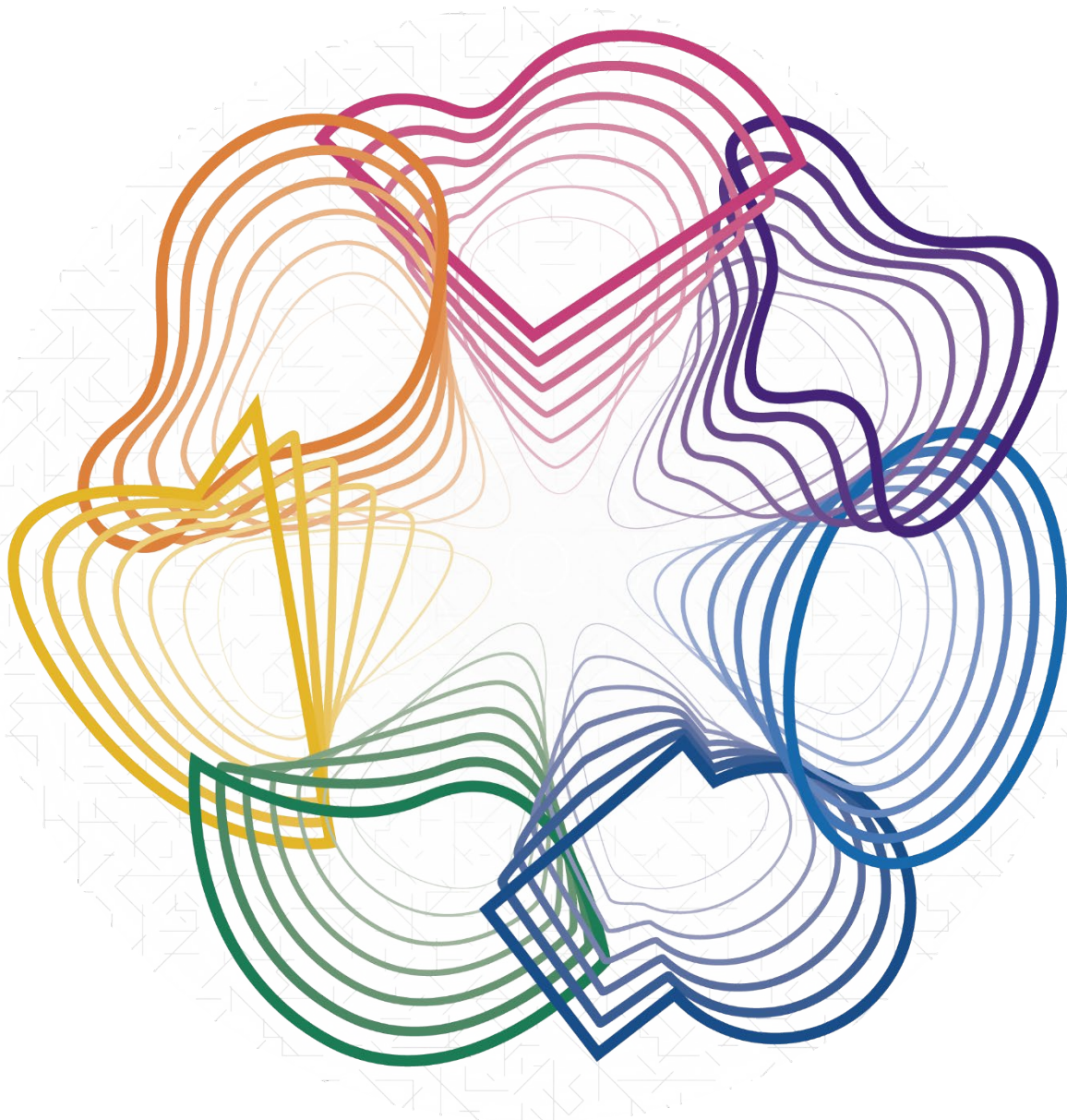


UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK CALL FOR APPLICATIONS 2021

APPLICATION FORM



UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK

2021 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The standard application form is prepared by the Secretariat of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network and shall not be altered in any way. Kindly note, only this standard form will be accepted and considered as eligible.

Please note that word limits are enforced and that it will not be possible to enter additional text once the limit is reached. Use the “Word Count” function to ensure that you do not exceed these limits.

*All sections of the Form shall be duly completed. The information provided should not be repeated across different sections unless it is relevant to these sections. **In case of lack of information for any of the section(s) or field(s) concerned, the applicant city is requested to enter the following phrase “No relevant information to provide”.***

Applicants are also required to submit three photos of the applicant city closely related to the creative field concerned. The form “Cession of Rights and Register of Photos” in the Annex hereto must therefore also be duly completed individually for each of the three respective photos.

1. NAME OF CITY:

Usuki City

2. COUNTRY:

Japan

3. CONTACTS

3.1 Mayor of the City

Title (Mr/Ms/Other):

Family name:

First name:

Address:

Telephone number

Email address:

3.2 Representative of the Mayor

The representative will facilitate the communication between the Mayor (the Municipality), and the UCCN Secretariat and provide political support to the designated “main executive contact” of the city (see point 3.3).

Title (Mr/Ms/Other):

Family name:

First name:

Institution/function:

Status/type of institution:

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Other important information:

3.3 Main executive contact

The main executive contact will be the Focal Point of the city for all communication and coordination concerning the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. In case of the city’s designation, this person should be officially designated by the Mayor or competent municipal authorities (see point 10.4).

Title (Mr/Ms/Other):

Family name:

First name:

Institution/function:

Status/type of institution:

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Other important information:

3.4 Main communication contact

The main communication contact of the city will be responsible for supporting the city's communication efforts alongside the main executive contact, in communicating and disseminating information on its activities in the framework of the Network, as well as those provided by UNESCO (for example, it could be the chief communication officer of the city).

Title (Mr/Ms/Other):

Family name:

First name:

Institution/function:

Status/type of institution:

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Other important information:

3.5 Alternative contact

The alternative contact will provide support and backup to the main executive contact.

Title (Mr/Ms/Other):

Family name:

First name:

Institution/function:

Status/type of institution:

Address:

Telephone number:

Email address:

Other important information:

4. CREATIVE FIELD:

Please choose only one between: Crafts and Folk Art, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Literature, Media Arts, and Music [Click on the drop-down menu]

.Gastronomy

5. GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE CITY:

Presentation of the main geographical, demographic, cultural, social and economic characteristics of the city; mode of governance, principal culture-related facilities and infrastructure, international connections, etc. (1500 characters maximum with spaces).

