



## ICF Quarterly Report July to September 2024

### Summary of Activities of the First Half of Fiscal Year Ending March 2025

At the ICF General Assembly on April 22, the secretariat shared the organization's activities and overall policy for the fiscal year ending in March 2025, focusing on three upgrades: upgrade of societal issue-driven activities, upgrade of business co-creation activities, and upgrade of community activities. As we reflect on the activities of the first half of the year in this summary, we will accelerate activities in the second half.

#### **1. Upgrade of societal issue-driven activities**

We have started working on the next edition of the Listings of Societal Issues, which is set to be published in January 2025. For the next edition, we will organize societal issues by taking into account environmental changes caused by the covid pandemic, technological progress, and other developments as well as new socioeconomic trends. It is expected to incorporate ICF members' opinions and concerns of issues as much as possible. If you are interested, please contact the ICF Secretariat. (See page 5)

#### **2. Upgrade of business co-creation activities**

Co-creation activities have been conducted by ICF aiming for societal implementation, including recurrent education for women (see the [ICF Quarterly Report from April to June](#)) and a carbon offset demonstration experiment (see page 4). In addition, a program has been launched to explore the possibility of using advanced technologies such as XR and human augmentation to resolve societal issues. Societal implementation research has also been under way, focusing on public affairs. (see page 4)

#### **3. Upgrade of community activities**

The ICF Meetup 2024 (see below) featured pitches from 15 companies and organizations and facilitated interactions among ICF members. In September, the secretariat conducted its first interview with ICF members in the Kansai region (see page 6) and will explore similar initiatives for areas beyond the Tokyo capital region. In addition, the Carbon Credit Deep-Dive Workshop (see page 4) has been taking on the challenge of creating an expanded community to foster the formation of a new market.

### Activity Report (July–September)

#### **ICF Meetup 2024 (July 19)**

The ICF Meetup 2024 was held in a hybrid format on July 19. It serves as a networking event bringing together all members for information sharing and opinion exchange on initiatives to resolve societal issues. Following pitch sessions by 10 companies and organizations, participants at the venue set up booths with support from [Real Virtual Incorporated](#), which offers 360-degree live streaming, and had a networking session. The event was a great success with about 90 people attending. For more details, please refer to the [event report](#) (in Japanese).

#### **1. Report on ICF activities**

At the beginning of the program, Yuji Mizuta, Chief of Staff of the ICF Secretariat, reported on the ICF activities since the ICF General Assembly in April and provided updates on the upcoming schedule. It was announced that the MRI DEMO DAY would be held in January 2025, followed by the opening of application for the next round of the Business Acceleration Program (BAP). More details can be found in the [First Quarterly Activity Report from April to June](#).

## **2. Report on Japan–ASEAN Startup Business Matching Fair 2024**

Next, the secretariat reported on the [Japan–ASEAN Startup Business Matching Fair 2024](#) held in Thailand on June 19. Three ICF venture members—UPWARD, Inc., Olive Co., Ltd., and Aerosense Inc.—took the stage in person to share their overseas businesses prospects and their takeaways from the event.

### **3. Member pitches**

Twelve pitches were made by new ICF members as well as existing municipality and university members from the Hokuriku region that focus on nurturing and supporting startups and resolving societal issues through collaboration among industry, government, and academia.

(Speakers)

[RC Solution Co.](#), [Z-Works Inc.](#), [DoctorNow Inc.](#), [Booon Inc.](#), [Koshida Art Co., Ltd.](#), [TOBE RAILWAY Co., Ltd.](#), [Hokkaido University](#), [Toyama Prefecture](#), [Ishikawa Prefecture](#), [Fukui Prefecture](#), [Kanazawa University](#), and [Kanazawa Institute of Technology](#)



## **Sixth Platinum Career Award Ceremony and Memorial Symposium (July 31)**

The Platinum Career Award is a joint initiative between Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking (a co-creating member) and ICF to recognize companies that support the development of platinum careers. The initiative also receives support from Toyo Keizai Inc. and

supplementary information provided by the Job Talk website.

