

Announcement on the Call for Applications for Recommendation for Special Naturalization of Outstanding Private-Sector Talent

In order to identify and attract outstanding global talent that will contribute to the Korean economy, applications are invited from candidates in the private sector for recommendation for special naturalization, as follows.

February 11, 2026

Minister of SMEs and Startups

1 Overview of the Special Naturalization for Outstanding Talent [hereinafter referred to as 'Special Naturalization']

□ Overview

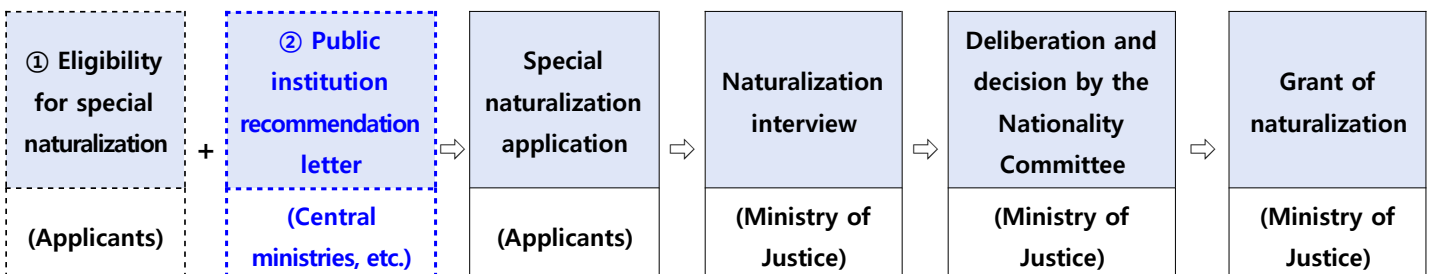
o The Ministry of Justice grants Korean nationality to individuals who possess outstanding abilities in science, the economy, culture, sports, etc., and are recognized as likely to contribute to Korea's national interest. Instead of requiring renunciation of the applicant's original nationality, dual nationality is permitted.

* Special naturalization categories (10 Categories) : 1. Prominent persons, 2. Excellent in academic research, 3. Excellent in culture and arts, 4. Excellent in sports, 5. Outstanding employees from domestic or overseas companies, 6. Employees in new-industry or advanced-technology fields, 7. Holders of original/core technologies in new-industry or advanced-technology fields, 8. Holders of intellectual property rights, 9. Holders of professional skills/technologies, 10. Employment at international organizations

□ Eligibility Requirements and Nationality Acquisition Procedures

o Final approval for naturalization is granted to ① individuals who meet the basic requirements for special naturalization, have received ② a recommendation from a public institution or similar entity, and have completed the nationality acquisition procedures administered by the Ministry of Justice.

<Procedure for Acquisition of Nationality (Special Naturalization)>



□ MSS Recommendation Categories

o The Ministry of SMEs and Startups(MSS) plans to issue letters of recommendation for the private sector categories listed below, following a review, among the ten special naturalization categories.

* As a government ministry supporting businesses, the MSS actively identifies and attracts global talent that can contribute to the Korean economy. Recommendations may also be made through institutions other than the MSS.

