Age: 44.7 years old (Male – 43.2 years old / Female – 46.0 years old)

Average Life Expectancy (2009): Male – 79.69 years old / Female 86.56 years old

## Education

Kindergartens: 150 (17 municipal) / 25,257 students

Elementary Schools: 211 (209 municipal) / 92,128 students

Junior High Schools: 108 (100 municipal) /

48,632 students

High Schools: 56 (9 municipal) / 48,033 students

Junior Colleges: 8 / 3,666 students

Universities: 15 (1 municipal) / 50,312 students

Schools for the Disabled: 14 (4 municipal) / 1,592 students

## Sister Cities

Portland (U.S.A.) – Official relations established Nov. 17, 1959

Munich (Germany) - Official relations established Aug. 28, 1972

Shenyang (China) – Official relations established Nov. 18, 1980

Novosibirsk (Russia) - Official relations established June 13, 1990

Daejeon (Korea) – Official relations established Oct. 22, 2010

Non-Japanese Registration (March 31, 2011) – 9,564 registrants

Foreign Students (May 1, 2010) - 1,630 students

Consulates in Sapporo:

Consulate Generals (U.S.A., Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, People's Republic of China)

Consulates (Australia)

# References

**City of Sapporo** : <http://www.city.sapporo.jp/city/english/index.html>

**Welcome City Sapporo** : <http://www.welcome.city.sapporo.jp/english/index.html>

**Sapporo City University** : <http://www.scu.ac.jp/english/>

**Inter-x-cross Creative Center** : <http://www.icc-jp.com/en/>

**Sapporo City Jazz** : <http://sapporocityjazz.web.transer.com/>

**Pacific Music Festival** : [http://www.pmf.or.jp/index\\_en.php](http://www.pmf.or.jp/index_en.php)

**Moerenuma Park** : <http://www.sapporo-park.or.jp/moere/english.php>

**Sapporo Art Park** : <http://artpark.web.transer.com/>

## **Sapporo, Blessed by Snow**

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