

corporations and seek success and prosperity in their own right.

What: Project outline seminar and information on signing up for the Reborn Challenges

When: 14:00-16:00, February 24, 2023

Where: Grand Hall, 9th floor, Osaka Toyopet Bldg., (3-1-1 Itachibori, Nishi-ku, Osaka)

Details of this event (in Japanese) are available here:

<https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/event/seminar/202301/D54230224019.html>

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2. TEAM OSAKA: HELPING TO MAKE ZERO CARBON A REALITY THROUGH HIGH-TECH DEMONSTRATION TESTING

“Team Osaka,” a proof-of-concept and demonstration testing group organized by the OCCI and the Osaka city and prefectural governments, is working with Fukushima Galilei on experiments to gauge the winter-time long-term stability and energy-efficiency of the company’s refrigerated display cases adapted to be powered by direct current straight from the solar panels.

The project is part of the OCCI’s Field Testing of Decarbonizing Technologies in Tsurumi Ryokuchi Park, a public-recruitment initiative focusing chiefly on decarbonization. The initiative offers support for innovation by the corporate community aimed at building a better future and seeks to build momentum in the run-up to the 2025 World Expo in Osaka.

It is open to companies of all sizes, from small startups to major corporations, who wish to use state-of-the-art technologies for proof-of-concept testing. If that sounds like you, contact Team Osaka now.

Check out the Team Osaka website at:

https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/innovation/digital_transformation/osaka_en.html

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3. FASCINATING, INSPIRING IDEAS WIN PRIZES AT THE AI BUSINESS IDEA CONTEST 2023

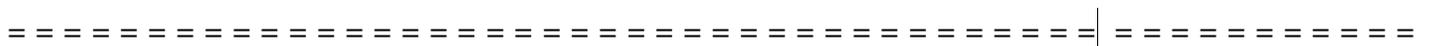
The AI Business Idea Contest 2023, hosted by the OCCI and the AI Technology Consortium (AITec, an initiative of the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology), held its open presentation round on February 13, 2023, and featured a variety of fascinating, inspiring ideas from individuals and corporations.

The sixth iteration of the contest attracted 17 entries from around the country, five of which successfully passed the screening stage to appear in the open presentation round. The eventual winner of the OCCI Chairperson’s Award and Sponsor’s Award was R55, an AI software that interacts with users to talk about memories of “the old days” and invokes feelings of nostalgia. For this, the R55 Project Team will receive support (subsidies of up to one million yen) for proof-of-concept testing and business implementation in Osaka.

But the AI Business Idea Contest is more than just a contest: it is also part of the Co-creation Challenge program organized by Team Expo 2025, a participatory initiative geared toward the 2025 World Expo in Osaka. Meanwhile, the OCCI, together with the Osaka city and prefectural governments, has established Team Osaka to support demonstration tests of cutting-edge technologies and other efforts to create new AI-based businesses with a view to the 2025 World Expo in Osaka.

Details of the AI Business Idea Contest finalists is available (in Japanese)

at:https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/Chousa_Kenkyuu_Iken/press/20230213ai.pdf



4. OSAKA DELEGATION VISITS MANCHESTER TO STUDY DECARBONIZATION

A delegation representing businesses involved in decarbonization visited the greater Manchester region of northern England between January 16 and 19, 2023.

Since entering into a bilateral cooperation agreement with Greater Manchester in 2021 centering on decarbonization and the environment, the Osaka City government has pursued policy-related exchanges and interaction with its counterpart. The OCCI was brought in to the scheme to promote industrial and technological exchange between the two.

Manchester has a proud history as a manufacturing hub; it was the focal point of the Industrial Revolution, and Osaka was known as the “Manchester of the East” in the early 20th century for its role in the development of the textiles industry. Osaka and Manchester are still bound by strong business ties, but nowadays the focus is on forward-looking themes like decarbonization.

Manchester is ambitious about achieving carbon zero: They are aiming to reach carbon zero by 2038, much earlier than the overall UK goal of 2050. The city's eagerness to adopt green technologies to help them get there has raised hopes of ample chances for Japanese businesses with state-of-the-art technologies that can contribute to decarbonization.

The OCCI sought to build interest in the lead-up to the delegation's visit by organizing an introductory online seminar with speakers from the Greater Manchester government and those involved in university-industry tie-ups, as well as hosting a delegation from Manchester and holding a panel discussion focusing on decarbonization business opportunities.

Participants got a front-row look at Manchester's decarbonization policies in action, including its heat network, as well as local university research facilities for decarbonization, hydrogen energy, and fuel cells.

Other highlights included Energy House, which has made great strides in improving heat efficiency; the Carbon Zero Skill Center, which strives to develop and carbon-zero-skilled workforce and boost employment; and other examples of Greater Manchester's public-private partnerships, workforce development, and other initiatives.

As the two cities ramp up efforts to strengthen ties, Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham is scheduled to visit Osaka in late 2023, which will only add momentum to the two cities' efforts, which incorporate the public, private, and university sectors, to achieve carbon zero.

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5. 26TH OSAKA BUSINESS NETWORKING CLUB, ATTENDEES LEARN ABOUT FUNDING OPTIONS FOR FOREIGN COMPANIES

The Osaka Business and Investment Center (O-BIC) held the 26th Osaka Business Networking Club on February 6, 2023. Dubbed “Business Tips of Financing for Foreign Affiliated Companies,” the get-together offered a range of useful information for foreign companies operating in Osaka, as well as companies and institutions that support overseas companies looking to invest here.

Attendees heard from Hidekazu Nakamoto, a financial advisor at the Osaka Global Finance One-Stop Support Center, who gave a presentation full of advice on how foreign companies in Osaka can access funding. This was followed by a highly fruitful networking session. Feedback from attendees included thanks for the opportunity to learn systematically about how foreign companies can access funding, as well as requests for assistance when negotiating with financial institutions.

O-BIC is dedicated to helping foreign companies invest in Osaka, and offers a broad range of assistance for those interested in local and international business expansion and promotion, including free advisory services, introduction of experts, and help for new investors to solidify their footing and become established.

Attracting foreign investment not only boosts innovation and helps make Osaka more competitive on the international stage, but hopes are high that it will also have a ripple effect on Japan's national economy.

O-BIC is always ready with a broad variety of helpful services to help foreign companies invest in Osaka.

For more information, contact the Osaka Business and Investment Center:

URL: <https://o-bic.net/>

E-mail: o-bic@osaka.cci.or.jp

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INFORMATION FOR COVID-19

Osaka Prefecture Government

<https://covid19-osaka.info/en/>

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[O-BIC as one-stop service center for creating a foothold in Osaka]

<http://o-bic.net/>

[Information about scheduled events (in Japanese only)]

<https://intl.osaka.cci.or.jp/>



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