

October 9, 2026
Aspirant Group Inc.

Announcement Regarding Strategic Alliance with ITOCHU Corporation

We are pleased to announce that Aspirant Group Inc. (“Aspirant” or “we”) has entered into a strategic alliance (the “Alliance”) with ITOCHU Corporation (headquartered in Minato-ku, Tokyo; TSE Prime: 8001; hereinafter “ITOCHU”) effective October 9, 2026. As part of the Alliance, ITOCHU has acquired an approximately 20% equity interest in Aspirant.

ITOCHU, guided by its founding philosophy of *Sampo-yoshi* ("good for the seller, good for the buyer, and good for society"), is a global trading and investment conglomerate with operations across a broad range of sectors, including textile, machinery, metals & minerals, energy & chemicals, food, general products & realty, and ICT & financial business. ITOCHU has built a strong relationship with Aspirant through its continued investments in the funds managed by Aspirant, as well as its support for value creation initiatives at portfolio companies.

Since its founding in 2012, Aspirant has supported the growth and transformation of Japanese companies through private equity investing. In recent years, Japan's M&A market has remained active, driven by increasing business succession needs, corporate portfolio transformations, and reforms of the public equity markets. At the same time, awareness of and expectations for private equity funds have continued to grow.

Against this backdrop, while preserving the corporate culture that Aspirant has cultivated since its founding, we have entered into this Alliance with ITOCHU with the objective of expanding investment opportunities and further enhancing our capability to support the growth of portfolio companies.

Through this Alliance, Aspirant will leverage ITOCHU's extensive industry expertise and global network to expand investment opportunities and strengthen its capabilities to support the business growth of portfolio companies, thereby contributing to the sustainable growth and enhancement of corporate value of Japanese companies.

Our name, "Aspirant," reflects our aspiration to create a private equity fund that contributes to society and our desire to realize that aspiration together with partners who share the same vision. Through our partnership with ITOCHU, we will continue working toward the realization of this aspiration.