<Basic Requirements for Special Naturalization in the Private Sector Categories>

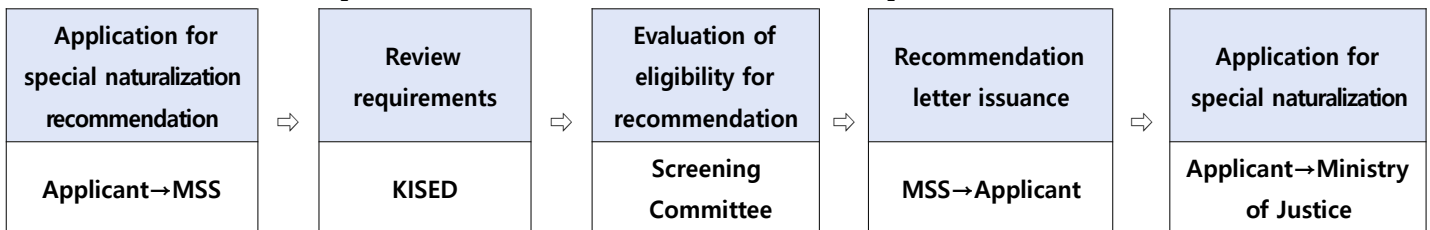
No.	Category	Basic Requirements (Experience, etc.)	Income Requirements
5	Employees from domestic or overseas companies; Employees at foreign-invested companies	<p>① A person with at least 3 years of work experience at one of the world's top 300 companies selected within the past 3 years by leading global economic magazines (e.g., FORTUNE, THE ECONOMIST), who works (or has a confirmed plan to work) on a full-time basis as an inside director (executive) at a large enterprise subject to the 「Monopoly Regulation and Fair Trade Act」.</p> <p>※ Foreign-national compatriots who have at least one year of work experience at a top 500 company may be exempt from the domestic employment requirement if their potential contribution to the national interest is specifically recognized through contracts (or collaboration) with the Government of the Republic of Korea or major domestic corporations.</p> <p>② A person with at least 3 years of work experience at one of the world's top 300 companies selected within the past 3 years by leading global economic magazines, who works (or has a confirmed plan to work) on a full-time basis as an inside director at a middle standing enterprise subject to the 「Special Act on the Promotion of Growth and Strengthening of Competitiveness of Middle Standing Enterprises」.</p> <p>※ Foreign-national compatriots who have at least two years of work experience at a top 500 company may be exempt from the domestic employment requirement if their potential contribution to the national interest is specifically recognized through contracts (or collaboration) with the Government of the Republic of Korea or major domestic corporations.</p> <p>③ A person who has worked for at least 3 years as an inside director or above at a domestic company located in Korea with (i) at least 100 regular employees and (ii) paid-in capital exceeding KRW 8 billion.</p> <p>※ For foreign-national compatriots: at least 2 years.</p> <p>④ The representative of a sole proprietorship or a corporation whose average annual export performance over the last 3 years is at least USD 5 million (the entity must be an SME under the 「Framework Act on Small and Medium Enterprises」, and the applicant must be the actual principal manager).</p> <p>※ For foreign-national compatriots: at least USD 2million.</p> <p>⑤ A person who (as representative director or above) has resided in Korea for at least 3 years at a foreign-invested company (individual or corporation) that invested at least USD 500,000 under the 「Foreign Investment Promotion Act」, and who has (i) a tax payment record of at least KRW 300 million and (ii) employs at least 30 Korean nationals.</p>	<p>At least twice the per capita GNI (1.5 times or more for foreign-national compatriots)</p> <p>Supporting documents proving performance</p> <p>Supporting documents proving performance</p>
6	Employees in new-industry or advanced-technology fields	<p>A person with at least 2 years of research or development experience in a new-industry field* or an advanced-technology field**, who is employed (or is scheduled to be employed) by a domestic company or research institute.</p> <p>* New-industry fields: System Semiconductors, Bio-health, Future Vehicles, Artificial Intelligence, etc.</p> <p>** Advanced-technology fields: New materials, Information Technology(IT), e-business, Biotechnology(BT), Nanotechnology(NT), Transport machinery, Environment/energy, Digital home appliances, Convergence industries, Software.</p> <p>※ Foreign-national compatriots with at least one year of work experience may be exempt from the domestic employment requirement if their potential contribution to the national interest is specifically recognized through contracts (or collaboration) with domestic companies or research institutions.</p>	<p>At least twice the per capita GNI (1.5 times or more for foreign-national compatriots)</p>

7	Holders of original technologies in new-industry, advanced technology, science, etc.	A person who possesses world-class original/core technologies in new-industry, advanced-technology, science, etc., that have not yet been commercialized.	None
8	Holders of domestic/overseas intellectual property rights	A person who holds domestic or overseas intellectual property rights (patents, utility model rights, design rights) and whose total income derived from patents, etc. is at least KRW 100 million (including income from assignment/transfer of patent rights).	None

Recommendation Procedure (MSS)

- o Receive recommendation applications, review requirements, undergo evaluation by the committee, and issue recommendation letters.

<Special naturalization recommendation procedure of MSS>



2 Application Eligibility and Required Documents

Application Eligibility

- o A person who seeks special naturalization and meets the basic eligibility requirements for special naturalization in the relevant field.

Required Documents : Online submission

Required Documents	Forms	Remarks
① All documents proving the fulfillment of the basic requirements for special naturalization	Note 1	The language of submission depends on the respective certificate format.
② Current employer's request for special naturalization recommendation	Note 2	Submit in Korean
③ Application for special naturalization recommendation for outstanding talent	Note 3 or Note 3-1	Submissions may be made in either Korean or English
④ Consent to provision, use, and collection of personal information	Note 4	Submit in Korean
⑤ Copy of passport or residence card		
⑥ Other materials required for review (optional)		

※ View the Fortune Global 500 Companies List : fortune.com/ranking/global500/

3 Evaluation Process and Criteria

Evaluation Procedure

① Requirements Review

- Review whether the basic requirements for special naturalization are met based on the submitted documents
- Applicants may be excluded from review if the basic requirements are not met, if the submitted documents cannot be verified, or if false information is provided.

② Presentation Evaluation

- Applicants must attend the screening committee in person (video participation is permitted in unavoidable cases) and present the validity of the special naturalization recommendation, etc.
- Presentation time : approximately 20 minutes / Q&A session : approximately 10 minutes

③ Decision on Recommendation

- The screening committee will comprehensively review the submitted documents and presentation and make a decision.

Evaluation Criteria

- Comprehensive evaluation of the applicant's excellence and potential contribution to the national interest

<Recommendation Evaluation Criteria>

Evaluation Items	Details	Points
1. Basic qualifications & competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Excellence of academic background/major■ Professional competencies and achievements (certifications, awards, papers, patents, etc.)	20
2. Excellence of prior experience, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Level/duration/difficulty of experience■ Key achievements and accomplishments	20
3. Role and performance at current organization/company	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Position and level of responsibility within the company■ Major achievements within the company	25
4. Potential contribution to national interest in the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Specificity of the contribution plan■ Feasibility (capabilities, resources, networks, etc.)	25
5. Intention to settle in Korea	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Plan to reside in Korea, Intention to settle with family/community, Korean language proficiency, etc	10

4 Application and Submission

- Application Period** : Starting February 11, 2026, applications will be accepted on a rolling basis.
- Application Method** : Submit online at <https://url.kr/t3tz7a>

5 Notes

Notes on Application

- o The application form and all documents must be submitted directly by the applicant for special naturalization.
- If the applicant and the person listed on the application form and submitted documents do not match, the applicant may be excluded from the evaluation process.
- o The applicant may be requested to submit additional or supplementary documents necessary for verification of eligibility and evaluation, and the applicant must cooperate.

Notes on Evaluation

- o The applicant must personally participate in the presentation evaluation (no proxy presentations allowed). Failure to participate will result in disqualification from the evaluation process.
- o To ensure fairness, the entire presentation evaluation process may be recorded or videotaped.

Notes after Recommendation

- o Receiving a special naturalization recommendation letter from the Ministry of SMEs and Startups does not necessarily mean final approval of the special naturalization.
- After receiving the special naturalization recommendation letter, the applicant must apply for special naturalization with the Ministry of Justice and undergo the Ministry's final review process.
 - * Special naturalization may not be approved depending on the results of the Ministry of Justice's review.

- o Even after recommendation, if it is discovered that the basic requirements for special naturalization are not met or that false information has been submitted, the recommendation may be revoked.