Usuki City on Kyushu Island in southwest Japan has a population of 36,000 and the land area of 291.1 km². Its east border is a deeply indented coastline facing inland sea while in the west area there are relatively steep mountains. The city has abundant clean water of optimal mineral balance. Using fresh sweet water, production of miso paste and soy sauce (seasonings fermented with rice malt) began around 1600, the output of which has now reached the top level in Japan.

The city retains a historical atmosphere of the Edo period (1603-1868), featuring various historical and cultural monuments, such as the site of a castle, residences of warriors and wealthy merchants, shrines, and temples, many of which are open to public. Together with the site of the castle, a factory of miso paste standing on a seaside sandbank is a landmark representing Usuki. There are many restaurants serving traditional Japanese cuisine, which uses locally produced, fermented seasonings. Usuki is also known for the greatest number of statues of Buddha engraved on rocks. Among those, the Usuki Stone Buddha has been designated as a National Treasure.

Today, residents of Usuki City are eager to promoting their health through slow food movement and consumption of organic vegetables. The city enjoys a sister-city relationship with Kandy, Sri Lanka, as well as a friendly-city relation with Dun-Huang, China, with which the city engages in gastronomic and other exchange programs.

6. MAIN DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FACING THE CITY – USING CREATIVITY AS A DRIVER FOR ACTION:

Every city is unique and pursues its own objectives according to its particular context and priorities. In this section, applicant cities are invited to explain how they consider that culture and creativity – particularly in the creative field concerned – can act as a driver for identifying opportunities and challenges, and then proposing interventions that seek to maximize the potential of the creative field concerned for sustainable urban development and mitigate and resolve the challenges they face (1200 characters maximum with spaces).

Usuki City's creative initiatives cover entire business ecosystems related to gastronomy. Concerning the primary industry, the city is involved in production of excellent soil. The Usuki City Compost Manufacturing Center works to revitalize soil microorganisms in farmland to enable sustainable farming without relying on chemical fertilizers or pesticides, and to enable the production of wholesome agricultural products with authentic flavors. Concerning the secondary industry, the city is home to the thriving fermentation food industry that produces healthy and long-preservative foods, such as miso paste and soy sauce, both being essential seasonings for Japanese cuisine, along with the production of alcoholic drinks, such as sake and shochu liquor. Moreover, the city operates the Usuroku Open Labo, where all residents in Usuki can engage in development of original food products. Through these initiatives, Usuki City is striving to build a creative, recycling-based society, in order to work to revitalize its food industry, secure job opportunities, and encourage many creative people to move into the city.

7. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES:

Presentation of the city's main and global development vision, strategies and policies, particularly those in line with the international development agendas, such as the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, African Union's Agenda 2063, etc. (1000 characters maximum with spaces).

In 2010, Usuki City enacted an ordinance related to sustainable food and agriculture, in line with which the city is promoting organic farming and slow food movement. Moreover, the Usuki City Comprehensive Plan (2015-2024, revised in 2020) clarifies relations between respective city's policies and the 17 goals of the SDGs. Of the city's major policies, the revitalization of social economy and the promotion of immigration into the city correspond to Goals 8 and 9; the production and distribution of wholesome food and creation of an eco-friendly recycling-based society correspond to Goals 2, 14, and 15; and the preservation and succession of the regional culture is related to Goal 4. By implementing these policies, the city seeks to fulfill Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. If Usuki is designated as a Creative City, it will even strengthen partnerships with other Creative Cities, thereby fulfilling Goal 17.

8. EXPECTED IMPACT OF THE DESIGNATION AND THE MEMBERSHIP ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY:

Presentation of the main reasons behind the decision to submit an application to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network and the expected medium and long-term impact of the designation for the sustainable development of the city, particularly over the next four years following the eventual designation (1200 characters maximum with spaces).

When Usuki City revised the Usuki City Comprehensive Plan in 2020, the city learned and adopted SDGs in the plan. The city decided to apply for the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UNCCN), believing that its membership is extremely effective in preparing and implementing the city's vision and programs that integrate various projects related to gastronomy, sharing them with residents in Usuki, and promoting them all over the world. The city will prepare a detailed action plan to promote gastronomical culture by the end of 2021.

In joint efforts with Tsuruoka City, with which Usuki has already built a partnership, and other Creative Cities of Gastronomy, Usuki City will promote global recognition of Japan's fermentation culture and traditional Japanese cuisine, and raise awareness of the importance of building eco-friendly, recycling-based society, characterized by organic farming and slow food movement, as a means to fulfil SDGs. At the same time, through effective use of the UNESCO brand, the city hopes to support global development of its food industry and to enhance residents' pride in Usuki's gastronomical culture.

9. PREPARATION PROCESS FOR THE APPLICATION:

The design and preparation of the application submitted by the city must involve stakeholders in the creative field concerned, drawn from the private and public sectors, academia and civil society, as well as creators, professionals and practitioners. Describe how each of these groups have been consulted and/or engaged in the process of preparing the application; and how each group will benefit from the designation and membership to the Network (1200 characters maximum with spaces).

Usuki City decided to seek designation as a Creative City of Gastronomy in 2020, based on the consensus among its citizens. In 2021, the city's representatives visited Tsuruoka City, Japan's only Creative City of Gastronomy, to build a partnership.

In February 2021, the city established the Usuki Creative City of Gastronomy Promotion Council, comprising the city's officials and specialists in gastronomy (chefs, producers of

fermented foods, organic farmers, etc.), along with members of industrial circles, civil organizations, and educational institutions. The city's mayor and the president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry respectively serve as the chair and deputy chair of the council. Its secretariat is located at the Creative City of Gastronomy Promotion Office in the city hall. This application form was drafted by the council's working group with a support of Oita Prefecture and was finalized after seeking advice from the Oita Association of Corporate Executives and professors specializing in SDGs and gastronomy. If Usuki is designated, through its partnership with Tsuruoka City, Usuki will assist respective stakeholders, particularly in chef development programs.

