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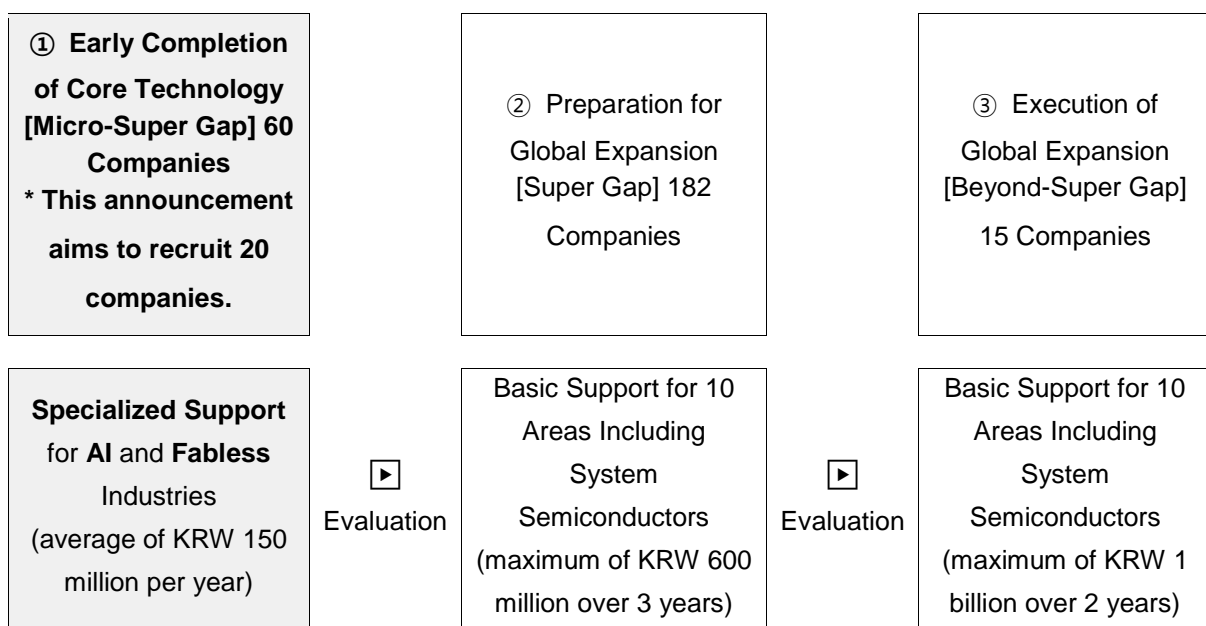
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## Announcement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Core Fields and Promising AI Transformation (AX) Startup Development Project

SEJONG – The Ministry of SMEs and Startups (MSS) announced on Wednesday, February 5, that it will be launching the “AI Core Fields and Promising AI Transformation (AX) Startup Development Project” to foster AI startups in high-growth fields that create new markets and economic value by converging with various industries based on AI technology innovation in the global market.

This program is the newly launched Level 1 ‘Micro Super Gap’ initiative, part of the three-phase ‘Super Gap Startup 1000+ Project’ announced in January. It is the first initiative to implement the ‘Super Gap AI Startup Level Up Strategy,’ introduced in July 2024, aimed at fostering high-growth AI startups that can create and expand new markets within the AI ecosystem.

### < Super Gap Project Phase-by-Phase Programs >



This announcement will select a total of 20 promising AI and AX startups, with details as follows:

① Commercialization of Core Fields in AI

Five promising AI startups in high-growth sectors such as small language models (sLLM), manufacturing, biotech, and content will be selected to receive up to KRW 150 million in funding for technology commercialization and technology advancement. In addition, based on the characteristics of each field, the leading organization, the Artificial Intelligence Industry Cluster Agency (AICA), will provide support in utilizing its infrastructure, including GPU-based AI computing resources and demonstration centers.

② Fostering Promising AX Startups

Fifteen AX startups with innovative AI technologies that can enhance products and services for demand-driven companies—ranging from large to small enterprises—will be selected across three key sectors: manufacturing, biotech, and content. These sectors offer clear potential for economic and social impact. Selected companies will receive KRW 80 million in collaborative funding, along with support for securing new sales channels.

Applications for this program will be accepted from Wednesday, February 5, to Tuesday, February 25. Among the selected startups that receive support, those demonstrating outstanding performance through evaluation will be further assisted in entering the global market through the “Super Gap Startup” initiative.

Following this announcement, plans to launch additional projects related to the “Super Gap AI Startup Level-Up Strategy” will be implemented on an ongoing basis.

First, continuing from 2024, there are plans to announce the ‘AI Super Gap Challenge’ by the end of February, which will facilitate commercialization and secure sales channels through demand-driven collaboration between global large companies and promising domestic AI startups.

In 2025, in collaboration with LG Electronics, the scope of the partnership in the on-device AI sector will expand from laptops to include products such as TVs. Additionally, new collaboration opportunities in the vertical AI sector will be introduced with Qualcomm Korea, with plans to further expand partnerships with other major tech companies.

A project titled the 'AI Regional Key Industry Connection Project' is scheduled to be announced in April. This initiative will match innovative AI startups with AX collaborations, based on the AI technology needs of leading small and medium-sized manufacturing companies in regional key industries.

Minister OH Youngju stated, "Artificial intelligence is a critical area that impacts not only industries but also the future of our nation. In 2024, we introduced the 'Super Gap AI Startup Level-Up Strategy' to support the growth of AI startups in high-growth sectors." She added, "This project is the first initiative to implement the level-up strategy, and we will continue to launch follow-up support projects to ensure its seamless execution."