The sixth Platinum Career Award Ceremony and Memorial Symposium was held at the Tokyo Stock Exchange Hall on July 31. More than 180 people attended in person and online.

At the ceremony, Dr. Hiroshi Komiyama—Chairman of the Institute, Mitsubishi Research Institute, Inc. and chair of the judging panel—presented award certificates and trophies to the winners (see (1) below), who then gave acceptance speeches. A Special Incentive Prize was introduced for the first time this year for applicants listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange Growth Market.

During the commemorative keynote lecture at the symposium, Mana Nakazora, the Vice Chairperson of Global Markets at BNP Paribas Japan, delivered a presentation titled "Utilizing Japan's Human Capital: Growth and Productivity Improvement." She talked about the core of human capital management, which was the primary criterion of evaluation this time (see (2) below). This provided participants with important clues on how to develop strategies and conditions that maximize the value of human resources.

This was followed by a panel discussion titled "Platinum Careers in the Era of Generative AI: How to Use Generative AI to Enhance Corporate Value." First, Kazuo Hiyane, General Manager of the Generative AI Lab at Mitsubishi Research Institute, gave a talk on changes in working styles and skills required by the development of generative AI. Award panelists and other speakers then gave their opinions and suggestions from various perspectives for both companies and employees utilizing generative AI.

A more detailed report can be found on the ICF website (in Japanese):

<https://icf.mri.co.jp/activities/activities-19546/>

## **1. Winners of the Sixth Platinum Career Awards**

### **〈Grand Prize〉 : Lion Corporation**

#### **Reasons for Award (main points of evaluation)**

- Established a cycle of career autonomy to empower self-directed individuals, supporting employees in achieving self-realization through career self-reliance.
- Introduced Lion Career Village, a platform for creating new learning opportunities with a strong track record of attendance
- Created a comfortable working environment, including office spaces, for diverse human resources
- Promoted increased interactions between employees and executives, with many employees participating
- Introduced the Relationship Strengthening Program to enhance relationships between superiors and subordinates

### **〈First Prize and Special Incentive Prize Winners and Reasons for Awards〉**

#### **First Prize (winners listed in alphabetical order)**

- Itoki Corporation

Award for improvement both in employee engagement and expertise

- Niterra Co., Ltd.

Award for digital transformation with all employees toward unconventional changes

- Persol Holdings Co., Ltd.

Award for creation through proactive career development

- SoftBank Corp.

Award for employee and company growth using generative AI

- The San-in Godo Bank, Ltd.

Award for community-based development of diverse future human resources

#### **Special Incentive Prize**

- Japan Tissue Engineering Co., Ltd.

Award for hiring and careful development of

diverse human resources

Acceptance speeches are available in the video below (in Japanese):

[https://youtu.be/vzn3jbR\\_Q3Q?si=KEcZTJfNQChSMAOC](https://youtu.be/vzn3jbR_Q3Q?si=KEcZTJfNQChSMAOC)

## **2. Primary Evaluation Criteria for the Sixth Platinum Career Awards**

The awards evaluate initiatives related to three key features of platinum career development: a long-term perspective, the independent desire to learn, and the skills to resolve societal issues. In addition, it sets a different primary criterion for each time. The sixth Platinum Career Awards focused on human capital management, and award panelists judged from the following four perspectives:

- As the company's working environment is expected to change with the progress of green and digital transformation (including the spread of generative AI), does the company share its management philosophy, strategy, and the ideal type of human resource with employees?
- Does the company explore and implement human resource measures and systems necessary to realize its strategy?
- How does the company show employees its stance on support for career self-reliance?
- Do the measures and systems above resonate with employees; are they being integrated into the company?



## **Carbon Credit Deep-Dive Workshop (September 20)**

The carbon credit market can help realize carbon neutrality but is still in its infancy in Japan. ICF aims to create an ecosystem where various players in the market can come together, discuss related issues, and share co-creation ideas. We have started by launching a series of bimonthly Carbon Credit Deep-Dive Workshops. They are open to non-members to encourage participation from a wide range of stakeholders in the carbon credit market.