10. COMPARATIVE ASSETS OF THE APPLICANT CITY MADE AVAILABLE TO THE NETWORK:

In the following fields, applicant cities are invited to present their main cultural assets – particularly those in the creative field concerned – that may be highlighted and tapped into locally and internationally to further the Network's objectives: making creativity, especially in the creative field concerned, an essential driver of sustainable urban development. Applicants are strongly advised to avoid presenting lists and to provide succinct and relevant information supported with data and examples, so that the city's cultural and creative assets can be assessed properly (1000 characters maximum with spaces for each field).

10.1 Role and foundations of the creative field concerned in the city's history and development

Usuki's fermented food culture originated more than 400 years ago, when Kani Shoyu began producing miso paste. Ever since, the fermented food industry has been growing while supporting many Japanese restaurants, including those of traditional local dishes, honzen cuisine (ceremonial cuisine of feudal lords), Buddhist vegetarian cuisine, and blowfish dishes.

Usuki's producers of miso paste and soy sauce formed cooperatives with other producers in Oita Prefecture and integrated their production in Usuki to ship their products nationwide. They also organize slow food festivals and co-develop Halal-friendly soy sauce with students of Ritsumeikan Asia-Pacific University (APU). There are four companies producing Japan's original sake and distilled spirit known as shochu. To promote locally brewed sake, in 2015 the city enacted an ordinance stipulating that a party should be started by toasting with locally brewed sake, which is now served at many restaurants in the city.

10.2 Current economic importance and dynamism of the cultural sector and, in particular, of the creative field concerned. The information can be supported using: data, statistics, and other indicators on its contribution to economic development and employment in the city, number of cultural enterprises, etc.

In Usuki, there are 22 food production companies with 820 employees. Their annual sales amount to 180.73 million U.S. dollars, or 25% of all industries in the city (national average: 12%). Whereas there are no official data about the output of miso paste and soy sauce in respective municipalities, among the 47 prefectures in Japan, Oita Prefecture is ranked at the sixth in terms of the output of miso paste (16,646 t) and seventh in terms of that of soy sauce (25,802 kl). About 94% of both products in Oita is produced in Usuki City.

Since around 2002, the city has been promoting organic farming. At present, farmland of 80 ha or about 4% is used for organic farming (national average: 0.5%). Organic farming has become increasingly popular since the establishment of the Usuki City Compost Manufacturing Center (see 10.9). At present, six companies are engaged in organic farming.

There are 133 restaurants with 678 employees in Usuki, their sales reaching 25.69 million U.S. dollars.

10.3 Different communities and groups engaged in, and/or that earn their livelihoods from, the creative field concerned

From 1972 to 1984, 51 miso paste and soy sauce producers formed four cooperative associations, led by Fundokin Shoyu and Fujijin Shoyu companies. At their factories, a wide variety of products are manufactured in small lots.

In addition to agricultural cooperatives and fishermen's associations, Usuki has a network of organic farmers formed in 2012 with the aim of improving their farming technologies. This network, the *Honmamon* Agricultural Products Promotion Network(*Honmamon* means an authentic thing in Japanese. It is used as a word to express the original taste of agricultural products in Usuki.), comprising 63 farmers and five shops/restaurants, organizes various events, such as fairs to sell their products and meetings with consumers. (see 10.13)

In 1982, restaurants in the city established the Usuki City Restaurant Union (present membership: 97 shops) to build a strong network and develop their business.

- 10.4** Major fairs, conferences, conventions, congresses, and other national and/or international events organized by the city over the past five years, aimed at professionals and practitioners in the creative field concerned (creators, producers, marketers, promoters, etc.)

Usuki City strongly supports food companies and chefs engaged in the development of new products using local materials. The city regularly displays new Usuki brand products and holds business talks at Japan's only exhibition hall of food products in Tokyo.

Usuki City has produced a documentary film "A Dialogue: Living Harmony" (2013, directed by Chigumi Obayashi), which introduces the organic farming of the region. The film shows attractive food culture in Usuki, as well as the importance of building a recycling-based society. To date, special screening events, highlighted by the film showing, presentation by Director Obayashi, and a tasting party of dishes using Usuki's special products, have been held in more than 250 places in the world. To name a few, it was held at the Terra Madre Salone del Gusto 2016 in Torino, Italy, and the general assembly of Japan Restaurant Association, held in 2019 in Kiraku-an, a Japanese restaurant in Usuki.

- 10.5** Major festivals, conventions and other large-scale events organized by the city in the past five years in the creative field concerned and aimed at the general audience at the local, national and/or international level.

The city's Kicchomu Green Tourism Study Group organizes home-stay programs at farm houses. About 60% of participants are from outside Japan (925 tourists from 41 countries in 2018). The program is popular since tourists can experience a sustainable lifestyle of Japanese farmers and enjoy local dishes.

The city holds food festivals that sell local products and serve dishes using them three times a year. The festival, sometimes featuring specific products such as rice and bread, attracts many visitors from around Oita Prefecture.

The Usuki Bamboo Lantern Festival, held every November, features illumination of the castle town by numerous bamboo lanterns. While it is one of the first of such events, its original purpose is preserving bamboo forests, which has a common ground with SDGs. Many restaurants in the city install food stalls at the event space.

Since the festival was not held in 2020 due to the pandemic, the city created a film to introduce Usuki's gastronomical culture (see 16.3).

10.6 Main curriculum mechanisms, courses and programmes aimed at promoting culture and creativity, as well as arts education in the creative field concerned across different educational levels

In 2000, Usuki City began food education to school children by serving school lunches that used local agricultural products provided by about 50 farmers in the city. The city seeks to increase the ratio of locally harvested vegetables used in school lunches to 50%, while the ratio in 2019 was 43%. In addition, since 2007 the city has organized planting and harvesting classes for children at childcare centers, kindergartens, and elementary schools more than 40 times a year. The vegetables harvested by children are used in their school lunches.

In 2007, the city opened organic farms where residents in and outside the city can engage in organic farming as owners of the farms.

In collaboration with Oita Prefectural Marine Science High School, the city also develops new products using organic vegetables, as well as kabosu yellowtail, farm-raised fish fed with kabosu or flavorful acid citrus fruit.

10.7 Lifelong learning, tertiary education, vocational schools, training centres, residencies and other complementary education institutions specialised in the creative field concerned

Oita Prefectural Marine Science High School has a food-related course to develop human resources for the fisheries industry. Students of this course produce canned foods, using kabosu yellowtail, farm-raised fish fed with kabosu or flavorful acid citrus fruit, as well as canned foods developed based on ideas of local elementary school children. The school offers these canned foods to the city for use as emergency supplies. At the fish market held every Saturday morning, students help shoppers by cleaning and filleting fish they have bought. In this way, the school is actively engaged in community activities.

