

Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc. (MUFG)
MUFG Bank, Ltd.
Kansai Innovation Center

Innovation Center Naming and Launch of Inaugural Remote Tourism Platform Program

Tokyo, December 11, 2020 --- Kansai Innovation Center, a foundation established and operated by Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc. (“MUFG”) and MUFG Bank, Ltd. (“the Bank”) today announced the name of their membership-based innovation center (“the facility”), MUIC Kansai, which is scheduled to open in February 2021. Also announced were the Remote Tourism Platform, the first project in the facility’s problem-solving program, as well as experiments to determine its business feasibility.

1. Facility Name

The facility was named “MUIC Kansai” based on its objective to be a center to promote open innovation among members in the tourism industry. It aims to contribute to the revitalization of the Kansai regional economy and the success of the Osaka-Kansai Japan Expo 2025.

The facility’s logo, which features braiding and stitching imagery, expresses the concept of “a new combination of tourism and technologies” which will be created from meetings and connections among members from various backgrounds.

Facility Logo



2. Initial Problem-Solving Program: Remote Tourism Platform

Program and Experiment Overview

Program Overview	A platform that connects tourists and tour guides while providing real-time remote tour experiences utilizing web-based video communication systems (Remote Tourism Service, “the service”).	
Experiment Overview	Phase 1: November 21 to December 15, 2020	Provide remote tour services in 8 tourist areas of the Kansai region for approx. 300 MUFG Bank and Bank of Ayudhya PCL employees with the goal of establishing basic operations and formulating a service outline.

	Phase 2: February to March, 2021 (Tentative)	Based on the results of the phase 1 experiment, functions necessary for the service, such as a reservation system, will be added, the operation area expanded, the range of participants broadened (including employees of the facility's prospective member companies) and a business model created towards monetization.
	Device	THINKLET® wearable device with neck-mounted camera and microphone by Fairy Devices Inc.

Background and Objective

MUIC Kansai is an innovation center that aims to contribute to the revitalization of the Kansai economy by solving tourism industry issues through its Problem-Solving Program, which promotes innovation and growth support for startups participating in the program. The tourism industry has been seriously impacted by a sharp drop in demand caused by the spread of COVID-19. In light of this situation, we launched this program prior to the facility's opening in February of next year.

This program aims to maintain the foundation of the tourism industry by constructing remote tourism infrastructure using digital technology to create opportunities for providing services to tourist destinations and tour guides that are struggling due to the downturn in the tourism industry, even with COVID-19 travel limitations still in place.

Furthermore, the economic damage caused by the sharp decrease in inbound tourism demand, which had been considered a growth industry, is becoming even more serious. By providing a remote tourism platform, we plan to create opportunities for interpreters and tour guides to play active roles in the tourism industry while also training guides capable of providing this service for the Osaka-Kansai Japan Expo 2025.

This service infrastructure, including the equipment and interface, were developed in cooperation with Fairy Devices Inc., a member of facility partner Mitou Foundation's influential startup network. Prospective member companies and partner organizations worked together with the Kansai Innovation Center in collaborating with various tourism sites and guide communities. This cooperation between partner organizations and member companies enabled Kansai Innovation Center to rapidly and efficiently begin feasibility experiments pertaining to this new service.

We will create a new model for innovation to solve social issues in the tourism industry through speedy commercialization, cooperating with promising start-up companies, large corporations and other members with ambitions to help resolve tourism industry issues. We believe that these activities will contribute to the recovery and growth of the tourism industry and the revitalization of the Kansai economy.

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About MUFG

Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc. (MUFG) is one of the world's leading financial groups. Headquartered in Tokyo and with over 360 years of history, MUFG has a global network with around 2,600 locations in more than 50 countries. The Group has over 180,000 employees and offers services including commercial banking, trust banking, securities, credit cards, consumer finance, asset management, and leasing. The Group aims to "be the world's most trusted financial group" through close collaboration among our operating companies and flexibly respond to all of the financial needs of our customers, serving society, and fostering shared and sustainable growth for a better world. MUFG's shares trade on the Tokyo, Nagoya, and New York stock exchanges. For more information, visit <https://www.mufg.jp/english>.

