

# JAPANESE SMEs



## Home of innovation

Apart from being known for its economic and technological leadership, Japan is also known as the home of one of the world's so-called Blue Zones, where life expectancy is higher than the global average.

In Japan, the islands of Okinawa purportedly have one of the highest concentration of centenarians in the world. Researchers believe that, aside from the close sense of community and active lifestyle, their proximity to the sea and its bounty account for the longevity of the local population.

Tapping on the abundance of the seas that surround Okinawa, **Kanehide Bio Co. Ltd.** has succeeded in extracting fucoidan from the edible *mozuku* seaweed (*Cladophora okamuranus Tokida*) using its original technology.

The company has also demonstrated fucoidan's high functionality through joint research with universities and other public institutions and plans more extensive research in the future. In recent years, it has also been cultivating and commercializing microalgae containing omega-3.

Aside from fucoidan, Kanehide Bio also processes local bitter melon, turmeric, and herbs into tablets, powders, and liquids through integrated production to meet consumer needs.

"We would like to continue to provide you with safe and reliable health foods made from natural ingredients from Okinawa," said **Kanehide Bio President & COO Mikio Miyagi**.



**Elionix Inc. President  
Minoru Shichino**

Meanwhile, as the base of many of the largest global brands, like Toyota, Sony, Honda, to name only a few, Japan built its economic muscle on the back of thousands of small- and medium-sized firms, some of them still family-owned, that maintain a strong ethos of workmanship, or *monozukiri*, while adapting an innovative spirit to keep them competitive.

From the country that pioneered the miniaturization of technology, Tokyo-based **Elionix Inc.** has applied the same commitment to high quality manufacturing in its design and development of devices and appliances that use electron beam and ion beam technology for high resolution lithography and nanofabrication.

"We are always looking out for global partnerships, whether for research or business partnerships, especially with North America, because they invest a lot of effort into science and technology. Our ultimate goal is to expand our business all over the world and really solidify our foothold in

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## Blessings from the Okinawan Sea for Your Health



**KANEHIDE BIO CO., LTD.**

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<https://www.kanehide-bio.co.jp>



nanotechnology," said **Elionix Inc. President Minoru Shichino**.

In North America, Elionix Inc. operates in the state of Massachusetts through SEMTech Solutions (STS-Elionix), which focuses on microfabrication technology at the nanoscale. Its electron beam lithography systems can write more than 1 million lines within one cubic centimeter.

**Sanwa Kasei Kogyo Co. Ltd.** has produced lubricant oil for 75 years from its base in Kanagawa and Shizuoka prefectures.

Its technology was applied to automotive, industrial processing and rust preventive oils, etc. which significantly extends the life of machinery and improves energy conservation.

Its unique hydrocarbon gel is also playing an important role in the pharmaceutical field.

**Sanwa Kasei Kogyo President Eisuke Muto** has increased the imports and sales of base oil materials in preparation for a carbon neutral world.

Muto also oversaw the construction and launching of an automated mega-warehouse in July 2022 amid a serious shortage of storage space for dangerous goods. He also wants the company to

become a one-stop service that makes, blends, stores and sells lubricant oils, as well as paraffinic, naphthenic, aromatic, synthetic base oils.

Another champion of *monozukiri*, **Sankin Corp.** in Osaka makes steel pipes and tubes, mainly for automobile and motorcycle manufacturers and, until a several years ago, for parking lift systems and storage solution providers.

Founded in 1946, the company is very proud of its ISO 9002 certification, a clear testament to its commitment to quality manufacturing. However, because of a persistent slowdown in car sales in Japan, Sankin Corp. remains focused on the United States, both as a material source and a product market.

A large consumer of cold-drawn steel produced in the United States, the company provides its pipes and tubes for around 80% of vehicles made and assembled in the country, as well as supplies many factories in Mexico.

"In Japan, our competitors purchase steel from trading companies. However, we purchase our steel directly from the source," said **Sankin Corp. President Takaharu Den**. ■



**Sanwa Kasei Kogyo Co., Ltd.**

<https://sanwakasei.co.jp/en>

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