Oita Prefectural Usuki High School has the UNESCO club. Its members are engaged in activities related to UNESCO and the Red Cross, along with other regional volunteer activities. The high school was designated as a member of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network in 2017 in recognition of its activities and achievements over years.

10.8 Research centres, specialized institutes and programmes that focus on research and development in the creative field concerned

In 2004, Fundokin Shoyu, a manufacturer of miso paste and soy sauce in Usuki City (founded in 1861, with 500 employees) established the Food Science Institute (with 15 staff members) to develop new products and verify the quality of their existing products through microorganism tests and analyses of raw materials and finished products. To innovate fermentation technologies, the institute develops engineers for the fermentation food industry and promotes personnel exchange.

Upholding a vision to go back to the starting line, in 2002, Fundokin Shoyu built the world's largest wooden barrel (listed in Guinness World Records) for fermenting ingredients of soy sauce to reproduce the flavor of the product that was made 300 years ago. In 2019, the company also developed Halal-friendly soy sauce together with students from seven Islamic countries who are studying at Ritsumeikan Asia-Pacific University (APU).

- 10.9** Recognized infrastructure for the creation, production and dissemination of activities, goods and services in the creative field concerned, at the professional level (for example, centres for professionals, cultural enterprise incubators, chambers of commerce with specific programmes for cultural goods and services, etc.)

To promote organic farming, Usuki City opened the Usuki City Compost Manufacturing Center in 2010. Shredding and fermenting weeded grasses and pruned twigs, the center annually produces mature compost of 1,600 to 1,800 tons. Containing abundant minerals, the compost has a composition close to that of leaf mold. Revitalizing soil microorganisms in farmland, the compost enables sustainable farming without using chemical fertilizers or pesticides and the production of wholesome agricultural products with authentic flavors. Since this is a rare project in Japan, by 2020, more than 1,000 people had visited the center.

In 2016, the city opened the Usuroku Open Labo, where all residents can develop and test food processing. The labo has developed the seasoning that uses ginger residue generated in confectionery process. In recognition of the effort to reduce food loss, the seasoning won an award at the contest held by the national government.

- 10.10** Main facilities and cultural spaces dedicated to practice, promotion and dissemination in the creative field concerned and aimed at the general public and/or specific audiences (such as youth, women, vulnerable groups, etc.)

Usuki City opened the Sala de Usuki, a center of Usuki's gastronomical culture, in the old castle town district. The "Sala" comes from a Portuguese word meaning salon. Portuguese culture influenced Usuki during the 16th century. The facility, comprising a hall, a kitchen, galleries, and outdoor plaza, is used for various food-related events, including cooking classes and food educational seminars. In the galleries, exhibitions are held on the city's traditional gastronomical culture and specialty products. The Usuki City Tourism Exchange Plaza in the same district also displays Usuki's specialty products, as well as items related to its gastronomical culture.

In addition, the city has Usuki Public Hall (a large hall with 1,000 seats and a small hall with 200 seats) and four community halls, where various meetings and events are held, including lectures on gastronomy. All these facilities feature a universal design.

- 10.11** Present a maximum of three major programmes or projects developed by the city in the past three years to promote wider participation in cultural life in the creative field concerned, particularly those aimed at disadvantaged or vulnerable social groups

To build an inclusive society, in 2020, Usuki City enacted the Ordinance to Develop Usuki into a Hometown Where All Residents Can Lead Fulfilling Lives Regardless of Disabilities.

In 2018, the Usuki City Self-Reliance Support Council began holding a food-related event "Colorful Cafe" twice a month to which community members, including disabled people and their families, are invited. In these events, 30 to 40 people constantly participate to engage in various cultural activities, such as preparation of festival decorations and other seasonal ornaments.

To promote the awareness of the importance of food and nutrition, the city organizes educational programs for elderly people. In addition, the city regularly holds "Orange Cafe," where community members, including people with dementia and their families, can enjoy tea time together, in three facilities in the city.

10.12 Present a maximum of three major programmes or projects developed in the past three years in the creative field concerned that have helped to create and/or strengthen relations of cooperation between different actors, including the city, the private sector, creators, civil society, academia and/or other relevant stakeholders

In 2019, Usuki City co-organized the "Idea Pitch to Promote Usuki's Attractive Features," an educational program on gastronomy for members of start-up businesses, together with Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) and the Oita Start-Up Support Center. Students of APU, Oita University, and Oita Prefectural College of Arts and Culture presented their ideas for new businesses of local industries (agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and fermented food industries) to share them with residents of Usuki.

In 2019, the city organized a two-day seminar, comprising a cooking class by Ms. Misaki Iwaki, a specialist in cooking of dishes using miso paste, and a discussion session involving producers of miso paste and soy sauce.

To support restaurants in the city that are struggling to maintain their businesses amid the pandemic, in 2021, four sake breweries in the city jointly developed new alcoholic products containing authentic shochu liquor.

10.13 Role and impact of the main professional, industrial or sectoral, and non-governmental civil society organizations that are active in the city in the creative field concerned

The *Honmamon* Agricultural Products Promotion Network, a network of organic farmers in Usuki was formed in 2012. It is chaired by Mr Hiromi Fujishima, a leading figure in organic farming in Usuki City. In 2017, organic farmers who moved to Usuki began organizing the Usuki Organic Food Market once a month. Many people visit the market from both inside and outside the city, including chefs of organic restaurants in Oita Prefecture, who exchange product information with farmers.

The Hitoneru Academy, an NGO established in 2016 by Mr Yohei Sato, a former employee of a major business who returned to his hometown, Usuki, supports the promotion of processed food using Usuki no Jimono (Usuki's local products) and helps develop creative human resources in the region.

10.14 Main initiatives, policies, guidelines, programmes and measures, implemented by the city in the past five years to improve the status of creators and professionals and to support creative work, particularly in the creative field concerned

Usuki City is developing organic farmers by using the national system to support the employment of people engaged in regional development. The city employs people seeking to engage in organic farming in Usuki and provides them with training programs led by Mr Fujishima, a leading figure in organic farming. This system has proved to be effective in improving the management and technological levels of organic farmers.

