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United Nations Development Programme and Citi Foundation Hold Inaugural "Youth Co:Lab" in Japan

"A Way for People Worldwide to Reuse Coffee Grounds" Wins the Excellence Award at the Youth Co:Lab Social Innovation Challenge Japan 2019

Tokyo, Japan – The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Citi Foundation hosted the inaugural *Youth Co:Lab Japan*, part of the largest youth-led social entrepreneurship movement driving the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Asia-Pacific region. Key events include *Social Innovation Challenge Japan 2019* on November 22, an SDG-focused entrepreneurship competition, and *Youth Co:Lab Japan Dialogue* on November 26, a platform for young people to directly engage policymakers and private sector partners to accelerate youth-led entrepreneurship in Japan towards implementation of the SDGs.

Eight finalists were selected from more than 50 applicants and presented their business ideas to more than 150 audience members and the judges at *Social Innovation Challenge Japan 2019*. The business ideas addressed SDGs from different perspectives, and in a close contest, the following four finalists were chosen for awards. The four teams will have the opportunity in January 2020 to join the *Springboard Programme*, a tailored and in-depth mentorship programme to further their ideas. Representatives from two of the winning teams will be selected to represent Japan at the Youth Co:Lab Regional Summit in April 2020 in Malaysia.

- Excellence Award: *A Way for People Worldwide to Reuse Coffee Grounds*
(Nozomu Aoki)
- Scalability Award: *Bio Fishing Items* (Hyuga Ando)
- WeWork Award: *Linking Unconnected Lives through Co-Living*
(Naoto Mihara, Nanami Tokoro)
- Audience Award: *My Mizu* (Robin Lewis)

Nozomu Aoki, Representative of "A Way for People Worldwide to Reuse Coffee Grounds", shared his excitement and commented, "I am delighted to receive the first Excellence Award at Youth Co:Lab Japan. This award has renewed my determination for the project, and I am

looking forward to the new experiences that come with this win. While there may be challenges along the way, I will continue to do my best with a can-do spirit”.



Youth Co:Lab Japan Dialogue kicked off with the keynote speech by Toshihiro Nakamura, co-founder and CEO of Kopernik and was followed by two panel discussions. The first panel “The Power of Youth - Nurturing Youth Entrepreneurship in Japan” was moderated by Masayoshi Suzuki, Vice President of Borderless Japan Corp. He was joined by three young founders of social businesses: Kaito Miwa, CEO of the NPO e-Education; Hinae Niori, President & CEO of manma inc.; and Mariko Mori, founder of StartupBaseU18 and President & CEO of matsuriba,inc. The discussion centered on shared opportunities and challenges for young social entrepreneurs.

The second panel, “Creating an Ecosystem to Promote Social Innovation and Youth Entrepreneurship” was moderated by Atsuko Suzuki, director of the NPO ETIC. She was joined by Professor Shigeo Kagami, General Manager, Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Division of University Corporate Relations (DUCR) at the University of Tokyo; Mr. Shohei Sakoda, Deputy Director, Industry Creation Policy Division, Economic and Industrial Policy Bureau, Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry; and Ms. Eriko Suzuki, General Partner, Fresco Capital. The panel members discussed mechanisms necessary to promote social innovation and entrepreneurship among youth from a holistic perspective.

“Since Youth Co:Lab’s creation in 2017, we have supported over 2,500 young social entrepreneurs in the Asia-Pacific region making a positive impact with their innovative solutions. I am pleased to launch Youth Co:Lab with our co-leads Citi Foundation in Japan to encourage our youth to generate new business ideas and join the regional network for social change. UNDP strives to strengthen the entrepreneur ecosystem connecting young entrepreneurs with various actors, including governments and businesses, as an integrator for the achievement of the SDGs.” said Tetsuo Kondo, Director of the UNDP Representation Office in Tokyo.

Lee R. Waite, Citi Country Officer & Japan CEO, said “We are honoured to be a part of the first Youth Co:Lab in Japan, hosted by UNDP and Citi Foundation. The success of the event is testament to the passion that Japanese youth have in solving social challenges, and in the

power of ecosystem players from public, private and non-profit sectors coming together to support youth ideas. Citi employees will continue to serve as volunteer mentors to help the winners realize their ideas. I hope Youth Co:Lab expands to become the largest youth-led social entrepreneurship movement driving the implementation of the SDGs in Japan”.

About Youth Co:Lab:

Co-created in 2017 by UNDP and the Citi Foundation, Youth Co:Lab aims to empower and invest in youth so that they can accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through leadership, social innovation and entrepreneurship. In 2020, Youth Co: Lab aims to expand to at least 25 countries and territories, deepen mentorship capacity for youth entrepreneurs through the Springboard Programme, and engage ecosystem partners in the development of young people's 21st Century skills.

Further details and ongoing updates on the Youth Co:Lab Japan 2019 program can be found on UNDP Tokyo's website and social media:

www.jp.undp.org | Twitter: @UNDPTokyo | Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UndpTokyo/>

About UNDP:

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in nearly 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

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About Citi Foundation:

The Citi Foundation works to promote economic progress and improve the lives of people in low-income communities around the world. We invest in efforts that increase financial inclusion, catalyze job opportunities for youth, and reimagine approaches to building economically vibrant cities. The Citi Foundation's "More than Philanthropy" approach leverages the enormous expertise of Citi and its people to fulfill our mission and drive thought leadership and innovation. For more information, visit www.citifoundation.com.

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