6	Contact
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(Application Inquiries) Global Startup Center

- o Email : startup.korea.visa@gmail.com

- o Tel : +82-02-3440-7346

(Other Inquiries) KISED

- o Email : yjeee@kised.or.kr

Category	Basic Requirements (Experience, etc.)	Examples of Supporting Documents
5. Employees from domestic or overseas companies; Employees at foreign-invested companies	<p>① A person with over three years' experience at a global top-300 company, currently serving or scheduled to serve as an inside director of a large corporation. ※ Foreign-national compatriots who have at least one year of work experience at a top 500 company may be exempt from the domestic employment requirement if their potential contribution to the national interest is specifically recognized through contracts (or collaboration) with the Government of the Republic of Korea or major domestic corporations. (Income Requirements) At least twice the per capita GNI (1.5 times or more for foreign-national compatriots)</p>	Certificate of Employment History (World's Top 300 Company), Certificate of Employment (Current Employer), and Withholding Tax Certificate
	<p>② A person with over three years' experience at a global top-300 company, currently serving or scheduled to serve as an inside director of a mid-sized enterprise. ※ Foreign-national compatriots who have at least two years of work experience at a top 500 company may be exempt from the domestic employment requirement if their potential contribution to the national interest is specifically recognized through contracts (or collaboration) with the Government of the Republic of Korea or major domestic corporations. (Income Requirements) At least twice the per capita GNI (1.5 times or more for foreign-national compatriots)</p>	Certificate of Employment History (World's Top 300 Company), Certificate of Employment (Current Employer), and Withholding Tax Certificate
	<p>③ A person who has worked for at least 3 years as an inside director or above at a domestic company located in Korea with (i) at least 100 regular employees and (ii) paid-in capital exceeding KRW 8 billion. ※ For foreign-national compatriots: at least 2 years.</p>	Four Major Social Insurance –related documents (employee headcount), Audit Report (capital), and Certificate of Employment
	<p>④ A representative of a company with average annual export sales of at least USD 5 million over the past three years (the company must be an SME, and the individual must be the de facto manager) ※ For foreign-national compatriots: at least USD 2million</p>	Certificate of Export Performance for the Past Three Years, and Business Registration Certificate or Corporate Registry Extract
	<p>⑤ A person who (as representative director or above) has resided in Korea for at least 3 years at a foreign-invested company that invested at least USD 500,000, and who has (i) a tax payment record of at least KRW 300 million and (ii) employs at least 30 Korean nationals.</p>	Investment Performance Certificate, Foreign-Invested Enterprise Registration Certificate, Corporate Tax Certificate, Certificate of Immigration Record (Residence Card), and Four Major Social Insurance Documents (Employee Count)
6. Employees in new-industry or advanced-technology fields	<p>A person with at least 2 years of research or development experience in a new-industry field or an advanced-technology field, who is employed by a domestic company or research institute. ※ Foreign-national compatriots with at least one year of work experience may be exempt from the domestic employment requirement if their potential contribution to the national interest is specifically recognized through contracts (or collaboration) with domestic companies or research institutions. (Income Requirements) At least twice the per capita GNI (1.5 times or more for foreign-national compatriots)</p>	Certificate of Research and Development Experience, Certificate of Employment or Employment Contract, Income Statement, and Withholding Tax Certificate
7. Holders of original technologies in new-industry, advanced-technology, science, etc.	<p>A person who possesses world-class original/core technologies in new-industry, advanced-technology, science, etc., that have not yet been commercialized.</p>	Documents proving possession of world-class core technologies (e.g., patents, research papers)
8. Holders of domestic/overseas intellectual property rights	<p>A person who holds domestic or overseas intellectual property rights and whose total income derived from patents, etc. is at least KRW 100 million.</p>	Evidence of patent-related income, including Patent Rights and Sales Certificates

* 'Foreign-national compatriots' refers to a person falling under Article 2, Paragraph 2 of the Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans (provided, however, that individuals who have obtained a master's or doctoral degree in science or engineering from a domestic or foreign university shall be considered under the criteria for foreign national compatriots)

Request for Recommendation for Special Naturalization of
Outstanding Talent

Name :	(Korean name) (English name)
Date of Birth :	[Month] [Day], [Year]
Nationality :	

We kindly request that the above individual, affiliated with our company (organization), be recommended as a candidate for special naturalization for outstanding talent.

2026 Month Day

*Hong Gil-dong, Representative of the Company
(Organization) Requesting Recommendation (Seal)*

To : The Honorable Minister of SMEs and Startups

□ 인적사항

(사진)	국적		소속/직위	○○기업 ○○이사
	성명		생년월일	yyyy.mm.dd.(남/여)
	입국일	yyyy.mm.dd.	국적신청일	yyyy.mm.dd.
	체류자격	영주(F-5)	국적상실일	국적회복 신청자만 해당
	체류지		출생국가	

I 기본적 자질·역량(학력 및 전문성)

□ 학력 개요(대학 이상)