In 2020, amid the pandemic the city supported chefs who were developing new dishes featuring local specialty products. In fiscal 2020 (April 2020 to March 2021), Usuki City decided to apply for UNESCO's designation of a Creative City of Gastronomy, and produced a film titled "The Way of Gourmet Cooking in Usuki" to promote eight aspects of gourmet cooking, including miso paste and soy sauce making and local dishes. The city released the film on TV CM and YouTube to create a favorable environment for people engaged in the regional gastronomical culture.

10.15 Main initiatives, policies, guidelines, programmes and measures, implemented by the city in the past five years to support and enhance local cultural industries in the creative field concerned

Usuki City is promoting forestation to cultivate water sources. At the same time, the city promotes production and marketing of organic vegetables that are produced with mature compost and certified by the mayor as *Honmamon* or agricultural products with authentic flavors.

In joint efforts with fishermen, the city seeks to restore marine resources by preserving the seabed environment and releasing juvenile fish. To promote fish consumption, the city is also promoting Usuki brand seafood as well as slow food movement.

To support the sustainable food processing industry, the mayor of Usuki certifies processed foods using local ingredients and minimum additives. Under this system, the mayor has certified 89 products of 23 manufacturers in the past five years.

To promote locally brewed sake, in 2015, the city enacted an ordinance that encourages to start a party by toasting with local sake. In this relation, four local breweries jointly hold local sake fairs every spring and autumn.

10.16 Main international and/or regional cooperation initiatives in the creative field concerned, developed with cities from different countries in the past five years

During the period between 2015 and 2017, Usuki City sent a mission to Kandy in Sri Lanka (a sister city since 1967) to study its gastronomical culture, agriculture, and forestry. Meanwhile, Kandy dispatched a mission to Usuki to study about production of mature compost. Sri Lanka's dishes were introduced to children in Usuki through school lunches and cooking classes.

Usuki also enjoys friendly exchanges with Dun-Huang in China (a friendly city since 1994). To agricultural engineers from Dun-Huang, Usuki offers seminars on organic farming and mature compost.

In 2019, the city started internship programs at companies in Usuki, including organic green tea, brewery, and miso paste/soy sauce companies, for students of Japanese Studies in the Faculty of Asia and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Cambridge. With members of French Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the city holds discussions about the development and promotion of sake, shochu liquor, and traditional Japanese dishes.

10.17 Major programmes or projects implemented in the last three years that directly or indirectly support and create synergies with at least one of the other creative fields in the Network

The Stone Buddha Village Lotus Festival is held every July, when lotus flowers are blooming in rice paddies in front of the Usuki Stone Buddha. While the primary event of the festival is a music concert, artists in other categories also join the festival. The highlight in 2018 and 2019 was the service of full course dinner on the theme of lotus. Various dishes that used locally produced organic vegetables were served on the plates and bowls of Usuki ware, which was once vanished but was revived recently by a ceramic artist in Usuki. In addition, organic farmers in the region jointly opened the Usuki Organic Food Market. The festival create a synergy of various art categories, such as gastronomy, crafts and folkarts, and music.

10.18 Main international cooperation initiatives and/or partnerships developed in the past three years involving at least two of the seven creative fields covered by the Network (crosscutting and/or trans-sectoral projects)

In 2019, Usuki provided an American student with an internship opportunity at a local brewery. During her stay in the city, she studied brewery technologies of sake and shochu liquor, as well as product distribution systems. Moreover, her brother designed product labels, which were adopted by the company.

Usuki City believes that it should reinforce such international cooperation programs and take related initiatives in collaboration with other municipalities. To promote inbound tourism, for example, the city seeks to cooperate with the Oita Prefectural Art Museum, which was designated by the national government as a culture tourism promotion facility in 2021, Beppu and Yufuin (international hot spring resorts), and the Kunisaki Peninsula, where unique religious culture is preserved. The city seeks synergy by combining its international cooperation initiatives in the field of gastronomy with initiatives of other cities in the prefecture that are promoting design and crafts & folkarts.

10.19 Main facilities and infrastructure made available as well as events (fairs, conferences, conventions, etc.) organized by the city in the past three years aimed at promoting the creative fields covered by the Network, other than the selected creative field in the application

Usuki is the birthplace of Yaeko Nogami, a leading novelist in Japan. The house where she was born has been converted into her memorial hall. The Usuki Library, opened in 1918, has been designated as a historical building and is still used today. In this background, the city is promoting literature and encouraging children to read more books. In 2021, the city adopted the third plan to promote reading, in line with which the city enhances the support to the library, create more opportunities of reading to children, and provide more chances for residents to learn about writers related to Usuki.

The annual National Cultural Festival, held in one of the 47 prefectures in Japan, brings together nationwide artists in traditional performing arts, literature, music, fine arts, and gastronomy. When the festival was held in Oita in 2018, Usuki City organized a contemporary dance event, classic music concert, performance of the flamenco, and an exhibition of arts by disabled people.

10.20 Provide detailed information of the city's overall proceeds and expenditures over the last five years, showing amounts devoted to and generated from the creative field concerned

Except for the municipal utility account, Usuki City's revenue for the past five years (fiscal 2016-2020) amounted to \$1,58 billion with an average annual income of \$316.65 million. Its expenditure for the same period amounted to \$1,55 billion with an annual average of \$310.74 million. The city spent \$28.39 million with annual average amounting to \$5.68 million on gastronomy, except for expenditure related to measures against the pandemic in fiscal 2020. The expenditure on gastronomy accounts for 1.8% of the city's total expenditure.

The breakdown of the expenditure on gastronomy is as follows: \$3.37 million for promoting organic farming and other agricultural projects; \$1.79 million for fisheries projects, particularly development of fishermen; and \$523,000 on commerce and manufacturing industries, including support of food-related events and brand development projects. (All figures in USD)

11. CONTRIBUTION TO ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE NETWORK

In this section, the applicant cities are invited to present an appropriate medium-term (four-year) action plan describing the main initiatives that the city commits to implement and achieve the Network's objectives: using creativity as a driver of sustainable development at the local and international levels.

The proposed initiatives must correspond to the objectives and the areas of action specified in the [Mission Statement of the Creative Cities Network](#)¹. Applicant cities are requested to have a thorough understanding of this document before filling in this section. The action plan and its proposed initiatives should be realistic, coherent and feasible, and in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is recommended to describe the main planned initiatives in a meaningful manner rather than multiple theoretical lists of actions. In case of designation, the city will be expected to implement this action plan and to report on its implementation of the plan via the compulsory quadrennial Membership Monitoring Report (in other words, in case of designation following the 2021 Call for Applications, the city shall submit its first report in 2025).

11.1 Presentation of a maximum of three major initiatives, programmes or projects aimed at achieving the objectives of the Network locally (city level) by enhancing the role of culture and creativity in the sustainable development of the city

*It is recommended that two of the proposed initiatives should correspond to the creative field concerned and one of the initiatives presented should be of a cross-cutting nature and link with at least one of the other creative fields covered by the Network. The presentation of the proposed initiatives should notably include the scope, objectives, outreach and stakeholders (partners, participants and beneficiaries), the expected results and impact to highlight the quality, diversity and innovation of the approach. Initiatives supported by the city involving the public and private sectors, civil society, professional associations and cultural institutions are encouraged (**3500 characters maximum with spaces**).*

To promote the city's sustainable development (SDGs 11), Usuki City will work to maintain the tradition of its regional gastronomy while concurrently innovating it by taking the three initiatives described below.

(1) Building Usuki-style recycling-based society (SDGs 8, 9, 12, 14, 15)

In collaboration with residents and companies, Usuki City will build a recycling-based society by cultivating water sources through forestation, promoting organic farming, and preserving the seabed environment. These initiatives to be taken in forests, farmland, and the ocean, are designed to create a favorable water circulation and grow the fermentation food industry, which uses quality fresh water and local products as essential materials. Locally produced foods and their provision at restaurants are expected to promote slow food movement, enhance the sustainability of gastronomical culture, and help increase the number of tourists.

While Usuki City has been engaged in various programs in diverse categories, it will integrate these programs to reinforce the city's efforts to implement them under the framework of the Creative City, and to build Usuki-style recycling-based society. Specifically, the city will increase the output of mature compost to meet the growing demand and will promote organic farming. To expand the global market of Usuki's fermented food industry, the city will support the industry by seeking cooperation from other Creative Cities. The city will support both

¹ https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/sites/default/files/uccn_mission_statement_en.pdf

existing and new restaurants, encouraging them to develop dishes using fermented food and organic vegetables, and assisting them to develop chefs with exceptional creativity and sensibility.

The city has decided to finalize a detailed action plan related to gastronomy by the end of 2021. In the city's next comprehensive plan, which will start in 2025, gastronomical policies will be included as focal points, together with policies related to the UCCN and SDGs.

(2) To enhance residents' pride in Usuki's gastronomical culture (SDGs 8, 9)

By promoting residents' recognition of the city's initiatives described in (1), Usuki City hopes to enhance their civic pride.

To this end, the city will reinforce food education for residents, particularly children and young adults, and increase the ratio of organic vegetables in school lunches (from 14.6% to 24%). In 2021, the city will form a working group, comprising members of the fermented food industry, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, restaurants, and general public. The members will lead projects to produce Usuki's gastronomic archives and to increase the number of opportunities to enable both residents and tourists to taste Usuki's traditional cuisine and dishes using local products.

(3) To build a Creative City with exceptional gastronomical culture (SDGs 8, 9)

Usuki has a variety of topographical features, including forests, farmland, and the ocean, all of which provide a variety of foods and help foster the city's unique gastronomy. By fusing it with other art genres, such as films, crafts, music, and cultural properties (Usuki Stone Buddha and historical buildings), the city will promote multifaceted features of the Creative City.

Specifically, the city will organize film festivals on the theme of gastronomy, promote collaboration of the local ceramic industry and restaurants to serve Usuki's dishes in Usuki's ceramics, and develop programs for tourists to learn Japan's gastronomical tradition and creative culture at first hand.

11.2 Presentation of a maximum of three major initiatives, programmes or projects aimed at achieving the objectives of the Network on an international level, particularly those involving other member cities of the Network

The presentation of the proposed initiatives should notably include the scope, objectives, outreach, stakeholders (partners, participants and beneficiaries) and expected results and impact, to highlight the quality, diversity and innovation of the approach. Initiatives supporting the extension of the Network in under-represented regions and countries, as well as actions involving cities in developing countries to strengthen North-South and South-South cooperation, are encouraged. A cross-cutting initiative linking several of the creative fields covered by the Network may be presented (3500 characters maximum with spaces).

Usuki City will reinforce partnerships with UNESCO Creative Cities and other cities in the world that prioritize creativity in sustainable development (SDGs 17) by taking the three initiatives described below.

(1) Promoting interactions with other cities by taking advantage of Usuki's fermentation gastronomy (SDGs 2, 8, 9)

Fermented foods, such as miso paste and soy sauce, are essential ingredients of traditional Japanese cuisine, which has become popular worldwide for its healthiness and good

taste. In collaboration with Tsuruoka City, which is also home to the thriving fermentation industry, Usuki City plans to promote interactions with other cities of fermentation culture, such as Parma, Italy. Among many such cities, Usuki has particularly many common points with cities in the East and South Asia. By promoting interactions with cities in these regions, Usuki hopes to disseminate information on UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy.

In 2019, Fundokin Shoyu, a major fermented food producer in Usuki (see 10.8) established a joint venture with a Malaysian food producer. In 2021, the company began producing dressings and other seasonings at its Malaysian factory while developing new seasonings containing miso paste and soy sauce. The company seeks to obtain certification of Halal-friendly products to market its products in Islamic countries. Together with the company, the city plans to disseminate the UCCN programs in Asia.

(2) Sharing the city's expertise in organic farming with other cities to build recycling-based society (SDGs 2, 12, 15)

Usuki City is eager to share with the world its expertise in production of fermented compost, which helps effective cultivation of wholesome and high-quality agricultural products.

Since 2010, the city has been producing mature compost by shredding and fermenting weeded grasses and pruned twigs to sell it to farmers. The city hopes to share the compost production technologies that it has developed over the past decade, along with culinary techniques and organic food recipes so as to promote organic farming, which is regarded to be difficult to introduce. As an effective means for this purpose, the city has created a film "A Dialogue: Living Harmony," which the city will continue to show in various parts of the world. At the same time, the city plans to organize a film festival in Usuki on the theme of gastronomy by inviting specialists.

