



Press Release

**Entrepreneurs selected from Asian countries and regions to compete
in the Kashiwa-no-ha Innovation Awards
The 12th Asian Entrepreneurship Awards (AEA) 2023
The 10 finalists from 20 semi-finalists,
of deep tech startups nominated from the 10 countries and regions.
Thursday, October 26, 2023 (Online)**

(Chiba, September 27, 2023) The Asia Entrepreneurship Award (AEA) Steering Committee is proud to announce we will be holding AEA2023 on October 26, 2023. This annual event has been held since 2012 and is intended to inspire startups in rapidly growing Asia.

At the 12th anniversary, AEA2023, the startups specializing in deep technologies will gather offering solutions to issues related to Life Science/Healthcare, Mobility, Environment/Energy and Sustainability, all of which the world pays attention to. This year, we opened a public application form and instituted "The Kashiwa-no-ha Prize," and the winner will get the support of the Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City for the business certification. Thus, the number of participants is much larger than usual.

The 10 finalists, culled from the semi-finalists nominated in various countries and regions, have been polishing their ideas through mentorship with venture capitalists and other specialists in Japan, with the aim of market penetration and collaboration with Japanese companies. At the final session held on October 26, they will make finalized presentations about the innovations of their business ideas, their impact on our economy and society, the feasibility, and the possibility of collaboration with companies in Japan. Some business ideas will be awarded the Grand Prix, the Prize of Kashiwa-no-ha, and honorable mentions. Don't miss the moment when brand new ideas of the top-notch technology startups in Asia will be shared and give birth to businesses.

*Click this <https://aea2023-online.peatix.com/> to apply for the event and watch online.

Key points of AEA2023

- Presentations by 10 startups recommended and selected by experts from Asian countries and regions are available online.
- To promote the participation of startups in Japan, the Kashiwa-no-ha Prize has been established in addition to the public call for applications.
- The Kashiwa-no-ha Prize winners will receive support for business demonstrations using Kashiwa-no-ha's demonstration fields, helping startups accelerate the creation of new industries.
- A networking event for AEA finalists and alumni is scheduled to be held in Kashiwa-no-ha in February 2024.



■ **About AEA** [WEB] : <https://aea.events/e/>

AEA is an innovation award established to develop an ecosystem of the creation of innovation in Asia. The movement, spearheaded by major private companies and organizations supporting startups, is going to encourage young entrepreneurs who are making new technologies with their wisdom, an initiative combining the private sector, public sector and academia.

The entrepreneurs who boldly try to solve problems in the world are the source of new employment, which creates a new industry. They are the key to innovation creation.

■ **Key points of the AEA2023**

AEA2023 opened a form for public applications and instituted a new prize, which led to enhancement of the diversity and the number of the participants. Also, a follow-up event will take place at Kashiwa-no-ha in February 2024, and we expect this momentum to contribute to establishment of an ecosystem and alumni community of promising startups. AEA will provide a spark in Kashiwa-no-ha to thoroughly support startups venturing into the world economy.

• **Watch the presentation by 10 finalists recommended by pundits in Asia online; the moment of collaboration happens between startups and companies in Japan**

The 10 finalists were culled from a lot of semifinalists who passed a paper exam. Such handpicked visionaries will make presentations finalized through mentorship with specialists, and you can watch the culmination online.

AEA offers opportunities for startups in Asia and companies in Japan to collaborate with each other. This has resulted in numerous business creations, as seen in AEA 2022 when they found potential partners.

• **Encouraged startups in Japan to join the event through public applications and a new prize, the Kashiwa-no-ha Prize; the first initiative in the Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City, the leading-edge technology area**

For AEA2023, we opened a form to receive public applications and instituted the Kashiwa-no-ha Prize to encourage startups to join the event, aiming at enhancement of the diversity and the number of the participants.

The winner of the Kashiwa-no-ha Prize can test their technology in the Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City. The whole city is designated as a platform for demonstration experiments, called “Kashiwa-no-ha

Innovation Field.” The company awarded the honorable prize can use facilities like KOIL MOBILITY FIELD, where they can test their technology of automated driving or drone control in an environment that closely simulates real street conditions. We believe that such support for business testing and PoB (Proof of Business) in Kashiwa-no-ha will be the first step for business creation and collaboration between companies.

