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Press release

Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd.
Global Brain Corporation

Mitsui Fudosan and Global Brain Corporation invest in Axelspace Corporation, the developer of microsatellite business

Selected as the first portfolio of the “Growth-stage Project” targeting growth-stage startups

Tokyo, Japan, December 7, 2018 - Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd., a leading global real estate company headquartered in Tokyo and Global Brain Corporation, one of Japan’s top-tier venture capital firms announced that they invested in Axelspace Corporation, a company that develops space-based business technology using microsatellites, as lead investors of the JPY 30 billion venture investment project (the “Growth-stage Project”), which mainly targets growth-stage startups. This investment will be the first case of the Growth-stage Project.



Left to right: Mitsui Fudosan Co. Ltd. Venture Co-creation Department Business Group Executive Manager Nobuyuki Tanaka, Venture Co-creation Department General Manager Akira Sugawara, Axelspace Corporation President and CEO Yuya Nakamura, Global Brain Corporation CEO Yasuhiko Yurimoto, Global Brain Corporation Partner in charge of Space & Robotics Hidetaka Aoki.

■ Axelspace Corporation

Since its founding in 2008, Axelspace has developed microsatellites, and it has a proven track record of developing, launching, and operating three commercial satellites, including the Arctic Ocean observation satellite, developed for Weathernews Inc. In 2015, the company raised JPY 1.9 billion in venture capital funding and announced the construction concept of “AxelGlobe,” a global Earth observation infrastructure. A constellation of dozens of satellites, AxelGlobe will be able to capture images of virtually all of the areas where humans are economically active, accumulating and analyzing

image data from the past until the present to produce insights and forecasts of natural and manufactured phenomena. Employing several dozen GRUS (remote-sensing microsattellites that weigh around 100kg each), AxelGlobe is expected to be completed by 2022.

■ The history of Axelspace and Mitsui Fudosan

The relationship between Axelspace and Mitsui Fudosan had launched 2009, when Axelspace's base of operations was primarily at industrial support facilities in Kashiwa City, Chiba. Axelspace Corporation received the support of General Incorporated Association TX Entrepreneur Partners (TEP), a startup-support organization based in Kashiwanoha, Chiba, where a connection was made with Mitsui Fudousan, one of its corporate members.

By 2015, Axelspace Corporation needed to grow its physical space in step with its expanding business, but it soon became apparent that renovating the existing space to install a clean room to produce the microsattellites and wide doors and elevators to facilitate satellite transport was not ideal. Mitsui Fudousan constructed a bespoke building for them on a piece of land that they owned in Nihonbashi, thus forging the strong relationship of co-creation between Axelspace and Mitsui Fudosan that has resulted in this latest investment.

■ The investment reasons

Mitsui Fudosan invests in startups for new business development and to strengthen our core businesses. We see great potential in Axelspace's space-based business and microsattellites, and in President Nakamura and the rest of their management team. In addition to urban development—the core business of Mitsui Fudousan—AxelGlobe can be used as countermeasures against the natural disasters that have become increasingly common in recent years. Given Axelspace's potential to infinitely expand the application range of satellite photos, we believe that it can contribute to the creation of new industries.

Mitsui Fudousan aims to create new industries that will invest in the development of society and will continue to strengthen the venture co-creation project we began developing in April 2015, as well as the Growth-stage Project.

■ Comment from Mitsui Fudousan Co., Ltd. Managing Director and Executive Vice President Yoshikazu Kitahara

"Since establishing the Venture Co-creation Department in 2015, Mitsui Fudousan has supported startups with a long-term perspective. The Growth-stage Project is a project to conduct large-scale investments with a long-term perspective in startups that possess innovative technologies and services. The concept of the global Earth observation infrastructure laid out by Axelspace has the possibility of becoming a new industry in Japan using the innovative technology. Using this investment opportunity, we will continue using Mitsui Fudousan's resources to support Axelspace."

■ Comment from Global Brain Corporation CEO Yasuhiko Yurimoto

“We have decided to make this investment based on the advanced technical capabilities, business development capabilities, excellent management team, and proven track record of Axelspace, a global pioneer in the field of microsatellites. We also believe that Axelspace, which aims to use Japan-built innovative technologies to expand their businesses globally, is an appropriate choice as the first project of the Growth-stage Project. Global Brain will continue to take full advantage of our resources and provide multifaceted support.”

■ Comment from Axelspace President and CEO Yuya Nakamura

“Since before our company had much of a history, we have been receiving long-time support from Mitsui Fudousan. Our current office (Chuo-ku Nihonbashi-Honcho office), which opened in 2017 to incorporate our company’s needs to the fullest, is the pride of our company and our employees. In addition to Global Brain, which invested in us in 2015, we are very thrilled that Mitsui Fudousan will be joining our corporate funding as a lead investor. While we are on the verge of launching our GRUS satellites, we hope that this round of funding will further accelerate the construction of AxelGlobe and make the path toward completion a certainty.”

■ Mitsui Fudousan Co., Ltd. Venture Co-creation Department (WEB) <http://www.31ventures.jp/>

Mitsui Fudousan established the Venture Co-creation Department (31VENTURES) in April 2015 for the purpose of creating new industries to strengthen and innovate Mitsui Fudosan’s businesses. 31VENTURES aims to realize co-creation of new industries together with startups through its fully integrated venture capital services of “Finance,” “Support” and “Community”.

In 2016, we established “31VENTURES Global Innovation Fund I”, the JPY 5 billion corporate venture capital fund, with Global Brain and have invested in domestic and international startups primarily in their early stages. In May 2018, both companies announced the JPY 30 billion Growth-stage Project that targets growth-stage startups with innovative technologies and/or services primarily in Japan.

■ Global Brain Corporation (WEB) <https://globalbrains.com/>

Global Brain is one of the top-tier venture capital firms in Japan. By leveraging its global reach and a broad network of Japanese major corporations, Global Brain provides hands-on supports to its portfolio companies, grow with them, and strive to bring innovations to the industry and the society. Based in Tokyo, San Francisco, Seoul, and Singapore, Global Brain is committed to providing startups with the support they need to scale the business and go global. With Mitsui Fudousan, it established the JPY 5 billion “31VENTURES Global Innovation Fund I” in 2015 and the JPY 30 billion “31VENTURES–Global Brain–Growth I Project” in 2018. To date, their total managed assets exceed JPY 100 billion.