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2. 25TH OSAKA BUSINESS NETWORKING CLUB JAPANESE EMPLOYMENT TRENDS AND SUPPORT IN THE COVID AGE

[HTTPS://O-BIC.NET/UPLOAD/PDF/FILE00000920](https://o-bic.net/upload/pdf/file00000920)

The Osaka Business Networking Club is a twice-yearly get-together where local businesses and foreign companies investing in Osaka can meet, interact, and pursue new business opportunities. These meetings, which are organized by the Osaka prefectural and city governments (through IBPC Osaka) and the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, have been a feature of the Osaka business calendar since 2008.

The main theme will be “Japanese Employment Trends and Support in the Covid Age” and there will be presentations from experts on a variety of topics, including employment trends in Japan, points to look out for when hiring Japanese or foreign nationals specifically, and subsidies available to employers of foreign workers.

Securing talented workers is vitally important to all businesses, particularly as the Covid-19 pandemic drags on, so don’t miss this chance to pick up some useful information.

◆Details and application

<https://o-bic.net/upload/pdf/file00000920>

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3.KANSAI DELEGATION ASKS TOP GOVERNMENT FIGURES FOR SUPPORT FOR 2025 WORLD EXPO PROJECTS

A local delegation including OCCI Chairman Hiroshi Ozaki met with top government figures on July 2, 2021, to present a proposal regarding business projects peripheral to the World Expo 2025, which is to be held in Osaka. Mr. Ozaki, who is also chairman of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the Kansai Area, was joined by Hirofumi Yoshimura, governor of Osaka Prefecture, Ichiro Matsui, mayor of Osaka City, Yoshinobu Nisaka, chairman of the Union of Kansai Governments, and Kazuo Sumi, vice chairman of the Kansai Economic Federation.

The delegation met with:

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga

Shinji Inoue, Minister for the World Expo 2025

Kazuyoshi Akaba, Minister of Land, Infrastructure,
Transport and Tourism

Toshihiro Nikai, secretary-general of the Liberal Democratic Party
of Japan

Kazuo Kitagawa, vice representative of the Komeito

Their proposal, “Requests Regarding Business Projects Peripheral to Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan,” was presented in the joint names of Osaka Prefecture, Osaka City, the Union of Kansai Governments, the Kansai Economic Federation, the OCCI, the Kansai Association of Corporate Executives, and the Japan Association for the 2025 World Exhibition.

With the cabinet having approved the Basic Policy on Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan in December 2020, the government is now moving to establish its Expo-Related Business Plan concerning, among other matters, the infrastructure the nation will require. The Kansai delegation’s proposal outlined the local infrastructure that would need to be built, stressed that the roll-out would need to be well planned, and requested that funding be secured and local public finance measures be implemented for the purpose. It also suggested ways in which organizational support and a revamp of regulatory requirements could enhance the expo’s effectiveness and promote national growth.

“The expo represents a sliver of hope for SMEs and micro-businesses struggling amid the chaos of Covid-19,” said Mr. Ozaki. “We hope the government will provide support through assistance for field testing new systems and developing technologies, institutional reform, and deregulation.”

There are further plans to make multiple additional requests regarding organizational support initiatives and regulatory reform

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**4. THEY'RE ALREADY TESTING APPLICATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COEXISTENCE
OF HUMANS AND ROBOTS AT OSAKA' S COMMON GROUND LIVING LAB**

Imagine a future in which people and robots co-exist, go about their day-to-day business, and interact in urban environments with a completely accurate, shared awareness of the space around them. That's the vision of Common Ground, the concept that OCCI has been studying and developing the idea with a view to unveiling it at World Expo 2025, which is to be held right here in Osaka.

That concept reached a major milestone on July 1, 2021, with the grand opening of the Common Ground Living Lab, a testing facility to trial the various services and applications conducive to the Common Ground concept. The lab is a joint effort incorporating many enterprises from a variety of different industries who share the project's goal of helping to make urban lifestyles more fulfilling, and is located on the premises of Nakanishi Metal Works in Osaka.

Common Ground is an information platform for next-generation urban environments, and a major step toward realizing the Society 5.0 concept we aim to promote at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. Rendering real spaces and all the myriad objects they contain into 3D data in real time and tying that into existing architectural information and other data relating to urban environments makes it possible for humans and robots to have a shared, accurate awareness of space. In practice, this will mean that people and robots can live together in the cities of the future.

The Common Ground Living Lab is a world's first: the first joint testing facility that brings together platform developers, service developers, manufacturers, and a variety of other businesses in recreations of the urban settings envisaged under the Common Ground concept. The complex has 95 square meters of shared office space and 138 square meters of testing facilities equipped with a variety of sensors that enable the

accurate digital recreation of the real space and the real-time transfer of data between the two. Such a set-up opens up infinite testing possibilities, such as mobility devices that can run autonomously without sensors of their own, and natural conversation between people in the real and digital spaces as if they were together in person.

