

To the press

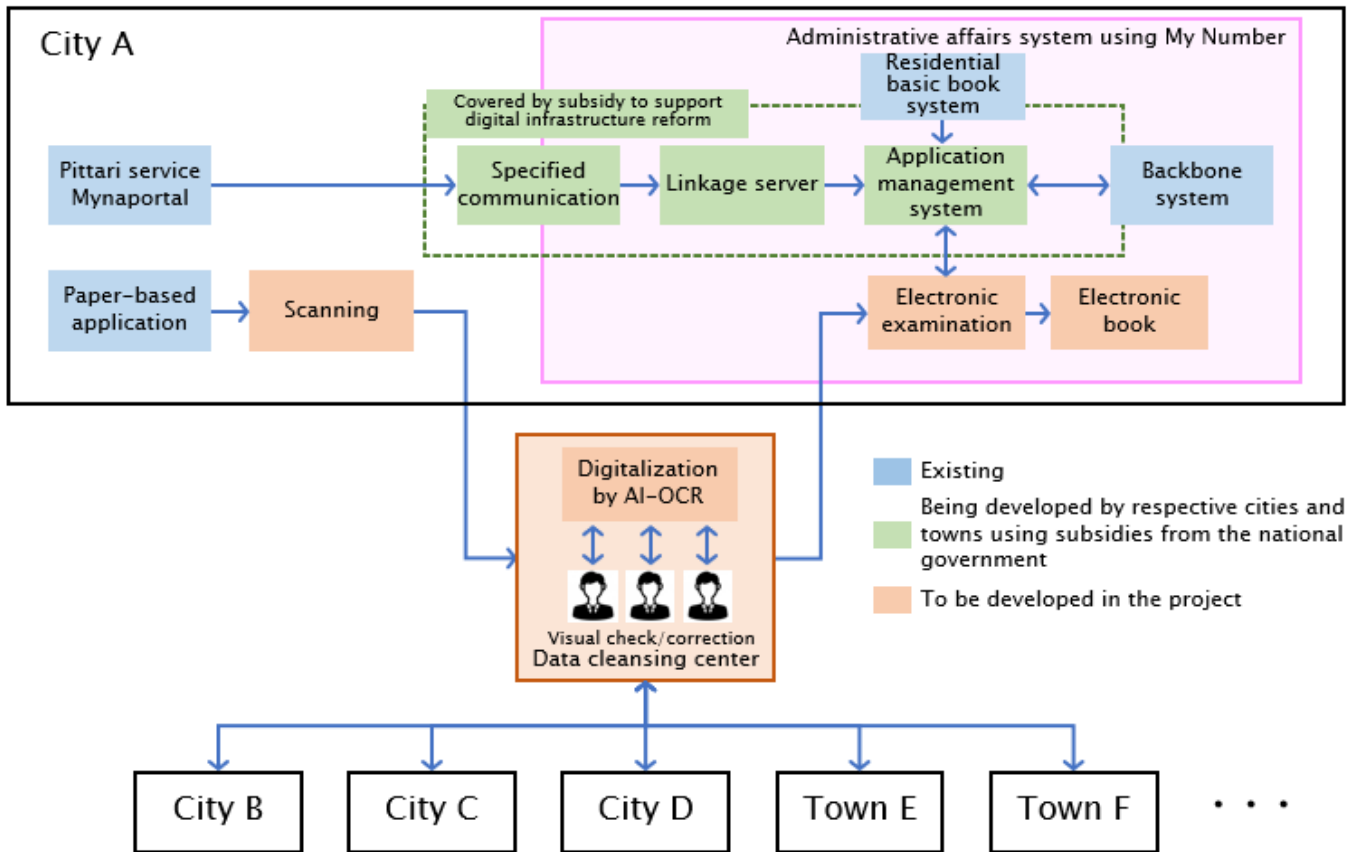
Press release

Govmates, a Joint Venture Established by Change and Konica Minolta Publitech, Awarded 500 Million Yen Contract for “Project to Build a Standardized Model of Operations for Cities and Towns” from Ehime Prefectural Government

**Aiming to Increase the Satisfaction of Services for Residents through Standardizing Administrative
Procedures of All 20 Cities and Towns in the Prefecture**

Matsuyama, Ehime & Tokyo (June 20, 2022) – Govmates, Inc. (Govmates), a joint venture established by Change Inc. (Change) and Konica Minolta Publitech, Inc. (Konica Minolta Publitech), has been awarded a 500 million yen contract for a “project to build a standardized model of operations for cities and towns” from the Ehime Prefectural Government. Through the project, Govmates will visualize and standardize the internal work of all 20 cities and towns in Ehime Prefecture for the 27 procedures*1 that the Japanese government has been working to digitalize using My Number Cards, and will help cut government costs while reducing the workload of government staff. Through the project, the local governments in Ehime Prefecture aim to increase residents’ satisfaction with services by cutting costs and allocating more time to higher-value government services or services unique to local government. This is the first project in Japan where all local governments in a prefecture work on digitalizing administrative procedures under the initiative of a prefectural government.