•A networking event at Kashiwa-no-ha where the AEA finalists and alumni and alumnae gather, in February 2024

Since its launch in 2012, AEA has seen 275 startups with proven technologies from 17 countries and regions in Asia. All of these startups have been vouched for by nominators, including pundits from incubators, accelerators, startup-supporting organizations in universities, JETRO, and the University of Tokyo. These startups have presented their business ideas for resolving social issues. Also, many companies, alumni of AEA, have undergone IPO and M&A to grow further.

In this fiscal year, we plan to hold a networking event in February 2024 at Kashiwa-no-ha. This event will serve as a follow-up opportunity where alumni startups and sponsors can mingle. We believe this event will foster both the establishment and collaboration of AEA winners, AEA alumni startups, and various companies in Japan. AEA aims to be the starting point of the movement to support startups and business creations in the future.

■ The 10 Finalists

Below are the carefully selected 10 companies. We had a number of applications from various technology startups recommended by incubators, accelerators, and supporting organizations like ones in universities in Japan. The 10 finalists culled from the 20 semifinalists will make the finalized presentations.

The details are here : <https://aea.events/e/>

1	AIRS Inc. / South Korea	
	Cutting-edge surgical robotic system with real-time 3D images designed specifically for fracture surgeries that reduces radiation exposure by 90%, cuts surgery time by 50%.	Life Science / Healthcare
2	Dai3mimi Health-Tech Limited / Hong Kong	
	Hearing solution for elderly and hearing-impaired users using patented acoustic technology, a material conduction system made of combined metal and plastic materials, to transmit sound waves directly into the inner ear through the skull.	Life Science / Healthcare
3	Liaoning Jiayu Technology Co., LTD / China	
	Sentinel lymph node biopsy for breast cancer based on the team's world-first open magnetic particle imaging technology	Life Science / Healthcare
4	Huijia Health Corporation / Taiwan	
	Highly sensitive and accurate biometric sensor capable of continuously monitoring and tracking vital signs based on fiber optic physiological monitoring based on Non-invasive Fiber Optic Physiological Monitoring Technology with no electromagnetic waves	Life Science / Healthcare
5	I2Cool Limited / Hong Kong	
	High-performance paint for energy-saving and decarbonisation to achieve net-zero buildings features an edge in solar reflection and thermal emissions, resulting in a significant cooling effect, without the need for electricity or ozone-depleting refrigerants	Energy Sustainability Environment /

6	Nabsolute Co., Ltd / Thailand	
	Patented nano-modified biopolymer delivery system that enhances the stability, solubility, and absorption of active ingredients in cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and other products	Life Science / Healthcare
7	Ostic Pharma Pvt Ltd / India	
	Developing and providing affordable Rapid TB diagnosis, Rapid antigen and CRISPR-based Molecular Based Diagnostics with a focus on the needs of vulnerable populations	Life Science / Healthcare
8	BioPhenolics Inc. / Japan	
	Bio-chemicals from renewable biomass as an alternative to petrochemicals producing eco-friendly bio-based chemicals through fermentation, using renewable biomass as feedstock.	Life Science / Healthcare Environment / Energy Sustainability
9	Customize Technologies Pte. Ltd. / Singapore	
	4D-printed casts created by using advanced fabrication techniques and customized blends of polymers, which provide unprecedented comfort, convenience, and efficiency for patients, doctors, hospitals, and medical insurers.	Life Science / Healthcare Sustainability
10	Yanekara Inc. / Japan	
	Cutting edge bidirectional electric vehicle (EV) charger capable of powering and storing EVs with solar energy and cloud software to control the charging and discharging timing of thousands of EV	Environment / Energy Sustainability Mobility

*The order of the list is the order of presentation on the day of AEA.

■ The Semi-finalists

- Taiwan / Alpha Intelligence Manifolds / Healthcare •Medical
- South Korea / Cellus.inc / Healthcare •Medical
- India / Cognitica AI Private Limited / AI •IoT •Apps •Software
- Vietnam / Comit Corporation / Food •Agriculture •Environment
- Thailand / CVD CORP CO., LTD. / Food •Agriculture •Environment
- Bangladesh / Eco Via Ltd. / Food •Agriculture •Environment
- India / InfyU Labs Pvt. Ltd. / AI •IoT •Apps •Software
- Bangladesh / InsureCow Ltd. / Food •Agriculture •Environment
- Thailand / UniFAHS Co.,Ltd. / Biotechnology
- South Korea / Zefit Inc. / Robotics/Manufacturing

+Finalists listed above

*Alphabetical order of company name

■ Keynote

《Special speeches》

•Speakers

- Mr. Hiro Yoshikawa (General Partner, Carbide Ventures / Founder & Chairman of the Board, Treasure Data)
- Dr. Shigeo Kagami (Chairman of the AEA Steering Committee / Professor, Graduate School of Engineering / Deputy and Director general of Division of University Corporate Relations at The University of Tokyo / President of Japan Academic Society for Ventures and Entrepreneurs)

• **Theme: Factors of growth — What drives startups up to the top in the global market?**

• **Profile of Mr. Hiro Yoshikawa**

General Partner, Carbide Ventures / Founder & Chairman of the Board, Treasure Data
Mr. Yoshikawa is a Japanese entrepreneur currently residing in Silicon Valley. 2011, he co-founded Treasure Data, Inc. in Mountain View, U.S., and has served as CEO since its inception. In July 2018, Treasure Data was acquired by Arm, Inc. for approximately \$600 million, after several years of service as Arm's Director of Data Operations, Treasure Data re-established itself under the SoftBank Vision Fund and became Chairman of the Board.

In August 2021, he founded Carbide Ventures with members from Treasure Data and others. With offices in Silicon Valley and Tokyo, he invests in enterprise SaaS and other startups mainly in Japan and the US.

《**AEA Alumni Speech**》

Speakers

- Dr. Karlos Ishac (CEO, Lifeform AI)
- Dr. Katia Bourahmoune (COO, Lifeform AI, AI Leader)

• **Theme: AEA is a bridge to the future. A Demonstration Project with a Japanese Company Seized by a Startup from the University of Tsukuba**

Lifeform AI is a startup founded by graduates from University of Tsukuba and one of the semifinalists in AEA2021. They are developing an IoT platform to enhance training and QOL, by introducing an AI-based human behavioral model and a sensing technology of a patented smart textile. Although they missed the AEA award then, they took advantage of follow-ups by AEA and obtained opportunities to collaborate with other companies. Their grit resulted in a demonstration project at Fitness Club Tokyo Dome in March 2023. They will share their experiences on how they secured the opportunity for the demonstration project from AEA2021, along with some subsequent stories.

-The Demonstration Project in Tokyo Dome (<https://aea.events/e/interview/lifeformai/>)

-Lifeform AI (<https://www.lifeformai.com/>)

■ **AEA2023 Outline**

Date: Thursday, October 26, 2023
Format: Online
Language: English
Official HP: <https://aea.events/j/> (Japanese)
<https://aea.events/e/> (English)
Host: Asia Entrepreneurship Award Steering Committee
Co-Host: The University of Tokyo, Mitsui Fudosan Co., TX Entrepreneur Partners, The Japan Academic Society for Ventures and Entrepreneurs, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), Kashiwa City

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■ Program

10:30-16:20	Final sessions by finalists (10 finalists will give 10-minute presentations + 15-minute Q&A)
16:30-17:10	Keynote speech by Almuni, Lifeform AI
17:20-18:05	Keynote talks by Mr. Hiro Yoshikawa (General Partner, Carbide Ventures / Founder & Chairman of the Board, Treasure Data) and Dr. Shigeo Kagami (Chairman of the AEA Steering Committee / Professor, Graduate School of Engineering / Deputy and Director general of Division of University Corporate Relations at The University of Tokyo / President of Japan Academic Society for Ventures and Entrepreneurs)
18:20-19:00	Announcement of the winners

■ Main target participants

- General Audience : Those who are interested in innovation by technology startups in Asian countries/regions
- For those who wish to be matched with technology startups in Asian countries and regions :
New business managers who are considering collaboration and partnership with startups
- VC, CVC, and other investors

■ Sponsors and Partners

Special Sponsor	Nikkei Inc.
Platinum Sponsors	Global Brain Corporation / Nippon Venture Capital Co.,Ltd (NVCC), Sumitomo Mitsui Constructions Co.,Ltd
Gold Sponsors	The University of Tokyo Edge Capital Partners Co.,Ltd. (UTEC) / BIPROGY Inc. / Mitsubishi Research Institute, Inc. / Mitsui Fudosan Residential Co.,Ltd./ SHIMIZU CORPORATION
Silver Sponsors	IP Bridge, Inc. / KOMATSU MATERE Co.,Ltd. / Nikken Sekkei Ltd / Frontier Construction & Partners Co.,Ltd. / Mitsui Home Co.,Ltd

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Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) / CHIBA Prefecture / KEIDANREN (Japan Business Federation) / Japan Venture Capital Association (JVCA) / Chiba Convention Bureau and International Center / Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) / Japan Institute of Design Promotion (JDP) / NATIONAL GRADUATE INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES (GRIPS) / National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST) / Life Science Innovation Network Japan (LINK-J) / Garage+