연번	기간	대학	학과	학위	전공분야
1	2010.00 ~2014.00	0000000000000000			
2					
3					

□ 연구실적

○ 최근 5년 내 논문 게재 또는 국제 학술대회 등 발표 논문

연번	학술지명	논문제목	저자유형	게재 일자	Impact Factor
1	Journal of ○○ (링크 주소)	Structural basis for ○○	○○저자	2023.1.	0.000
논문개요		학문적 가치	산업적 가치		
▶(예시) ○○에 관한 연구임		▶(예시) ○○ 발전에 기여 가능	▶(예시) ○○ 산업에 기여 가능		
연번	학술지명	논문제목	저자유형	게재 일자	Impact Factor
2	Journal of (링크 주소)	Structural basis for ○○	제0저자	2023.1.	0.000
논문개요		학문적 가치	산업적 가치		
▶(예시) ○○에 관한 연구임		▶(예시) ○○ 발전에 기여 가능	▶(예시) ○○ 산업에 기여 가능		

수상경력

- 0000. 0. 0. ○○상 수상
- 0000. 0. 0. ○○상 수상

특허등록 실적

연번	구분	특허명	특허번호	<input type="checkbox"/> 등록일 <input type="checkbox"/> 출원일 <small>(등록, 출원 여부 반드시 체크)</small>
1	미국/한국 특허			
특허 개요		산업적 가치		
2	미국/한국 특허			
특허 개요		산업적 가치		

II 이전 경력 등의 우수성(현 소속기업 이전의 국내·외 경력)

현 근무기업 이전의 경력 개요

연번	근무기간	기업명(소재 국가)	직위	주요업무
1	2010.00 ~2014.00	000000000000(00국)		
2				
3				

1. 00000 컴퍼니(국가명)

- 주요 역할, 업무
- 주요 실적, 성과

2. 00000 컴퍼니(국가명)

- 주요 역할, 업무
- 주요 실적, 성과

Ⅲ**현 소속기업(기관) 내 역할 및 실적** 현 소속기업 근무현황

연번	근무기간	기업명	직위	주요업무
1	2010.00 ~2014.00	000000000000(00국)		

 주요 역할, 업무

○

 주요 실적, 성과

○

 향후 계획

○

Ⅳ**향후 국익 기여 가능성**

1. 국익 기여 계획 및 목표

○

2. 구체적 실현 방안

○

Ⅴ**한국 정착 의지**

1. 한국 거주 계획, 가족·커뮤니티 정착 의지

○

2. 한국어 능력 등 기본소양 함양 계획

○

Note 3-1

Application for Recommendation for Special Naturalization of Outstanding Talent

Personal Information

(Photo)	Nationality		Affiliation/Position	
	Name		Date of Birth	Year Month Day (Male/Female)
	Date of Entry	Year Month Day	Date of Application for Nationality	Year Month Day
	Qualification of Residence	e.g., Permanent Residence (F-5)	Date of Loss of Nationality	Applicants for nationality restoration only
	Place of Residence		Country of Birth	

I Basic Qualifications & Competencies [Education and Professional Expertise]

Educational Background (University Level and Above)

No.	Period	University	Department	Degree	Field of Study
1	Year Month ~ Year Month				
2					
3					

Research Achievements

o Papers published within the **past five years** or presented at international academic conferences

No.	Journal Name	Paper Title	Author Type	Publication Date	Impact Factor
1			e.g., 1st Author		
Paper Overview		Academic Value	Industrial Value		
▶ e.g., Research on O O		▶ e.g., Expected to Contribute to the Development of OO	▶ e.g., Expected to Contribute to the Development of the OO Industry		
No.	Journal Name	Paper Title	Author Type	Publication Date	Impact Factor
2			e.g., 1st Author		
Paper Overview		Academic Value	Industrial Value		
▶ e.g., Research on o o		▶ e.g., Expected to Contribute to the Development of OO	▶ e.g., Expected to Contribute to the Development of the OO Industry		

Awards

o Year Month Day, Received the 00 prize

o Year Month Day, Received the 00 prize

Patent Registration Performance

No.	Category	Patent Title	Patent No.	Registration Date Application Date <small>(Registration / Application status must be specified)</small>
1	US/Korea Patent			
Patent Overview		Industrial Value		
2	US/Korea Patent			
Patent Overview		Industrial Value		