The first session was held on June 12, where companies on the demand side of carbon credits shared their reasons for undertaking activities and procurement at an early stage and challenges related to participating in transactions. In the second session held on September 20, carbon credit suppliers were invited to discuss what quality is required for carbon credits and how risks should be viewed. The third and final session is scheduled to be held in November. The secretariat will select themes deemed as particularly important based on the discussions in the first and second sessions. New participants are also welcome to join from the third session, so if interested, please contact the ICF Secretariat. We will try our best to share with you past information and other materials.

## **Carbon Offset Demonstration Experiment Using Credits**

ICF is committed to decarbonizing its events. It calculated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the sixth Platinum Career Award Ceremony and Memorial Symposium on July 31 (see page 2) and conducted a demonstration experiment for carbon offsetting using credits.

In order to offset CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the transportation of in-person participants, ICF asked all in-person participants to provide information on their round-trip transportation. Participants were encouraged to use public transportation as much as possible when

visiting the venue to reduce emissions. For details on the scope of GHG calculations and credits used for offsetting, please refer to the report on the ICF website (in Japanese): [https://icf.mri.co.jp/note/pca6-carbon\\_offset/](https://icf.mri.co.jp/note/pca6-carbon_offset/)

## **ICF Societal Implementation Research: Public affairs (August 2 and September 27)**

In this fiscal year, ICF is focusing on public affairs (PA) as a theme of its societal implementation research. It aims to share insights and know-how gained through trials and case studies of PA activities among its members to promote collective impact and innovation activities toward resolving societal issues.

A kick-off event was held on August 2 with about 50 participants. The focus was on the 2024 version of the government's basic policy and growth strategy to facilitate a deeper understanding of their content and relation to PA.

The second session on September 27 included a survey on stakeholders and policy trends, using the business of Morus Inc., an ICF venture member, as a case study. ICF will share the results of this research with members, including specific procedures and examples of PA activities. The second session also included a workshop to promote interactions among members interested in PA activities.

Note: Morus Inc. is a startup engaged in the development of new protein sources and food made from silkworms

## **Human Augmentation and Virtual Economy (September 5)**

ICF is promoting activities aimed at resolving societal issues by creating new markets with promising technology in the field of human augmentation and virtual economy. On June 26, a [special webinar on social change brought by XR](#) (extended reality) was held as a kick-off event with Shun Kubota, the CEO of Mogura Inc., as a special guest.

It was followed by an ideathon on September 5 that focused on new innovations from startups and ways to effectively utilize them for business. Twelve participants split into two groups and came up with ideas for co-creation to resolve societal issues. Ideas included virtual performances, virtual hiking, online training, as well as concrete co-creation activities at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. For more details, please also refer to the [event report](#) on the ICF website (in Japanese).

Following this ideathon, ICF will promote specific co-creation activities and start planning for the next ideathon, which is expected to be held around December. Based on the insights from this ideathon and other activities, ICF will organize and share ideas on how societal issues can be resolved within this fiscal year.

If you are interested in utilizing new innovations in the field of human augmentation and virtual economy to resolve societal issues, please contact the ICF Secretariat.

## Startup Wheel: A pitch event in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (August 22 and 23)

The final round of Startup Wheel was held on August 22–23 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Startup Wheel is one of the largest pitch events in Vietnam and provides a venue for startups, venture capital funds, government officials, and government agencies from Vietnam and abroad to gather. It is organized by Business Startup Support Centre (BSSC), established in 2010 as one of the most prominent startup support centers in Vietnam.

The contest this year received applications from over 2,000 startups from Vietnam and other countries. Three members from ICF—UPWARD, Inc., tomoiku Inc., and Faeger Co., Ltd.—participated in the pitch event, with UPWARD and Tomoiku making it to the top 50, and Faeger being selected as one of the five finalists.



