

ASIA PACIFIC
FOUNDATION
OF CANADA

FONDATION
ASIE PACIFIQUE
DU CANADA

The Indigenous Meeting on Pacific and Arctic Climate and Trade

IN JAPAN: TOKYO, HOKKAIDO, AND OSAKA





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The Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada (APF Canada), with strong support from the public and private sectors, will host the Indigenous Meeting on Pacific and Arctic Climate and Trade (IMPACT) at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, from August 4 – 8, 2025.

This mission is part of APF Canada's 2019-2026 Women's Business Mission to Asia Series and brings together Indigenous Peoples from six Pacific and Arctic jurisdictions — Canada, Australia, Alaska, Japan, New Zealand, and Taiwan — to:

- Promote sustainable trade practices that respect Indigenous rights and cultures
- Facilitate the exchange of traditional knowledge and experiences related to the mitigation of climate change
- Develop new collaborative strategies to enhance resilience to climate change

By focusing on the intersection of trade and climate change, IMPACT seeks to empower Indigenous Peoples to protect their livelihoods, cultures, and environments in the face of evolving global challenges.

The week-long mission includes a cultural showcase of Indigenous fashion designs and other arts at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. There will also be stops in Hokkaido and Tokyo with opportunities for cultural exchange and business-to-business (B2B) meetings to promote gender-inclusive trade, support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and catalyze international partnerships between Canadian and Japanese businesses.

WELCOME MESSAGES





THE GOVERNOR GENERAL • LA GOUVERNEURE GÉNÉRALE

Message from the Governor General of Canada

I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to the participants of the Indigenous Meeting of Pacific and Arctic Climate and Trade (IMPACT) Mission.

This inspiring initiative is presented as part of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada's Women's Business Mission Series to Asia. It is the first mission dedicated to Indigenous women in business and design, a significant milestone in celebrating Indigenous innovation, creativity, and leadership on the global stage. It also illustrates a shared vision held by Indigenous women—one of sustainability, prosperity and partnership across the Pacific and Arctic regions.

I commend all delegates for their commitment to advancing Indigenous voices and shaping a more inclusive future for international trade and co-operation.

May you enjoy a most productive and memorable experience at Osaka Expo 2025.

Mary Simon

Message From Rechie Valdez

Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Secretary of State
(Small Business and Tourism)

As Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Secretary of State (Small Business and Tourism), I congratulate all the participants joining the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada's (APF Canada) Women's Business Mission this year on its ninth mission, Expo 2025 Osaka, the Indigenous Meeting on Pacific and Arctic Climate and Trade!

Through its Women's Business Missions, policy engagement and programming, APF Canada has helped Canadian women, including Indigenous women, grow their businesses, access international markets, build networks and form strategic partnerships across the Indo-Pacific region.

In Canada, 30.4% of Indigenous majority-owned businesses are owned by Indigenous women. Attending this expo highlights their pivotal role in entrepreneurship and offers them a chance to showcase their talents on an international platform. This mission also elevates Indigenous voices in sustainable trade, climate knowledge sharing and resilient partnership building.

The federal government has invested more than \$5 million through the Women Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES) Ecosystem Fund to support APF Canada's vital work. With WES support, APF Canada has been able to increase access to the resources women entrepreneurs need to start up, scale up and expand to new markets.

Our government proudly celebrates all women entrepreneurs. Through trade missions like this, they are working to building a stronger and more inclusive economy.

To all participants, please accept my sincere congratulations and best wishes for a successful, collaborative and inspiring mission.



Message From Dawn Madahbee Leach

Co-chair, Indigenous Meeting on Pacific and Arctic Climate and Trade
General Manager, Waubetek Business Corporation
Chair, National Indigenous Economic Development Board

Dear friends, delegates, and esteemed guests,

It is with great pride and excitement that I welcome you to IMPACT: the Indigenous Meeting on Pacific and Arctic Climate and Trade. Hosted by the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, this gathering seeks to amplify the voices of Indigenous leaders, entrepreneurs, and designers from not only Canada but also Australia, Alaska, Japan, and Taiwan. I am honoured to co-lead this ambitious project and showcase the talent, creativity, and resilience of Indigenous women to Japan and the rest of the world through Expo 2025.