II	Excellence of Previous Experience [Domestic and International Experience Prior to Current Affiliation]
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Summary of Professional Experience Prior to Current Employment

No.	Employment Period	Company Name (Country of Location)	Position	Main Duties
1				
2				
3				

1. 0000 Company (Country Name)

o Main Roles and Duties

o Key Achievements & Outcomes

2. 0000 Company (Country Name)

o Main Roles and Duties

o Key Achievements & Outcomes

III Roles and Achievements within the Current Company [Organization]

Employment Status at Current Company

No.	Employment Period	Company Name	Position	Main Duties
1				

Main Roles and Duties

o

Key Achievements & Outcomes

o

Future Plans

o

IV Potential to Contribute to National Interests

1. Plans and Goals for Contributing to National Interests

o

2. Concrete Implementation Measures

o

V Willingness to Settle in Korea

1. Plans to Reside in Korea, Willingness to Settle with Family and Community

o

2. Plans to Develop Basic Competencies, Including Korean Language Skills

o

Consent to Collection and Use of Personal Information

The 「Korea Institute of Startup & Entrepreneurship Development」 seeks your consent for the collection and use of personal information as set forth below, in accordance with Article 15, Paragraph 1, Subparagraph 1 of the Personal Information Protection Act, in relation to the 「Application for Recommendation for Special Naturalization of Outstanding Talent」.

◆ Matters Concerning the Collection and Use of Personal Information

Purpose of Collection and Use of Personal Information

○ Selection and management of applicants for the 'Recommendation for Special Naturalization of Outstanding Talent', guidance and operation of the program, follow-up management after program completion, management of records related to the support program, utilization of materials, general matters such as the operation of external lectures hosted by the Korea Institute of Startup & Entrepreneurship Development, etc.

Items of Personal Information Collected

○ Passport number, Foreign Resident Registration Number

※ Basis for Processing: Article 41 of the Enforcement Decree of the Support for Small and Medium Enterprise Establishment Act (Processing of Sensitive Information and Unique Identification Information)

○ Personal Information

- (Required) name, date of birth, gender, nationality, affiliation, mobile phone number, email address
- (Optional) home address, domestic residence, linkedIn address

Personal Information Retention and Use Period

○ 5 years, immediately destroyed after the business purpose is achieved

Right to Withhold Consent and Disadvantages of Withholding Consent

○ You have the right to withhold consent to the collection of required personal information. However, please note that if you withhold consent, you will not be able to apply for the 「Recommendation for Special Naturalization of Outstanding Talent」.

○ You have the right to withhold consent to the collection of optional personal information. Even if you do not consent, you will not be disadvantaged in the 「Application for Recommendation for Special Naturalization of Outstanding Talent」.

Do you consent to the collection and use of your personal information as described above?

Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
Optional	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree

Year

Month

Day

Name:

(seal or signature)

Consent to Third-Party Disclosure of Personal Information

The 「Korea Institute of Startup & Entrepreneurship Development」 seeks your consent for the provision of personal information as set forth below, in accordance with Article 17, Paragraph 1, Subparagraph 1 of the Personal Information Protection Act, in relation to the 「Application for Recommendation for Special Naturalization of Outstanding Talent」.

◆ Matters Concerning the Provision to Third Parties

Recipients of Personal Information

Ministry of Justice, competent immigration office, relevant overseas diplomatic missions, evaluation committees responsible for reviewing and evaluating requirements, etc.

Purpose of Use by Recipients of Personal Information

Application, Submission, and Recommendation for Special Naturalization of Outstanding Talents

Items of Personal Information Provided

Passport number, Foreign Resident Registration Number

※ Basis for Processing: Article 41 of the Enforcement Decree of the Support for Small and Medium Enterprise Establishment Act (Processing of Sensitive Information and Unique Identification Information)

Personal Information

- (Required) name, date of birth, gender, nationality, affiliation, mobile phone number, email address

- (Optional) home address, domestic residence, linkedIn address

Personal Information Retention and Use Period

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You have the right to withhold consent to the collection of optional personal information. Even if you do not consent, you will not be disadvantaged in the 「Application for Recommendation for Special Naturalization of Outstanding Talent」.

Do you consent to the collection and use of your personal information as described above?

Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
Optional	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree

Year

Month

Day

Name:

(seal or signature)