(3) Improving Usuki's gastronomical culture and promoting inbound tourism featuring home-stay programs at farm houses (SDGs 2, 6, 8, 9, 15)

The city plans to promote personnel exchanges, particularly those of chefs, with other Creative Cities of Gastronomy to improve Usuki's gastronomical level. In addition, providing chefs and tourists from other cities with opportunities of creative tourism (see 11.1), the city seeks to promote global recognition of its initiatives to promote fermented food culture and to build recycling-based society.

Under the city's home-stay program at farmhouses (see 10.5), Usuki has hosted many tourists from outside Japan. Combining the program with creative tourism of Creative Cities of various categories, the city hopes to promote recognition of diverse aspects of creative culture in the region. The city also plans to hold an international symposium on traditional Japanese cuisine to promote the history and spirituality of Usuki's ceremonial cuisine of feudal lords and Buddhist vegetarian cuisine.

11.3 Estimated budget for implementing the proposed action plan

It is recommended to present the estimated overall annual budget for implementing the proposed action plan over a period of 4 years, as well as the respective percentages that will be earmarked to local and international initiatives. All of the resources that the city expects to contribute should be mentioned, not only including financial resources but also other resources (personnel, facilities, etc.). Please indicate any existing funding or envisaged funding opportunities with national, regional and international funding agencies such as development banks and institutions, in order to complement the budget from the Municipality itself. Alternative and innovative fundraising mechanisms may be presented (1000 characters maximum with spaces).

The evaluation will not be made on the basis of the size of the proposed budget but in terms of its feasibility, coherence, achievability and sustainability in relation to the proposed action plan.

The budget for Usuki's action plan for fiscal 2021-2024 will be \$26.24 million or \$6.55 million per year. The breakdown of the annual budget is as follows: \$6.37 million (97%) for regional initiatives; \$187,000 (3%) for international initiatives. Whereas in the past five years the city annually allocated \$5.68 million on average, the city will increase the budget to fulfil its mission as a Creative City. Specifically, the city plans to allocate more on programs to foster creative chefs and create opportunities for both residents and tourists to experience Usuki's gastronomical culture. In these initiatives, Oita Prefecture is going to render financial support to the city (All figures in USD).

Twenty organizations in the city have formed the Usuki Creative City of Gastronomy Promotion Council (see 3.), which is supported by seven advisers and 10 members of a working group. The secretariat of the council has 13 staff members, including four full-time members.

11.4 Intended structure for the implementation and management of the action plan

Presentation of the organization and governance structure of the city, as well as the resources in terms of personnel and/or the entity that will be established to ensure the planning and implementation of the proposed action plan and an active contribution by the city to the achievement of the Network's objectives. It is recommended that the person in charge of this team or entity will also be the focal point of the city in case of designation. Brief presentation of the organizational structure and the planned working arrangements of the entity, as well as the details of the potential partners to implement the action plan along with the names, designations and contact details of key experts, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and academic institutions, may also be provided (1500 characters maximum with spaces).

The Usuki Creative City of Gastronomy Promotion Council, established by the city in February 2021 (see 3.), is responsible for the implementation and management of the action plan. The council's role is to integrate projects that have been separately carried out in diverse fields, such as commerce, manufacturing, agriculture, and education, and to reinforce the project implementation from the viewpoint of the Creative City.

In addition to members of the food industry and related specialists, the council comprises members of NGOs, including those working to build recycling-based society, improve dietary habits, and promote gender equality. Accordingly, the council is operated based on broad and inclusive perspectives, in addition to the viewpoint of revitalizing the local economy. Meanwhile, Oita Prefecture supports the implementation of the action plan in various terms, including financial support. Advisers to the council include members of the Oita Association of Corporate Executives (survey and promotion of the Creative Cities), Professor Tomonori Sudo at APU (SDGs), Professor Hidehiko Fujihara at Beppu University (fermented food studies), researchers of culinary history, and members of NGO Hitoneru Academy (development of creative human resources). They offer professional advice essential for promoting Usuki's gastronomical culture as a Creative City.

11.5 Intended plan for communication and awareness-raising

Presentation of a comprehensive communication and awareness-raising strategy and plan for promoting the Network and its objectives to a wide audience, as well as the expected outcomes and impact of this plan (1500 characters maximum with spaces).

In seeking the UCCN's membership, Usuki City has held seminars and used various media to share related information with residents and raise their awareness. After the designation of Usuki as a Creative City, Usuki will reinforce communication with its residents through its website, SNS, and brochures. Since Oita Prefecture is home to the UNESCO Biosphere Reserves and a site of the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems, Usuki hopes to seek collaboration with them.

Inside Japan, Tsuruoka City in east Japan and Usuki in west Japan will collaborate to promote the significance of the UCCN and to share outcomes of the two cities' activities through the Creative City Network Japan and the Study Group for Creating Rich Food Hometowns. Immediately after the designation of Usuki, the city will begin collaboration programs with Tsuruoka, with which Usuki has already built partnerships. Since Usuki has been ranked as the No. 1 small city where young Japanese people desire to live(source:"Country life book"), Usuki will encourage creative people to move into the city by sharing the information of its designation as a Creative City.

Outside Japan, Usuki hopes to share outcomes of its activities at annual general meetings of the UCCN, and promote interactions with other Creative Cities of Gastronomy through Tsuruoka. Specifically, Usuki hopes to build close relationship with Parma, a Creative City known for its fermented foods, such as prosciutto, cheese, and wine.

12. SUBMISSION OF THE MEMBERSHIP MONITORING REPORT

☒ By checking the box, the city if designated commits to provide every four years, a Membership Monitoring Report as requested by UNESCO, which provides detailed information on the effective implementation of activities related to its designation as a UNESCO Creative City and its impact. The first such report will be expected in 2025 for cities designated following the current Call for Applications.

13. PARTICIPATION IN THE ANNUAL CONFERENCES OF THE NETWORK

☒ By checking the box, the city if designated commits to ensure the participation of a delegation from the city, including at least one representative, ideally together with the Mayor, in the Annual Conferences of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network and shall be responsible for covering any travel, accommodation and other subsistence costs incurred. In the event that more than one representative attend (not including the Mayor), it is recommended that the aforementioned city focal point should be included.