IMPACT celebrates the leadership of Indigenous women in business, culture, politics, and trade, and seeks to foster greater representation in these spaces. In Canada, we have seen incredible progress in this regard, notably with the appointment of Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon as Canada's first Indigenous Governor General and The Honourable Michelle O'Bonsawin as the first Indigenous Judge of the Supreme Court of Canada. In business, Indigenous women are also making major strides. Today, there are over 50,000 Indigenous-owned businesses in Canada that contribute C\$31 billion to our GDP. These businesses are both more likely to be women-owned and youth-owned compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts, demonstrating the great potential our women and young leaders possess.

In support of the Indigenous Peoples Economic and Trade Cooperation Arrangement (IPETCA) -- consisting of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Chinese Taipei -- Indigenous businesses are now better positioned to grow their businesses and engage with international partners. During IMPACT, I encourage delegates and representatives from the participating jurisdictions to take advantage of the arrangement to advance economic co-operation, build social capital, and share best practices for increasing

Indigenous peoples' engagement in the global economy, whether it be through the various roundtables, business-to-business meetings, or cultural events scheduled as part of the program.

Lastly, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who helped make IMPACT a reality, including our sponsors, partner organizations, the Canadian team at Expo 2025, the Embassy of Canada to Japan, our IMPACT partner jurisdictions, the Canadian International Women's Network (CanWIN) Indigenous Advisory Council, and the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada.

I am especially grateful to the strong Indigenous leaders from across the Arctic and Pacific regions whose vision and collaboration have been instrumental in bringing this initiative to life. Your commitment to Indigenous prosperity, innovation, leadership, and economic empowerment is inspiring, and I look forward to the exchange of knowledge and practices and the partnerships that will emerge from our time together.

Message From Kanji Yamanouchi

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Canada

I am thrilled with the IMPACT Mission to Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. On this mission, Indigenous women entrepreneurs and fashion designers will be visiting Japan through the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada's initiative, and during a turbulent time globally. I am convinced that they are leading transformative change in their communities.

Canada is a beautiful country, blessed with abundant natural resources. The wisdom of Indigenous Peoples, who have long protected and lived in harmony with them, holds boundless potential for a more sustainable future. Indigenous women entrepreneurs and business leaders are blending traditional knowledge with innovation to create community-rooted enterprises. Their strength and vision are key to driving inclusive and resilient economic growth.

The development of small and medium-sized businesses forms the foundation of local economies. The leadership of women with diverse perspectives is vital to shaping a more equitable and sustainable business landscape.

I sincerely hope that this mission will foster new dialogue between Japan and Canada, and further deepen the bonds of collaboration between our two countries. I am confident that we will move forward to a brighter shared future, more closely than ever.



**Message from Ambassador Ian G. McKay to the delegates of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada
Indigenous Meeting on Pacific and Arctic Climate and Trade (IMPACT) mission to Japan**



I am very pleased to welcome to Japan the Indigenous Meeting on Pacific and Arctic Climate and Trade (IMPACT) mission, with its important focus on building indigenous women's business connections and people-to-people ties. I would like to thank the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada for its leading role in organizing this mission.

In April 2019 and in December 2022, the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada led to Japan two business missions focused on Canadian women, and demonstrated, through these great successes, the vast potential for women entrepreneurs in this market. Japan is the world's 4th largest economy, Canada's 5th largest trading partner and our largest source of foreign direct investment from Asia. As the world faces unprecedented times, increased inflation, supply chain disruptions, and shifting trade patterns, the Japanese market of 125 million people offers attractive opportunities for Canadian companies. The implementation of the Comprehensive and Progressive for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) – in which Canada and Japan are two of the largest economies – offers new possibilities for Canadian companies interested in exporting to the Indo-Pacific region.

As the Canada-Japan commercial relationship continues to strengthen, indigenous women business leaders have an important role to play in contributing to growth, prosperity, and people-to-people ties. I firmly believe that the benefits arising from international trade are maximized through an inclusive and diversified approach that promotes the participation of all segments of society, and the Trade Commissioner Service is dedicated to supporting the efforts of all Canadian entrepreneurs to expand into global markets. I am equally pleased to see delegates participate in cultural programming at the Canada Pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka—an event that brings the world together and inspires global connection through creativity and innovation.

I encourage you to fully leverage the diverse elements of your program in Hokkaido, Tokyo, and Osaka to immerse yourselves in Japanese culture, forge new business connections, and cultivate lasting relationships. I look forward to hearing about your achievements and successes in Japan.

I wish the IMPACT mission every success.