Details are available (in Japanese) at the Common Ground Living Lab

website: <https://www.cgll.osaka>

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5. OCCI PARTNERS WITH THE GOVERNMENT TO SPARK NEW SPORTS BUSINESSES

Japan's long-anticipated and Covid-delayed Olympics were finally held and the Paralympics are under way as you read this. There were concerns about whether the games could go ahead amid the changed and challenging circumstances, but not even a pandemic could stop the thrills and spills, cheers and tears of the Olympic spectacle, and the games once again have proven to be a source of hope and admiration for people worldwide.

Many of the athletes use equipment made right here in Osaka and the greater Kansai region by manufacturers such as Mizuno, Asics, and Descente. Indeed, here at OCCI, we are working hard to leverage the region's strengths as a sports industry hub to create new business opportunities in the sports space.

For instance, we at OCCI have signed up as an operational partner for the 2021 Sports Open Innovation Platform project, which is run by the Japan Sports Agency.

The Sports Open Innovation Platform is designed to add momentum to Japan's sports industry by sparking open innovation in that sector nationwide. A variety of accelerator programs are in place, bringing

together local sports teams and enterprises from different industries to create new business. The project is being held in the Kansai and Chugoku regions, as well as Hokkaido and Okinawa, and we at OCCI are proud to be the operational partner for Kansai.

Via our Sports Hub Kansai organization, we will leverage our strengths and experience in business matching to link up professional sports teams with businesses. There will be briefings to explain the kind of businesses those teams are looking to collaborate with, and a call for proposals, followed by a screening of proposals received. Those that get accepted and implemented will be monitored and their results measured, and a joint event will be held to reveal the outcomes of all of the Sports Open Innovation Platform projects. The Japan Sports Agency will lend support through funding and human resources for measuring the outcomes of the projects.

The participating teams and details on the kind of businesses we hope will participate are scheduled to be released in September. Keep up with all the latest at the Sports Hub Kansai website:

<https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/sports/>

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6. SDGS & ESG BUSINESS PLATFORM HELPS BUSINESSES PURSUE SDGS AND ESG MANAGEMENT

August 5, 2021, saw the launch of the OCCI's SDGs & ESG Business Platform, an initiative that brings together businesses interested in SDGs and ESG management, and is aimed at matching the needs of Japanese and overseas enterprises so as to promote the creation of new, SDG-and-ESG-conscious businesses.

OCCI is a leader among chambers of commerce in efforts to help achieve the SDGs and promote ESG management. Starting this year, OCCI offers workshops (fees apply) to help clients bring their operations into line with SDG and ESG concepts.

Signing up for the SDGs & ESG Business Platform gets you access to a variety of support for learning, taking action, and creating new business, and best of all, it's free! (Charges such as entry fees may be required for some individual activities.)

Find out more (in Japanese) at https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/sdgs/about_sdgs_egs.html

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7. “MEDICAL DEVICE USER REVIEW SERVICE BY MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS”

We at the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) hope to establish an ecosystem in Osaka and the broader Kansai region for

medical device development. As part of that ecosystem, we are building a framework with Osaka National Hospital for Japanese companies to have their products rated through “user reviews” by medical professionals. So far, that framework is showing promising results. To enhance and globalize that framework, we hope to offer overseas companies user reviews of their products by Japanese medical professionals, and offer Japanese companies user reviews of their products by overseas medical professionals.

For details: <https://o-bic.net/upload/pdf/file00000917.pdf>

Contact: o-bic@osaka.cci.or.jp

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**8. NET ZERO LEADERS SUMMIT (JAPAN BUSINESS CONFERENCE 2021)
~ MEETING THE CHALLENGE TO ACHIEVE CARBON NEUTRALITY THROUGH A
POSITIVE CYCLE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION~**

Japan’s Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) are jointly organizing “NET ZERO Leaders Summit (Japan Business Conference 2021)” to accelerate innovation in green investment and realizing carbon neutrality by 2050. This online event is taking place from July 28 to September 10.

At the event, 54 Japanese companies with cutting-edge technologies and services, and local governments, including Osaka government, are exhibiting their technology and pride.

Come and exchange with exhibitors and Osaka and other governments!

For details and registration: <https://www.jetro.go.jp/en/events/jbc/>

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9. VIP REPORTS

7/29 Mr. Xue Jian, Consul General, The People’s Republic of China in Osaka

Xue Jian, the new Consul General of the People’s Republic of China in Osaka, paid a courtesy visit to OCCI Chairman Hiroshi Ozaki on July 29, 2021, to announce his recent appointment and discuss future exchanges.

Mr. Ozaki spoke of the Kansai region’s deep ties with China, and stated his desire to maintain the OCCI’s close relationship with the consulate and to boost Kansai-China trade. Mr. Xue remarked on the long historical connections between his country and Kansai, and stressed his hope for further developments in the post-Covid age. Indeed, both sides were eager to promote economic exchange once the pandemic subsided.

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DO YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION ?

[Information on COVID-19 in Osaka] New!

<https://o-bic.net/e/covid/>

[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://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/event/index.php>



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