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Foundation Overview

Name	Kansai Innovation Center
Chairman	Hiroshi Murakami
Location	3-6-3 Fushimimachi, Chuo-ku, Osaka-shi, Osaka, Japan
Website	https://www.muic-kansai.jp/

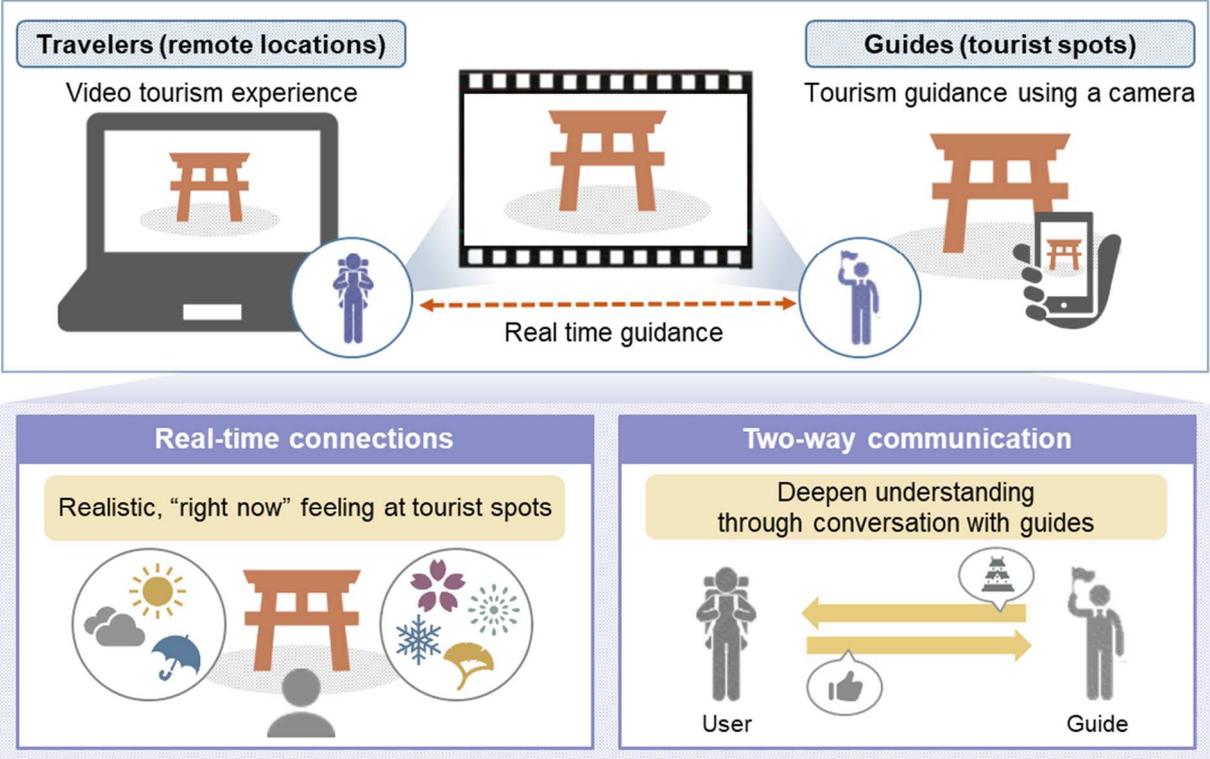
Problem-Solving Program

Problem-Solving Program

MUIC Kansai creates new businesses and services through its Problem-Solving Program



Remote Tourism Service Outline



Overview of Fairy Devices and THINKLET®

Name	Fairy Devices Inc.
Date of Establishment	April, 2007
CEO	Masato Fujino
Location	Tokyo, Japan
Main Business	Providing connected-worker solutions including wearables, edge AI and an audio cloud platform
Website	https://fairydevices.jp/

Connected worker solution enabling humans to engage with AI and co-work with machines

THINKLET®