Ian G. McKay
Ambassador of Canada to Japan and Special Envoy for the Indo-Pacific

Message From Jeff Nankivell

President and CEO, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

On behalf of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, I am delighted to welcome all participants to IMPACT: the Indigenous Meeting on Pacific and Arctic Climate and Trade, hosted at Expo 2025 Osaka, Japan, with additional programming in Tokyo and Hokkaido. Led by Christine Nakamura, Vice-President of our Central Canada Office, and with support from the Government of Canada and others, this mission is poised to be another great success.

IMPACT focuses on bringing together Indigenous communities from five Pacific and Arctic jurisdictions — Canada, Australia, Alaska, Japan, and Taiwan — and highlighting the knowledge, innovation, and skills that Indigenous women bring to the world. Through this mission, APF Canada and its partners aim to promote trade diversification and sustainable trade practices that respect Indigenous rights and cultures. This unique initiative offers an opportunity to facilitate the exchange of traditional knowledge and experiences related to mitigating climate change and developing new collaborative strategies to enhance resilience to this global threat.

For the ninth mission in our Women's Business Missions to Asia Series, APF Canada is excited to return to Japan — the economy that hosted our first-ever Women-only Business Mission to Asia in 2019. In the six years since, the Foundation has supported 290 women and gender-diverse business leaders and entrepreneurs in accessing 11 markets in the Indo-Pacific region. We have arranged 973 business-to-business meetings between our delegates and their Asian counterparts, resulting in 68 business deals worth an estimated C\$34 million.



Japan is a key trading partner for Canada, offering tremendous opportunities for small and medium enterprises. In 2023, Japan was Canada's fourth-largest trading partner in terms of bilateral merchandise trade, with the total flow of goods valued at C\$36.5 billion. Both countries are open economies and resilient democracies committed to maintaining peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. Additionally, as members of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), Canada and Japan are committed to reducing bilateral trade barriers and protecting open, inclusive, and rules-based trade.

IMPACT builds on Canada's commitment to Indigenous-led international co-operation through the Indigenous Peoples Economic and Trade Arrangement (IPETCA) — of which Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Chinese Taipei are members. This mission aims to expand IPETCA engagement with Japan and Alaska to foster cultural exchange, enhance dialogue and collaboration, and promote inclusive and sustainable trade.

I would like to thank our many public and private sector partners for their generous contributions to this mission. The realization of this ambitious and inspiring project is a team effort. I look forward to the mission's positive outcomes.



AGENDA

Latest Details



MEET THE DELEGATION



CHAIRS
OF THE
MISSION



Christine Nakamura

*Vice-President, Central Canada Office,
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada*



Dawn Madahbee Leach

*General Manager, Waubetek
Business Development Corporation*



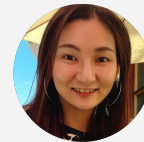
Amanda Healy

*CEO, Warrikal Pty Ltd &
Managing Director, Kirrikin*



April Allen

*Founder & Designer,
Stitched By April*



Ayumi Yamada

*Director, Japan External Trade
Organization, Toronto*



Bobbie Racette

*Founder & CEO,
Virtual Gurus*



Gina Nagano

*Co-Owner & President,
Tr'ochëk Energy Incorporated*



Jenn Harper

*Founder & CEO,
Cheekbone Beauty*



Kiyo Weiss

*Senior Director Sales Asia
Pacific, Air Canada*



Lesley Hampton

*Founder & Designer,
LESLEY HAMPTON*



Patuk Glenn

*Executive Director, Arctic Slope
Community Foundation*



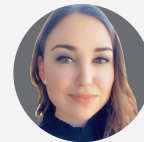
Tamami Kaizawa

*Founder & Designer,
TAMA kor DESIGN*



Trisha Pitura

*Co-Founder,
MINI TIPI*



Victoria Kakuktinniq

*Founder & Designer,
Victoria's Arctic Fashion*



DESIGNER SPOTLIGHT



Kirrikin

Amanda Healy,
Managing Director & Designer

<https://kirrikin.com>

KIRRIKIN
DISCOVER YOURSELF

Kirrikin showcases stunning artworks on handcrafted and sustainable fabrics, bringing together the beauty of art and fashion. The brand offers a range of exquisite clothing accessories, including silk and cashmere scarves, silk neckties, bowties, and pocket squares. Each piece features exclusive designs inspired by Aboriginal artwork, traditions, culture, and our deep connection to the land, capturing the essence of Australia and embodying the spirit and creativity of Indigenous art.

The word “Kirrikin” holds a special meaning, translating roughly to “Sunday’s best clothes.” This word was part of the original language recorded by missionaries in the Hunter Valley during the early 1820s and has become a symbol of our commitment to Wonnarua language revitalization. Kirrikin take pride in personally sourcing talented Indigenous artists to create our ranges. With a keen eye for emerging artists and their incredible artworks, the brand carefully curates designs that seamlessly transition from canvas to fabric.

As an Indigenous registered business, Kirrikin is dedicated to supporting Aboriginal communities. With every purchase, a percentage of the proceeds directly benefits the featured Indigenous Australian artist involved in the design.



LESLEY HAMPTON

Lesley Hampton, Founder & Designer

<https://lesleyhampton.com/>

LESLEY HAMPTON

Lesley Hampton is an Anishinaabe artist and fashion designer focused on mental wellness and body neutrality in fashion through the lens of the Indigenous worldview. Lesley is a member of Temagami First Nation, and she identifies as an adult ‘Third Culture Kid’ with her formative years spent in Canada’s Arctic and Atlantic, Australia, England, Indonesia, and New Caledonia.

Named in the Forbes “30 Under 30 Local: Toronto” list and the number one Canadian brand to keep your eye on by Vogue, Lesley has styled campaigns for the Toronto Raptors, modelled for Nike, created custom designs for The Toronto Maple Leafs, and has been a guest judge on Canada’s Drag Race.

The brand has showcased at White Milano Trade show during Milan Fashion Week, Canadian Curated Collections during London Fashion Week, Toronto Fashion Week, and Indigenous Fashion Arts Festival, and has dressed celebrities such as Lily Gladstone (Killers of the Flower Moon), Devery Jacobs (Reservation Dogs), and Tantoo Cardinal (ECHO).



Stitched By April

April Allen, Founder & Designer

<https://www.stitchedbyapril.com/>



Stitched By April is more than a fashion brand — it's a story stitched into every seam. Founded by Inuk designer April Allen, the label celebrates Inuit identity through garments that honour traditional craftsmanship while pushing the boundaries of contemporary fashion. Each design is rooted in a deep respect for the land, water, and ancestral knowledge that continue to shape the lives of Inuit.

Through her work, April fuses sustainability, cultural storytelling, and advocacy. Her collections often feature sealskin, fur, and leather — materials long used by Inuit for survival in the Arctic — reimagined into high-fashion silhouettes. A key piece, her “Water Dress,” uses blue leather raindrops and chains to spotlight the urgent need for clean drinking water in Indigenous communities. Whether worn on global runways or in community spaces, April’s designs carry a message of resilience, pride, and the enduring beauty of Inuit culture.