Although municipalities have increasingly digitalized their procedures, paper-based applications will remain more prevalent than electronic applications for the time being, forcing local government staff to handle both types. This makes their work more complex and time-consuming. Through the project, the Ehime Prefectural Government will standardize the internal work flow of handling both electronic and paper-based applications among all 20 cities and towns in the prefecture and eliminate the use of paper forms throughout the process, thereby significantly reducing the workload. Specifically, the Ehime Prefectural Government will establish and operate a data cleansing center; first, it will build a system for digitalizing the contents of paper-based applications, and then distribute the data to the 20 cities and towns to be integrated with the flow of electronic applications in a fully digital, standardized method. Ehime Prefecture has diverse local governments with population sizes ranging from under 10,000 to more than 500,000, which is representative of local government models across Japan. The know-how of standardizing the handling of online applications gained through the project can be deployed to local governments nationwide. Govmates will promptly deploy the know-how with more than 60 business partners across the country. Meanwhile, the internal procedures of local governments other than handling online applications will be standardized and digitalized, starting with labor-intensive operations, based on government-wide work volume data of more than 160 local governments owned by Govmates. The know-how will be deployed across Japan.



Conceptual diagram of the project to build a standardized model of operations for cities and towns

Govmates is a joint venture established by Change and Konica Minolta Publitech. Headquartered in Matsuyama City, Ehime Prefecture, Govmates aims to eliminate regional disparities in society by offering DX services specially designed for local governments and encouraging local governments across Japan to reform their operations. Under the vision of “making the jobs of local governments and the workstyle of their staff more productive and smarter,” Govmates offers services to local governments across Japan by combining the strengths of Change, which has know-how in DX support and AI development and a track record in doing business with more than 1,600 local governments, and those of Konica Minolta Publitech, which has collected datasets on the operations of more than 140 local governments across the country based on surveys on government-wide work volume conducted on local governments.

Regarding the services offered by Govmates to standardize local government operations, Govmates works with more than 140 local governments at present (all data as of April 2022), has more than three million datasets from surveys on work volume, and registers and discloses 8,000 operational procedure manuals of about 50 local governments and eight patterns of procedure manual models. Thanks to a system for sharing and comparing operational flows on the Local Government Wide Area Network “LGWAN-ASP,” the services are readily available for local government staff. “GAIA,” a proprietary AI assistant for improving local government operations developed by Govmates, suggests the standard flow of similar operations, prior cases of improving operations, and examples of solutions upon entering an outline of the operations to be made more efficient and standardized. This tool enables respective local governments to refer to the efforts of other local governments, significantly reduce the time required for surveys and studies, and increase efficiency.

As the first step, Govmates will help achieve high-value-added government services and cut government costs by drastically improving productivity by reforming local government operations in the Ehime Prefectural Government and cities and towns in the prefecture. Govmates will also spread the standard services of local government operations to local governments across Japan by leveraging the track record and operation know-how in Ehime Prefecture, where the classification of the 20 local governments by population size*2 represents the overall status of local governments across Japan.

*1: 27 procedures (child care: 15, nursing care: 11, support for disaster victims: 1) of cities, towns, and villages among the 31 procedures to be digitalized in the Local Government DX Promotion Plan (released by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications on December 25, 2020), which stated “Regarding procedures that contribute to improving convenience for citizens in particular, we will make it possible to follow procedures online using My Number Cards from Mynportal at all local governments in principle by the end of FY2022.”

*2: Classification of 20 local governments by population size

500,000: 1

150,000: 1

About 100,000: 2

50,000 to 100,000: 2

10,000 to 50,000: 10

Less than 10,000: 4

About Govmates

Govmates is a joint venture established by Change Inc. and Konica Minolta Publitech, Inc. It aims to promote DX in local government operations across Japan and realize a society free from regional disparities. The joint venture was named Govmates, a word coined from “governments” and “mates,” to convey its intention of being a real partner which serves the detailed needs of local governments and resolves issues together. By establishing the head office in Ehime Prefecture, Govmates will promote DX of the operations of local governments across Japan as a “locally based” platform holder to promote the realization of “local revitalization through digital implementation” as advocated by the national government.

Website of Govmates, Inc.

<https://govmates.jp/> (in Japanese)

Related Press Release

Change and Konica Minolta Publitech Announce Strategy for Govmates, a Joint Venture Providing Local Government DX Services

<https://www.konicaminolta.com/global-en/newsroom/topics/2022/0210-01-01.html>

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