Open Innovation

Creating new businesses in a variety of ways, including business-accelerating partnerships.

Nikon is actively partnering with a variety of companies possessing innovative technologies to create new businesses and expand existing ones. Between 2019 and 2020, we entered into business alliances with DMG MORI CO., LTD., a leading manufacturer of machine tools, and XTIA Ltd., the proprietary owner of “optical comb”, the world’s only light source technology. By combining our core technologies with new resources, we are accelerating the launch of new businesses, including in the material processing business area. And with a view to expanding our business field, we are pursuing the creation and development of new businesses, including through the establishment of a private fund and cooperation with venture capital partners.

Alliances

Nikon is building various alliances including business/capital tie-ups outside the company including universities, other companies and affiliates, cooperative research, and M&A. Through these various alliances, Nikon is leveraging its strengths to expand the scale and scope of its businesses, including extending its interests to peripheral fields in order to create new business opportunities. In recent years, by entering into business alliances in the Material Processing Business, positioned as a core pillar of new business, we are actively promoting the development of new equipment and the expansion of sales opportunities.

Recent examples:
- Business alliance with DMG MORI CO., LTD.
- Capital and business alliance with XTIA Ltd.

Private fund

Nikon and SBI Investment Co., Ltd. have jointly established a private fund to invest in venture companies, using SBI Investment’s valuable expertise and investment experience in growth sectors. Nikon deploys this new fund to pursue fresh business opportunities by investing in venture companies that can potentially play a future role, with focus on Japan and North America as well as European and Asian countries.

Investment fields:
- Material processing
- Digital manufacturing
- Vision Systems/Robotics
- Optics
- Sensing technology
- AI and image processing
- IoT
- Healthcare

Cooperation with venture capital partners

To expand new business operations, Nikon has invested in venture companies in Japan, Europe and the United States, each of which provides Nikon with valuable transaction data and trend information as well as exchanging diverse information at regular meetings. Nikon benefits from its venture business partners’ research, comparisons, target company information and future value estimations.

Major companies invested in:
- SBI Investment
- Beyond Next Ventures
- Geodesic Capital
- 500 Startups Japan, and more

Nikon Imaging Centers around the world

- Japan: Hokkaido University
- Singapore: Singapore Bioimaging Consortium
- Germany: University of Heidelberg
- France: Institute Curie
- UK: Kings College London
- Italy: Italian Institute of Technology
- USA: Harvard Medical School
- USA: University of California, San Diego
- USA: Northwestern University

One of the features inspired by feedback from a NIC is the Assist Guide function on the ECLIPSE Ti2 inverted research microscope. Based on information from the built-in sensors, the microscope guides the user to the next operation and immediately checks for misconfiguration. It eliminates human error and helps researchers save valuable time.

Marketing

Valuing the opinions of researchers and the perspectives of our customers through global marketing activities.

Nikon is committed to providing products, services, and solutions from the perspectives of its customers by listening closely to people living in diverse areas and working in disparate industries. In the Healthcare Business, for example, we established Nikon Imaging Centers (NICs), open facilities partnered with major research institutes around the world. Each NIC allows visitors to use Nikon’s cutting-edge microscopes for image acquisition and analysis, provides opportunities to learn from basic microscope observation to the latest advanced imaging technologies, and also serves as places for researchers to interact. Through these activities, the NICs collect information on their needs and challenges and feed it back into product development and global marketing activities. Finally, by promoting joint research based at NICs, we are able to contribute to the continued development of bioscience.