TAMA kor DESIGN

Tamami Kaizawa, Founder & Designer

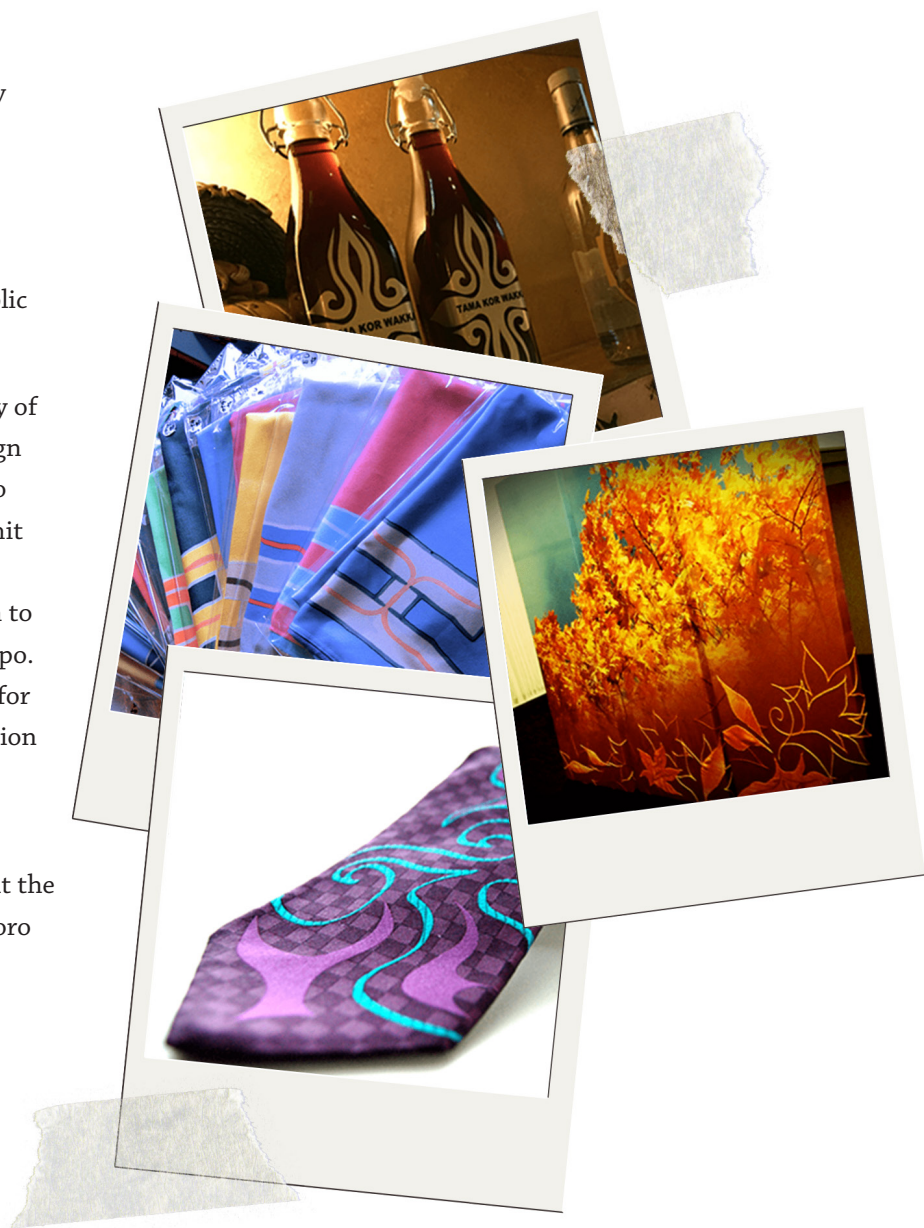
<http://www.tamamikaizawa.com/>



TAMA kor DESIGN, founded in 1997 by Ainu designer Tamami Kaizawa, blends traditional Ainu motifs with modern aesthetics. Ms. Kaizawa's work spans accessories, textiles, apparel (dresses, scarves, traditional Ainu kimonos), public art, lighting, and graphic design.

Ms. Kaizawa has been active in a variety of design fields. In 2008, her original design furōshiki wrapping cloths were gifted to all leaders attending the 34th G8 Summit at Lake Tōya in Hokkaido, and in 2015 she was showcased in the “Introduction to Ainu Culture” performance at Milan Expo. In 2021, she was the costume designer for the Hokkaido Performing Arts Foundation performance of “Lear at 43° North Latitude.”

Her designs are on permanent display at the Minapa Ainu cultural art space in Sapporo Station and at Sapporo's Shin-Chitose Airport.



Victoria's Arctic Fashion

Victoria Kakuktinniq, Founder & Designer

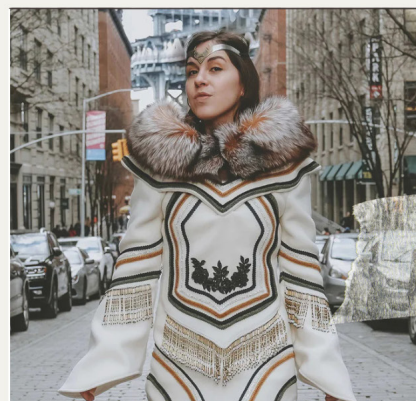
<https://vafashion.ca/>



VICTORIA'S ARCTIC FASHION

Victoria's Arctic Fashion (V.A.F.), founded in 2014 by Inuk designer Victoria Kakuktinniq, is a contemporary fashion label that seamlessly blends traditional Inuit craftsmanship with modern design. Based in Iqaluit, Nunavut, V.A.F. specializes in handcrafted garments such as parkas, kamiit (winter boots), and accessories that incorporate both traditional materials — like sealskin and fox fur — and modern fabrics.

Kakuktinniq's designs draw inspiration from traditional Inuit clothing, particularly the amauti, featuring elements like curved hems and voluminous hoods, while integrating modern touches such as asymmetrical zippers and corset-style lacing. Her work has garnered national and international recognition, with showcases at Paris Fashion Week, New York Fashion Week, and collaborations with brands like Canada Goose. Through V.A.F., Kakuktinniq not only preserves and revitalizes Inuit sewing traditions but also brings Indigenous fashion to the global stage.



