

## Participating in the Festival

Anyone wearing the requisite costume can participate in the Nebuta Festival as a *haneto* dancer. Rental costumes are available throughout town in large department stores, small kimono shops, and the Nebuta-themed stores that pop up in the summer. Reservations, either online or over the phone, are recommended since rental costumes are likely to be booked out early, especially for the last night of the festival. Renting a *yukata* and belt starts at around ¥4,000, with additional trimmings, such as footwear or bells, costing extra. Costumes are also available for purchase, starting from around ¥10,000 for the full get-up.

Most rental stores are located around the parade route and have a dressing team to help dancers with their costumes. The elaborate outfit has many layers and folds, so it helps to have an expert assist with putting it on and tying the belts. After they have their costumes on, the *haneto* dancers meet up at the starting point of the parade where they can find their favorite Nebuta team to dance with. The *haneto* then stick with one float throughout the whole parade route, making a full loop until they come back to the start.