■Co-Hosts

<The University of Tokyo Industry-Division of University Corporate Relations> [WEB]

<https://www.ducr.u-tokyo.ac.jp/>

The Division of University Corporate Relations at the University of Tokyo offers various supports related to the right acquisition, management, use, and business creation of intellectual properties to make influential innovations through research at the University of Tokyo. Such support includes Entrepreneurial consultation services for researchers and students, Operation and management of incubation facilities for venture companies, and Funding for university-launched venture companies through the University of Tokyo Collaborative Platform Development Corporation and the University of Tokyo Edge Capital Partners Corporation. The division also operates incubation facilities such as the University of Tokyo Entrepreneur Plaza and the University of Tokyo Entrepreneur Lab, as well as entrepreneurship education programs such as the University of Tokyo Entrepreneur Dojo, EDGE-NEXT, Hongo Tech Garage, and FoundX. The University of Tokyo Entrepreneur Dojo, EDGE-NEXT, Hongo Tech Garage, FoundX, etc. Through this award, the division will further foster a culture of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship from a global perspective.

<MITSUI FUDOSAN> [WEB] Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City <https://www.kashiwanoha-smartcity.com/>

Mitsui Fudosan is promoting the Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City project in the area around Kashiwa-no-ha Campus Station in Kashiwa City, Chiba Prefecture, under the three themes of "environmental symbiosis," "health and longevity," and "creation of new industries." In the area of new industry creation, centered on the venture co-creation project "31VENTURES," Mitsui Fudosan's broad trade area and diverse business domains are utilized to create new industries that connect people of multiple generations, fields, and nationalities throughout the city. Mitsui Fudosan and Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City have supported AEA since its launch in 2012, and will continue to build an innovation creation ecosystem in the Kashiwa-no-ha area that attracts Asian startups, major companies and entrepreneurial supporters.

<TX Entrepreneur Partners> [WEB] <https://tepweb.jp/>

TX Entrepreneur Partners (TEP) is an organization that supports deep tech startups with technology at its core, mainly along the Tsukuba Express rail line, and promotes the creation of a sustainable startup support ecosystem through collaboration among local universities and research institutions, government, private companies and individual supporters. AEA was established as an opportunity for startups to expand their horizons beyond their home countries and regions to Asia and the world, and has been held on an ongoing basis.

<The Japan Academic Society for Ventures and Entrepreneurs> [WEB] <https://www.venture-ac.ne.jp/>

The purpose of the Japan Academic Society for Ventures and Entrepreneurship is to provide theoretical, empirical, and practical training on corporate activities in venture companies and general companies, and to contribute to the promotion of industry-academia cooperation and the support of entrepreneurial activities. We aim to become a social platform for entrepreneurial activities and ventures that are responsible for the creation of innovations by enhancing our function as an "academic society that thinks" as well as an "academic society that acts" while forming a network of diverse people, including major companies, venture companies, and government officials, rather than simply a group of researchers.

<Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)> [WEB] <https://www.jetro.go.jp/>

JETRO aims to contribute to the further development of Japan's economy and society through the promotion of trade and investment, as well as research and studies, by fully utilizing its global network of approximately 120 domestic and overseas offices. In recent years, we have been strengthening our efforts to nurture Japan's startup ecosystem and create innovation. We support Japanese startups in their overseas expansion through the establishment of a "Global Acceleration Hub" and promote

domestic and international partnerships and collaboration between Japanese and overseas companies through the development of the "J-Bridge" business platform.

< **Kashiwa City** > [WEB] <https://www.city.kashiwa.lg.jp/index.html>

Since 2023, Kashiwa City has offered a comprehensive 'Startup Support Package.' This is based on the concept of 'Gathering' (by companies), 'Connection' (of businesses), and 'Creation' (of innovation), all aimed at energizing the city's industries.

Kashiwa City has, mainly in the Kashiwa-no-ha area, research institutes such as the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST) and the National Cancer Center Hospital East, academic institutions such as the University of Tokyo and Chiba University, and incubation facilities such as Tokatsu Techno Plaza and Todai Kashiwa Venture Plaza that support the commercialization of their leading-edge technologies and knowledge in Japan. Taking advantage of these regional characteristics, we will continue to support the startups that are clustered in the city so that they can play an active role.

*Please note that due to the joint release, there may be duplicate distribution.

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