COMPANY PROFILES



cheekbone

Cheekbone Beauty



Jennifer Harper,
Founder & CEO

<https://www.cheekbone-beauty.com/>

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

Headquartered in St. Catharines, Ontario, Cheekbone Beauty supplies clean, vegan, and sustainably-sourced colour cosmetics, including lipsticks, eyeshadows, and blushes. Rooted in Anishinaabe culture and values, Cheekbone Beauty's products -- from ingredients to packaging -- are high-quality, sustainable, and cruelty-free. The brand has been featured in multiple fashion and beauty publications, including Vogue, Elle, and Marie Claire, and sells to large retailers such as Sephora and JCPenney.

UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

Cheekbone Beauty blends innovation with tradition, offering makeup that is both ethically made and beautifully effective. The brand prioritizes eco-conscious packaging, transparency in ingredients, and giving back to Indigenous youth through education and support programs.

SECTORS SERVED

Retail

OBJECTIVES IN JAPAN

Cheekbone Beauty aims to meet with potential distributors, manufacturers, and R&D partners. The brand is targeting clean beauty retailers, ethical distributors, and platforms that prioritize sustainability, inclusivity, and transparency. It also wants to build partnerships with organizations that support Indigenous representation, women entrepreneurs, and social impact.

MINI TIPI®

MINI TIPI



Trisha Pitura, Co-Founder

<https://minitipi.ca/>

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

Headquartered in Gatineau, Quebec, MINI TIPI produces high-quality blankets and accessories featuring authentic Indigenous-designed fabrics. The company sells blankets, shawls, scarves, mittens, and bags to over 80 retailers across Canada, as well as online. MINI TIPI proudly manufactures in Canada and prioritizes ethical and sustainable production practices.

UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

MINI TIPI transforms cultural storytelling in the textile industry by amplifying Indigenous voices through authentic, respectful collaborations. The company's exclusive designs share traditional teachings and community knowledge and help bridge cultures and foster deeper understanding. Through artist partnerships, fair royalty programs, and educational storytelling, MINI TIPI creates meaningful connections that celebrate Indigenous resilience and creativity.

SECTORS SERVED

Retail

OBJECTIVES IN JAPAN

MINI TIPI aims to meet with premium textiles suppliers specializing in recycled and custom-woven fabrics. The company also hopes to meet with high-end retailers that value quality, intentional design, and cultural storytelling, as well as distributors and marketers who can support market entry.



Virtual Gurus



Bobbie Racette,
Founder & CEO

<https://thevirtualgurus.com/>

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

Headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, Virtual Gurus is a talent-as-service platform that connects businesses with highly skilled virtual assistants from underrepresented communities, including Indigenous, LGBTQ2S+, and people of colour. Powered by purpose and AI, Virtual Gurus helps companies scale while creating meaningful employment opportunities for overlooked talent.

UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

Virtual Gurus combines AI, machine learning, and human insight to help businesses match with the right assistant. Once paired, clients have access to analytical data that visualizes their assistant's task progression. Virtual Gurus provides easy two-way communication and actionable reporting to ensure feedback is heard and updates are understood and acted upon.

SECTORS SERVED

HR Technology, Gig Economy

OBJECTIVES IN JAPAN

Virtual Gurus aims to meet with potential distributors, investors, and JV partners. The company also hopes to meet with local AI agents to learn more about launching Virtual Gurus' AI in Japan.



Tr'ochëk Energy Incorporated



Gina Nagano,
Co-Owner & President

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

Headquartered in Dawson City, Yukon, Tr'ochëk Energy focuses on the development of hydrogen production and distribution infrastructure for the purpose of providing clean heat and electricity in northern Canada.

UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION

Tr'ochëk Energy provides community-based and community-focused solutions for the unique energy challenges in Canada's northern regions (e.g. isolation, rudimentary infrastructure, limited capacity). The company works with a range of energy options — including photovoltaic panels, biomass, and hydrogen — to provide reliable energy that replaces fossil fuels or critical mineral-reliant renewable technologies with energy solutions that rely only on purified water.

SECTORS SERVED

Clean Energy

OBJECTIVES IN JAPAN

Tr'ochëk Energy aims to meet with business and government stakeholders to explore future localization opportunities in Japan. The company also hopes to meet with industry players — including leaders in the energy sector, infrastructure developers, and hydrogen distributors — as well as potential investment and R&D partners.