Pitch (Faeger)



Final round



Top 50 companies

## Creation of the Listings of Societal Issues 2025

ICF has started working on *the Resolving Societal Issues through Innovation: Listings of Societal Issues 2025* (hereafter referred to as the Listings of Societal Issues).

- While positioning it as a guiding agenda for the realization of a sustainable society where 10 billion people can live in affluence to the age of 100, ICF is considering revising the six established focus areas and planning to set new ones.
- Revisions will take into account changes caused by the covid pandemic and other events
- Current societal issues will be identified from the perspectives of the development of earth, society, and people; new societal issues brought about by technological progress will also be discussed

This revision will also incorporate opinions of ICF members as much as possible. During interviews with ICF members, we received feedback on their expectations for the next edition of the Listings of Societal Issues based on their own use of the listings.

ICF will continue discussions with the aim of publishing the listings around January 2025.

## Initiatives in the Kansai Region

ICF is engaged in a variety of co-creation activities. However, since its events and seminars are mainly held in Tokyo, ICF hopes to create more opportunities for communication and dialogue with members outside the Tokyo metropolitan area and also plans to promote more activities outside the capital region.

As a starting point, Mitsubishi Research Institute exhibited a booth with [NPO Daisan no kazoku](#), an ICF member, at the EXPO Mirai School Festival on August 8, organized by the Expo Promotion Bureau of Osaka Prefecture and Osaka City. In addition, in early September, members of the secretariat visited about 10 ICF member companies and organizations in the Kansai region to gather insights on their needs and challenges.

Based on the results of these interviews, ICF will plan its activities in the Kansai region for the third quarter. If you have any topics you would like to work on in the Kansai region, please contact the ICF Secretariat.



Booth at EXPO Mirai School Festival



Booth at EXPO Mirai School Festival

## New Entrepreneurial Stories of Impactful ICF Members (#44 and #45)

In order to tackle societal issues through business, entrepreneurs must have excellent interpersonal skills and strong organizational capabilities. What do they think and how are they trying to create the world they envision? ICF has published a series of articles that sheds light on the personalities of entrepreneurs who are striving to resolve societal issues. The goal of these articles is to share with readers the philosophies of and the issues being tackled by these entrepreneurs, which in turn should accelerate future breakthroughs that contribute to society as a whole.

The new articles cover stories of [Logos Science Corp](#), which is committed to contributing to men's health, and [endophyte Inc.](#), which aims to create a future with the power of microorganisms.

The list of Japanese articles is [here](#).

The list of English articles is [here](#).

## ICF Members

Members are listed on the [ICF website](#) (in Japanese).

From July 1 to September 30, 11 companies and organizations joined ICF. As of the end of September, the total number of ICF members is 634.

## Upcoming Activities (from October)

### 2024 ICF Interim Meeting on October 18

The 2024 ICF Interim Meeting will be held online from 3 pm to 4:15 pm on Friday, October 18.

This meeting will summarize ICF activities in the first half of the fiscal year ending in March 2025, share the schedule for the second half, and bring up new strategies of commercialization and market formation for businesses that resolve societal issues. In addition, ICF members will make pitches on the latest examples of public-private partnerships aimed at addressing societal issues.

Further details and registration:

<https://icf.mri.co.jp/activities/activities-19888/>

### Business Co-Creation Activities

< Schedule of ongoing co-creation activities >

- [Life Career × Healthcare Course for Women through Industry-Academia Collaboration](#) will start on October 12.

- Carbon Credit Deep-Dive Workshop: The third (final) session is scheduled for November (see page 4)

- Human Augmentation and Virtual Economy: The Next Ideathon is scheduled for December (see page 4)

< New initiatives >

- A VR-based [evacuation drill presented by Geocreates Inc.](#) is scheduled for October at the MRI headquarters.

- We are planning activities in the Kansai region, and we will share the details such as venue and theme as soon as possible

- We are planning to hold a series of proposal-based webinars with the aim of connecting the initiatives of our members to future co-creation activities