

KUROFUNE and Suzuki Start Collaboration to Improve Life Satisfaction of Foreign Employees in Suzuki

- Utilize “KUROFUNE LIFE SUPPORT” life assistance app for foreigners working in Japan -
- Promote an environment where diverse human resources can make the most of their abilities -



KUROFUNE Inc. (Head Office: Nagoya, Aichi; Founder and CEO Ryo Kurakata; hereinafter "KUROFUNE") and Suzuki Motor Corporation (Head Office: Hamamatsu, Shizuoka; Representative Director and President: Toshihiro Suzuki; hereinafter "Suzuki") launched an initiative in July to improve the quality of living and work satisfaction of Suzuki's foreign employees by utilizing KUROFUNE's smartphone application for foreigners living and working in Japan, “KUROFUNE LIFE SUPPORT”.

KUROFUNE develops the life assistance app “KUROFUNE LIFE SUPPORT”, with the aim of grasping the worries and concerns of foreigners working in Japan and providing concrete and continuous support. Through this collaboration, KUROFUNE will conduct interviews to understand the needs of Suzuki's Indian employees in Japan and aim to develop new services.

Suzuki believes that it is important to create an environment in which employees can work energetically and demonstrate their motivation and abilities in a physically and mentally fulfilled state. The company also recognizes that its competitive edge will be enhanced by having a diverse workforce. At present, foreign employees are active mainly in the technical departments in Japan, and the company plans to increase the number of direct recruitments such as from the Indian Institute of Technology in the future. In the growth strategy announced in January 2023, Suzuki also announced a policy to strengthen its R&D structure by collaborating with overseas group companies such as the R&D Center in India and overseas startups.

The company wishes to understand the needs of employees in their daily lives and create an even better working environment.

■ **Comments from KUROFUNE Founder and CEO, Ryo Kurakata**

The number of foreign workers in Japan has increased sharply to 1.82 million, approximately 3 times compared to that of 10 years ago, and is expected to increase by another 5 million and reach 6.74 million in 2040. Foreign workers may have a variety of concerns in their unfamiliar lives in Japan, and through our app “KUROFUNE LIFE SUPPORT”, we provide assistance to make life in Japan more prosperous. Working with Suzuki is a valuable opportunity to obtain real voices of foreign workers in Suzuki and create new services. We will work to further improve our services in order to create a society where people feel easy to work and live as in their home country.

■ **Comments from Suzuki Executive General Manager, Human Resources Development, Yusuke Kato**

Suzuki aims to achieve sustainable growth through cooperation of our production, development, and sales bases all over the world, and each playing their respective roles. Here in Japan, diverse human resources including people from India are active at our headquarters. Through collaboration with KUROFUNE, we will further strengthen our system to respect and embrace diversity.

Going forward, we plan to actively recruit diverse human resources who can identify with the Suzuki Group's mission statement. We aim to create an environment in which the employees of the Suzuki Group can demonstrate their full potential and become a company that is needed by people and society.

[Overview of the Initiative]

KUROFUNE will conduct interviews with Suzuki's Indian employees in the first half of the initiative period from July to September 2023 to understand their needs. Based on the interviews, they will examine new service ideas that will provide solutions.

In the second half, from October to December 2023, the two companies will develop new services based on the ideas from KUROFUNE, by having discussions with Suzuki's Indian employees.

KUROFUNE aims to launch a new service within December of this year.



[About the life assistance app “KUROFUNO LIFE SUPPORT”]

“KUROFUNO LIFE SUPPORT”, a life assistance app for foreigners living in Japan, is currently available in seven languages (Japanese, English, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Chinese, Indonesian, and Uzbek) and has eight services as of today. The free plan offers (1) 24hrs Consultation Services, (2) Online Pharmacy Service, (3) Point Service, (4) Souvenir Service, (5) Report Service, and (6) Remittance Service. In addition to (1) - (6), the higher service plan offers (7) Insurance Service and (8) Online Japanese E-learning Service.

(<https://zaigai-association.com>)

[List of services of KUROFUNO LIFE SUPPORT]

List of services	Service features
① 24hrs Consultation Services	Can consult anytime about any difficulties or issues you may have in your life in Japan
② Online Pharmacy Service	Can purchase medicine without using Japanese and have it delivered to your home
③ Point Service	Can use the services within the app at a rate of 1 point = 1 yen
④ Souvenir Service	Can have Japanese products delivered to your home country without any burden for delivery for users (currently available only for Vietnam and Philippines)
⑤ Report Service	Reporting feature for foreigners to communicate difficulties to companies anonymously
⑥ Remittance Service	Can make international money transfers at a low fee
⑦ Insurance Service	An insurance policy that provides a maximum coverage of 1.1 million yen in case of injury or illness for income compensation
⑧ Online Japanese E-learning Service	Japanese language E-learning service that allows you to take classes 24 hours a day, anytime

[KUROFUNO Inc.]

KUROFUNO, a start-up company based in Nagoya, supports foreigners working and living in Japan. Their mission is *“Opening up the world to design a future for foreigners feel easy to work and live as in their home country”*.

Established : February 2018
Representative : Ryo Kurakata, Founder and CEO
Headquarters : Nagoya, Aichi
URL : <http://kurofune-inc.com>

[Suzuki Motor Corporation]

Established : March 1920
Representative : Toshihiro Suzuki, Representative Director and President
Headquarters : Hamamatsu, Shizuoka
URL : <https://www.globalsuzuki.com/>