14. PROVIDING INFORMATION TO THE SECRETARIAT

☒ By checking the box, the city if designated commits to provide regular up-to-date key information related to the implementation of the city's membership, notably any change in the contact details including the Mayor, the focal point and other contact persons (see sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4)

15. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION PROVIDED BY UNESCO

☒ By checking the box, the city if designated commits to regularly disseminate information as well as communication materials shared by UNESCO through the city's communication and social media platforms. The main communication contact alongside the main executive contact (please refer to Section 3.4) shall be responsible for undertaking this task and keeping the UNESCO Secretariat informed in this regard.

16. COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

In order to prepare communication materials about your city in the event of its designation, please complete the following fields. This information will be used on the UNESCO website and in other communication materials of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network.

*Therefore, please kindly note that the city is **fully responsible for the quality and accuracy of the submitted communication materials**. In order to facilitate the preparation of these materials, you may refer to the UCCN website where a city page for each current member is presented.*

- 16.1** Brief and pertinent presentation of the cultural assets and creative industries of the city in the creative field concerned, avoiding the exclusive promotion of city branding or tourism. Data, statistics and other indicators in the field of cultural and creativity, especially in the creative field concerned, are highly recommended (**1500 characters maximum with spaces**).

Usuki City is located on Kyushu Island in southwest Japan. The city faces an inland sea in the east while its west area has relatively steep mountains. This topographical feature provides the city with abundant clean water. Using fresh sweet water, production of miso paste and soy sauce (seasonings fermented with rice malt) began around 1600, the output of which has now reached the top level in Japan. In addition, Usuki is also known for alcoholic products, such as sake and shochu liquor.

As one of Japan's first region to assimilate Western culture, Usuki has a multi-cultural tradition that originated in the 16th century. Constructed as a castle town, Usuki maintains streets of the 17th century with historical houses of merchants, warriors' residences, temples, and shrines. Today, there are many traditional Japanese restaurants that serve dishes using local products. Usuki is also known for images of Buddha engraved on rocks, the number of which is the greatest in Japan. One of the images, known as Usuki Stone Buddha, has been designated as a National Treasure. At present, the city is promoting organic farming and slow food movement by producing compost from fermented grasses, certifying organic vegetables, and using them for school lunches. In this way, in addition to the time-honored fermentation industry, the city develops unique sustainable industries that take advantage of the fermentation technologies, particularly the organic agriculture that uses mature compost.

- 16.2** Contributions of the city in terms of achieving the objectives of the Network according to the proposed action plan (**800 characters maximum, presented in bullet points**)

To achieve the objectives of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network as a Creative City of Gastronomy, Usuki City will contribute to the UCCN in the terms described below:

- Taking advantage of its fermented food industry, the city will introduce Japan's fermented foods to the world and promote interaction of fermentation cultures in the world.
- To build recycling-based society through promotion of organic farming, the city will share with the world its technology to produce fermented mature compost, which helps efficient production of wholesome and high-quality crops.
- The city will develop creative tourism, which enables many inbound tourists to experience the city's gastronomical culture and other creative, cultural aspects at first hand.

- 16.3** A maximum of two URL links to websites related to the creative field concerned and the contents of the application. Social media handles for the city if any including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter may also be provided.

The Way of Gourmet Cooking in Usuki:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9GQSQ85nHU>

Usuki City's official website:

<https://www.city.usuki.oita.jp/docs/2021062400018/>

- 16.4** List of the city's membership in other UNESCO's cities networks (such as UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities, and Megacities Alliance for Water and Climate), as well as other major international and inter-regional cities networks or platforms

A member of the Creative City Network Japan, a network founded in 2013 to promote Creative Cities in Japan

A member of the Study Group for Creating Rich Food Hometowns (founded in 2019, chaired by the representative of Tsuruoka City), a network of Japanese cities seeking regional development through promotion of their gastronomical culture

Name: Goro Nakano

Mayor of the city of: Usuki City

Date: June 29, 2021

Signature²:

² The Mayor of the city should sign the present Application Form with his/her digital signature. In case the digital signature is not available, please send a separate scanned copy of the page 2 (where personal information about the mayor appears) and this page, both signed in ink.

UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK

2021 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

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Identifier (for instance file name)	Brief informative caption (no more than 40 words in English or French)	Date	Credit (‘© -----, year’)	Photographer (if not mentioned in the credit)
Kani Shoyu with <i>koji</i> - making steam	Kani Shoyu with <i>koji</i> - making steam	23/06/2021	©Fumiaki Himawari,2021	Fumiaki Himawari

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5. All disputes arising out of, or in connection with the present Cession of Rights or the breach thereof, shall be settled primarily by mutual understanding. In the event an amicable settlement cannot be reached, such dispute shall be referred to arbitration in accordance with the Rules of Arbitration of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

Name: NAKANO Goro

Date: 29/06/2021

Address: 72-1 Usuki, Usuki
City, Oita Prefecture,
Japan

Signature:

UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK

2021 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

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Identifier (for instance file name)	Brief informative caption (no more than 40 words in English or French)	Date	Credit (‘© -----, year’)	Photographer (if not mentioned in the credit)
<i>miso-</i> making in Kani shoyu	<i>miso</i> -making process in Kani shoyu	30/10/2017	©Kani shoyu,2017	Aiichirou Kani

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10. All disputes arising out of, or in connection with the present Cession of Rights or the breach thereof, shall be settled primarily by mutual understanding. In the event an amicable

settlement cannot be reached, such dispute shall be referred to arbitration in accordance with the Rules of Arbitration of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

Name: NAKANO Goro Date: 29/06/2021

Address: 72-1 Usuki, Usuki
City, Oita Prefecture, Japan Signature:

UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK

2021 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

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Identifier (for instance file name)	Brief informative caption (no more than 40 words in English or French)	Date	Credit (‘© -----, year’)	Photographer (if not mentioned in the credit)
Kirasumameshi	One of the traditional local dishes made by a frugal lifestyle	05/04/2017	©usukiyaki,2017	Hiroyuki Usami

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14. I Hiroyuki Usami will hold harmless, defend and indemnify UNESCO against any lawsuits, claims, costs and liabilities resulting from any disputes that arise from the present Cession of Rights.

15. All disputes arising out of, or in connection with the present Cession of Rights or the breach thereof, shall be settled primarily by mutual understanding. In the event an amicable

settlement cannot be reached, such dispute shall be referred to arbitration in accordance with the Rules of Arbitration of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)

Name: NAKANO Goro

Date: 29/06/2021

Address: 72-1 Usuki, Usuki
City, Oita Prefecture,
Japan

Signature: