

For immediate release

July 16, 2020  
Asian Entrepreneurship Award Steering Committee

Aiming for collaboration between Asian technology startups and Japanese companies by holding  
**the AEA 2020 Pre-Event online from 4 p.m. on Friday, August 7, 2020**  
—Exploring the future of business in the “new normal” age—

<https://aea2020preevent.peatix.com>

Tokyo, Japan, July 16, 2020—Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd., a leading global real estate company headquartered in Tokyo, announced today that the Asian Entrepreneurship Award (AEA) Steering Committee decided to hold the AEA 2020 Pre-Event online on Friday, August 7, 2020 before AEA 2020, an innovation contest for fast-growing startups in Asia held annually since 2012.

The world is entering uncharted territory as a result of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). At a time when all assumptions about our lives and how businesses evolve have been turned upside down, even businesses that were once considered rock solid are being forced to find new ways to survive or change direction.

Since we must now create a new vision of the future in the age of the “new normal,” at the AEA 2020 Pre-Event, participants will share the impact of COVID-19 and current status of major companies in Japan and Asia, and discuss the potential for collaboration with Asian startups.

This will be the first fully online AEA event that makes it easier for personnel of major domestic companies responsible for new businesses to take part. We invite everyone seeking business inspiration in the “new normal” age to sign up.



#### ■About the AEA 2020 Pre-Event: Exploring the future of business in the “new normal” age

Acting as moderator of the pre-event is Professor Shigeo Karama, General Manager, Division of University Corporate Relations, The University of Tokyo and Chairman of the AEA Steering Committee. He will lead the discussion on the impact of COVID-19 on major companies in Japan and Asia, their current situation, and potential for collaboration with Asia’s startups. Chairman Shingo Koku do of TX Entrepreneur Partners (TEP), the builder of Japan’s deep tech startup ecosystems, will also speak about the various challenges faced by technology startups in the pandemic and report from the field of startup investment in Japan.

<Overview of the AEA 2020 Pre-Event>

Date: Friday, August 7, 2020, 16:00–17:30

Format: Zoom webinar

Pre-registration (required): <https://aea2020preevent.peatix.com>

Program

Start time	Content	Speaker
16:00	Opening Address	Shigeo Kagami Professor, The University of Tokyo / Chairman, AEA Steering Committee
16:10	Talk Session 1 Impact of COVID-19 on major companies in Japan and Asia and their current status (TBC)	•Motoaki Nishiwaki Evangelist, Microsoft Japan •Toppan Printing Co., Ltd. •Kazunori Yamashita
16:30	Talk Session 2 Global collaboration in the “new normal” age (TBC)	Managing Officer, General Manager, Kashiwa-no-ha Urban Planning and Development Department, Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd. •Shingo Kokudo Chairman, TX Entrepreneur Partners
16:50	About AEA 2020	AEA Steering Committee office / Mitsui Fudosan

\* Note: The program content and schedule will be updated as required. Please check the latest information using the link above.

■Scheduled for October 27–29, 2020

**AEA 2020: Together with Asia’s leading startups, exploring the future of business in the “new normal” age**

The AEA takes place every year in October in the Kashiwa-no-ha area. It is an innovation award that attracts technology startups that harness knowledge and technology to pioneer new businesses from all over the fast-growing Asia region, aiming to create an ecosystem for innovation in Asia. First held in 2012, 181 technology startups from 15 countries in Asia have participated in AEA to date. Startups that take part receive business and field-testing support in the Kashiwa-no-ha area. After the event, many have taken off as global businesses by forming collaborations with Japanese companies and expanding their markets.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, all AEA 2020 events, including presentations by Asian startups, will be held online, providing an opportunity to experience the latest technologies and services that will create a new future. This year, the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) has joined the group of co-hosts to strengthen its role in matching startups with Japanese companies. AEA 2020 will provide opportunities for all participants to envision business of the future in the “new normal” age as Asia’s leading startups connect with major Japanese companies online.

<Overview of AEA 2020>

(details to be published at a later date)

Date: Tuesday, October 27 to Thursday, October 29, 2020

Format: Online

Official website (Japanese): <https://aea.events/j/>

Official website (English): <https://aea.events/e/>



## ■Focus on Asia's startups

In China and other countries in Asia, there are many so-called unicorn startups (unlisted companies with a valuation of over \$1 billion). Asia has produced multiple excellent startups, because it has an ecosystem in place to nurture them. AEA's global partners in Asian countries select those with outstanding technological capabilities and invite them to the event. This year's participants are technology startups that provide solutions to challenges in the "new normal" age in fields of global importance (healthcare, communication, work style reform, and quality of life (QOL)). Participants must be technology startups with a specific interest in doing business in Japan. This means AEA 2020 offers opportunities to find a startup that can help your company find a solution to problems associated with COVID-19.

## \* About the Kashiwa-no-ha area

The Kashiwa-no-ha area centered on Kashiwa-no-ha Campus Station aspires to be Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City, which solves social issues. Its three main themes are "an environmentally symbiotic city," "a city of health and longevity" and "a city of new industry creation," and made possible through collaboration between the public and private sectors and academia. Kashiwa-no-ha IoT Business Co-Creation Lab was established in June 2018 to further the spread and use of IoT and create business opportunities for IoT-related businesses. The Lab has opened its doors to field testing projects in Kashiwa-no-ha for products and services of private-sector companies and others at the social implementation stage. This is part of Innovation Field Kashiwa-no-ha, a program to accelerate the creation of new industries. So far, more than 10 field tests are planned or have been performed. By making the entire city a platform for field testing, Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City will become an engine for new industries and innovation.

Led by Mitsui Fudosan and the Kashiwa municipal government, Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City Consortium was formed and designated a Smart City Model Project by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, which promotes the creation of smart cities that incorporate new technologies such as AI and IoT and data held by the public and private sectors in neighborhood creation. Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City Consortium aims to form a data-driven, smart and compact city built around a rail station by building a data platform linking held by the public and private sectors.

Relevant news release: [https://www.mitsui-fudosan.co.jp/corporate/news/2019/0605\\_02/](https://www.mitsui-fudosan.co.jp/corporate/news/2019/0605_02/)

## ■Co-hosts

Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd.

The Division of University Corporate Relations, University of Tokyo

TX Entrepreneur Partners

The Japan Academic Society for Ventures and Entrepreneurs

Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)

## ■Overview of co-hosts

<Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd.> Website: Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City <https://www.kashiwanoha-smartcity.com/>

Mitsui Fudosan is developing the Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City project in the Kashiwa-no-ha Campus Station area of Kashiwa, Chiba Prefecture. The project's three main themes are "an environmentally symbiotic city," "a city of health and longevity" and "a city of new industry creation." For the third theme, Mitsui Fudosan aims to create new industries that connect people of all ages, business sectors, and nationalities in the city using venture co-creation business 31 VENTURES as a hub, and taking advantage of its extensive trade area and diverse businesses. Mitsui Fudosan and Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City have supported AEA from its launch in 2012, and will continue to build an ecosystem for generating innovation in the Kashiwa-no-ha area by bringing together startups, their supporters, and major corporations in Asia.

Contact: Kashiwa-no-ha Smart City

Corporate Communications Department, Mitsui Fudosan Co., Ltd.

Tel: 03-3246-3155

<The Division of University Corporate Relations, University of Tokyo> Website: <https://www.ducr.u-tokyo.ac.jp/>  
The Division of University Corporate Relations at the University of Tokyo provides support for licensing of intellectual property, management and utilization, as well as entrepreneurship and commercialization to realize innovation that has an impact. Specifically, it provides consulting services to researchers and students seeking to start a business, runs and manages incubation facilities for startups, and provides funding to university startups through UTokyo Innovation Platform Co., Ltd. and The University of Tokyo Edge Capital Co., Ltd. It also operates incubation facilities such as The University of Tokyo Entrepreneur Plaza and the University of Tokyo Entrepreneur Lab as well as entrepreneur training and education programs such as Tokyo Entrepreneur Dojo, Edge-Next, Hongo Tech Garage, and FoundX. By taking part in AEA, the Division of University Corporate Relations, University of Tokyo aims to foster a culture of entrepreneurship with a global perspective.

Contact: Shigeo Kagami, Professor, General Manager, Division of University Corporate Relations,  
University of Tokyo  
Tel: 03-5841-1482

<TX Entrepreneur Partners> Website: <https://www.tepweb.jp/english/>  
TX Entrepreneur Partners is an organization that supports entrepreneurs and startups based in areas served by the Tsukuba Express railway line. Local universities, research institutes, municipalities, private-sector companies, and individual supporters collaborate to form a sustainable support network for startups. By helping to host AEA, it seeks to further the development of the entrepreneurial environment in Asia, including Japan, to provide opportunities for entrepreneurs to expand their horizons beyond their own countries and regions to all of Asia and the world.

Contact: TX Entrepreneur Partners  
PR Office  
Tel: 03-6759-8989

<The Japan Academic Society for Ventures and Entrepreneurs> Website: <http://www.venture-ac.ne.jp/>  
The Japan Academic Society for Ventures and Entrepreneurs (JASVE) provides training programs on the theory, testing, and practice of activities by startups and business corporations for creating new industries. It also seeks to assist collaboration between industry and academia and support entrepreneurial activity. JASVE is not merely a group of researchers, but forms a diverse network of people employed by major corporations, startups, and government. It is not only a society of thinkers, but is strengthening its function as a society of doers as well to serve as a social platform that engages with entrepreneurial activity that drives innovation and startups.

<Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)> Website: <https://www.jetro.go.jp/>  
JETRO's mission is to contribute toward Japan's continued economic and social development by promoting mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world and through survey and research activities by utilizing its global network of 76 offices in 55 countries and 52 regional offices in Japan. In recent years, JETRO's core focus has shifted toward forming an ecosystem for Japan's startups and fostering innovation by supporting their overseas development and promoting collaboration and partnerships with overseas startups. In 2019, JETRO established the Innovation Promotion Division to provide opportunities for Japanese companies engaged in open innovation with overseas startups and other companies to talk business.

Contact: Mori, Goto, and Yoshida  
JETRO Innovation Promotion Division  
Email: [IID@jetro.go.jp](mailto:IID@jetro.go.jp)

## ■Mitsui Fudosan Group's contribution to SDGs

[https://www.mitsuifudosan.co.jp/english/corporate/esg\\_csr/](https://www.mitsuifudosan.co.jp/english/corporate/esg_csr/)

The Mitsui Fudosan Group aims for a society that enriches both people and the planet under the principles of cc in harmony with society, link diverse values and achieve a sustainable society, and advances business with an awareness of the environment (E), society (S) and governance (G), thus promoting ESG management. By further accelerating its ESG management, the Group will realize Society 5.0, which the Japanese government has been advocating, and contribute significantly to achieving the SDGs.

\* The initiatives covered in this press release are contributing to five of the UN's SDGs.

Goal 3 Good Health and Well-Being  
Goal 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth  
Goal 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure  
Goal 10 Reduced Inequalities  
Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals



**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS**