

June 29, 2021

**MEDIA ALERT**

*Five Japanese Start-up Companies to be Featured in Innovation Showcase of the  
2021 Japan-U.S. Innovation Awards Program*

San Francisco, CA - The Japan - U.S. Innovation Awards Program <<https://www.usjinnovate.org>> is proud to announce five exciting Japanese startup companies that will be featured in the Innovation Showcase of the annual Japan - U.S. Innovation Awards Symposium on July 15, 2021.

Now in its eleventh year, the Japan - U.S. Innovation Awards Program is produced annually by the Japan Society of Northern California <<https://www.usa-japan.org>> in cooperation with the US-Asia Technology Management Center <<https://asia.stanford.edu>> at Stanford University.

The Innovation Showcase recognizes up to five Japanese startup companies built around exciting new technologies and innovative business ideas that have the potential for major worldwide impact. Showcase companies are selected from a pool of over 100 nominees through stringent review, discussion, and voting by the Innovation Advisory Council of the Awards Program, a distinguished 54-person committee of venture investors, successful entrepreneurs, company executives, and academic experts in the U.S. and Japan (for member list, see <<https://www.usjinnovate.org/innovation-awards-council-members/>>).

The 2021 Innovation Showcase companies are:

**akippa** <<https://akippa.co.jp/>> -- sharing economy business for parking space rental  
**Bespoke** <<https://www.be-spoke.io/>> -- AI-based multilingual conversation assistant  
**bitBiome** <<https://bitbiome.co.jp/en/>> -- microbiome genome analysis and database services  
**Idein** <<https://idein.jp/en/>> -- platform for edge AI in IOT systems  
**LUCA Science** <<https://www.luca-science.com/>> -- mitochondria as therapeutics for cellular bioenergetics restoration

(Further details are below.)

The Innovation Showcase will take place during the second session of the Japan - U.S. Innovation Awards Symposium, which this year will be presented online only via Zoom on two successive Thursdays, July 8 and July 15, from 4:30 - 7:00 pm, Pacific Time (U.S.) During the second session of the Symposium on July 15, top executives of the Showcase companies will share the story and vision of their companies' innovations, followed by interactive breakout sessions in which the executives, sponsors, and program organizers will engage in small group discussions with the audience. The program on July 15 also features a keynote presentation by Ms. Tomoko Namba, Founder and Executive Chairperson of DeNA Co. Ltd., and the first-ever woman to be named a Vice Chair of the powerhouse Japan Business Federation (Keidanren).

Registration for the Symposium is open at <<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2021-japan-us-innovation-awards-symposium-tickets-156731623505>> and includes admission to both the July 8 and July 15 sessions. On July 8, the Awards Program will present the Emerging Leader Award to one Japanese and

one U.S. firm that are already beginning to transform a worldwide industry or value chain; 2021 Emerging Leader Awards go to Astroscale (Japan) and Color (U.S.).

Awards Program Steering Committee Chair, Dr. Richard Dasher, Director of the US-Asia Technology Management Center at Stanford, noted that “This year’s Showcase companies reflect the breadth of innovation in advanced digital technologies that is underway in Japan today, and which is often overlooked outside that country. We are proud to play a part in introducing these exciting, dynamic innovations to the Silicon Valley ecosystem.”

Details on the 2021 Innovation Showcase:

**akippa** <https://akippa.co.jp/>

akippa offers a sharing economy platform that allows owners of parking spaces to rent them out and users to make reservations. Since it launched, the service has registered over 2.2 million members and 45,000 parking spots in total, and the company is poised for further expansion.

**Bespoke** <https://www.be-spoke.io/>

Bespoke provides multilingual AI-powered chatbots that help customer support organizations answer questions more quickly, accurately, and efficiently than traditional call centers. More than 100 of the world’s largest travel companies and government organizations are using Bespoke’s frictionless and privacy compliant AI-based solutions to engage with travelers on location.

**bitBiome** <https://bitbiome.co.jp/en/>

bitBiome has developed a microbial single-cell genome analysis platform, bit-MAP®, that efficiently sequences complete genomes of microorganisms that were previously impossible with existing technologies. Through their sequencing technology, bitBiome has been building a massive microbial genetic database to create a data-driven bio-production platform in collaboration with industrial partners.

**Idein** <https://idein.jp/en/>

Idein supports IoT systems through Actcast, a platform-as-a-service (PaaS) that enables developers to easily and inexpensively build IoT systems with edge computing architecture. Actcast technology enables advanced AI analysis on inexpensive edge devices, which has been difficult with previous technologies. Their platform encourages the efficient collection, advanced research, and utilization of large-scale data in cyber-physical systems.

**LUCA Science** <https://www.luca-science.com/>

LUCA Science is pioneering a new modality of organelle therapy using mitochondria to restore cellular bioenergetics. LUCA Science has developed a novel method to isolate proprietary functional mitochondria which can then be stored and delivered as a biopharmaceutical agent that can stimulate cell activation and restore normal functions in dysfunctional or damaged tissues and organs.

The organizers:

**Japan Society of Northern California** [www.usajapan.org](http://www.usajapan.org) Since its founding in 1905, the Japan Society of Northern California has advanced US-Japan mutual understanding in a global context. The Society

offers an array of programs and networking opportunities for people and organizations in the Bay Area with a strong interest in Japan. It is the go-to place for US-Japan insights, opportunities, collaboration and networking. The Japan Society is a dynamic link connecting the world-renowned innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem of San Francisco/Silicon Valley to a resurgent Japan.

***Stanford University US-Asia Technology Management Center*** [www.asia.stanford.edu](http://www.asia.stanford.edu) The US-Asia Technology Management Center (US-ATMC), is an industry-funded center in Stanford University under the Center for East Asian Studies. Established in 1992, the US-ATMC conducts education and research into innovation and emerging business trends in technology-intensive industries that provide Stanford students and the Silicon Valley community at large, with knowledge and analytical capabilities that will be important to global success in high-tech fields in the 21st century.

**Additional information and registration is available at: <http://www.usjinnovate.org>.**

Media Contact

Tomomi Komura

[tomomi@usajapan.org](mailto:tomomi@usajapan.org)

Japan Society of Northern California