



Press Release

KYOKO iCAP Completes Strategic Investment in Saki Corporation

Kyoto, Japan, December 15, 2020 – INNOVATION Kyoto 2016 Limited Liability Partnership (“KYOTO-iCAP 1st Fund”), and Kyoto University Innovation Capital Co., Ltd. (the general partner. Headquarters: Sakyo-ku, Kyoto City; CEO: Ko Kusumi; “KYOTO-iCAP”), today announced that it has concluded a 100 million yen investment in Saki Corporation, a venture company that utilizes Kyoto University's world-class research capabilities (Headquarters: Koto-ku, Tokyo; President and CEO: Norihiro Koike).

Overview of the investment

Saki Corporation is a venture company that develops, manufactures, and sells automated inspection equipment for the production of electronic modules. As the manufacturing process of electronic modules is increasingly automated, inspection methods have evolved from visual inspection to automatic inspection systems. Saki Corporation has a wide variety of inspection algorithms for high-quality in-line inspection, and contributes to the realization of smart factories by offering the best automatic inspection solutions for each user.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of electronic modules for applications such as EVs and 5G, where the soldered parts are not visible and visual inspection is difficult. In addition, the requirement for 100% inspection using automatic inspection equipment is increasing to ensure safety. Saki Corporation has realized 3D inspection using its proprietary X-ray inspection method "Planar CT" and AI engine. The company helps build production lines that improve productivity whilst maintaining a high quality assurance system by detecting minute defects with the industry's top-class accuracy, as well as automatically detecting the degree of defects with AI and providing immediate feedback to operators.

Saki Corporation invited Professor Takashi Sato of Kyoto University's Graduate School of Informatics to serve as their scientific advisor tasked with providing ideas and advice on elemental technologies for optimizing PCB and semiconductor manufacturing processes, and to help in developing next-generation testing equipment. Given the high demand for automated testing equipment in anticipation of "Beyond 5G", Kyoto iCAP has carefully evaluated the promising future opportunities for Saki Corporation and decided to invest 100 million yen of the total 300 million yen in third-party allocation of capital.



“Semiconductors and electronic modules constitute the foundations of our digital society’s infrastructure, while the imperative of meticulous inspection at manufacturing sites plays a vital role in protecting the quality of that infrastructure,” says Saki Corporation’s scientific advisor, Professor Takashi Sato of the Graduate School of Informatics, Kyoto University. “We are delighted that Saki Corporation’s commercial value in contributing to the productivity of the world’s smart factories through automated testing has been recognized. With this investment, Saki Corporation and Kyoto University will continue to work together to develop the next generation of X-ray inspection systems and to apply the results of our academic research to practical applications.”

Concurrent with the investment, Saki Corporation continues its collaboration with Kyoto University’s Professor Takashi Sato with joint development projects for next generation inspection solutions.

About Saki Corporation

Since its inception in 1994, Saki has led the way in the development of automated recognition through robotic vision technology. Saki’s 3D automated solder paste, optical, and X-ray inspection and measurement systems (SPI, AOI, AXI) have been recognized to provide the stable platform and advanced data capture mechanisms necessary for true M2M communication, improving production, process efficiency, and product quality. Saki Corporation has headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, with offices, sales, and support centers around the world.

For more information about Saki visit www.sakicorp.com/en/.

About Kyoto University Innovation Capital Co., Ltd. (KYOTO-iCAP)

Kyoto iCAP is a wholly owned subsidiary of Kyoto University established in December 2014. Its purpose is to provide investment and support to companies founded by researchers belonging to Kyoto University (including spin-offs from joint research companies) for commercializing knowledge (including research results, technology, etc.). The KYOTO-iCAP 1st Fund was created from a 16- billion-yen capital contribution from Kyoto University and private financial institutions, in January 2016. KYOTO-iCAP is a general partner of the Fund. The fund management period is 15 years, that enables KYOTO-iCAP to support Kyoto University-originated long-term ventures and to provide equity from the seed stage through to practical application. The university is one of the top research institutions in Asia.



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