

June 2025 Japan Expo Healthtech Mission Evaluation Report - SDI
Post-event Summary, Assessment of Outcomes, and Record of Next Steps

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - June 2025 Japan Expo Healthtech Mission Evaluation:

The Scottish delegation's participation in the Osaka Expo Healthtech Trade Mission (Tokyo and Osaka, 23–27 June 2025) successfully reinforced Scotland's growing reputation as a leading global healthtech innovation partner. Engagements with Japanese industry stakeholders, accelerators, clusters, and government officials highlighted clear opportunities to deepen collaboration in digital health innovation, validation processes, and shared care models. Feedback from companies and stakeholders also validated that the trade mission itself was incredibly successful in its aims to expand Scottish business networks to promote future sales, consolidate existing partnerships, and drastically increase understanding of the Japanese healthtech market and market entry strategies.

The Healthtech Expo programme saw 6 Scottish companies and 7 speakers travel to Tokyo and Osaka for 5 days of activity. The companies were a mix of early stage through to larger organisations (plus one social enterprise) and the 7 speakers were stakeholders from across Industry, Academia and NHS/SG. Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary Neil Gray's participation also attracted engagement from a wide range of C-suite contacts, with a parallel Ministerial programme running alongside the mission to support broader policy and partnership aims.







The programme for the week was ambitious – the panel sessions and networking engagements alone attracted **200+** VIP attendees to two large Scotland-focused events in Tokyo at the British Embassy and during the Expo Activation Day in Osaka. These events coincided with a trade mission packed with bespoke meetings with Japanese companies and regional innovation clusters, plus a bustling Scotland stand at the Japan Health trade show in Osaka; including a speaking slot to 50+ Japan Health attendees, and a Ministerial keynote speaking slot arranged by SDI at JETRO/METI's Global Healthcare Challenge event. Initial feedback from evaluations has been overwhelmingly positive with all attendees stating very high satisfaction rates and companies are keen to return to Japan to continue engagement with Japanese stakeholders and organisations.

Overview: Recommendations & Outcomes

- In terms of figures, **international revenue** forecasts for the 6 companies currently sit at approx. **£9.4m** for the 3-year forecast.
- We highly recommend a **follow up mission** with companies ideally within this financial year be considered to build on connections made and cement relationships with key Japanese contacts.
- Immediate inquiries from organizations and companies such as the following: *Kobe City, TOA Corporation, Nitto Corporation, ATR Science City, Tokyo Metropolitan Institute for Geriatrics and Gerontology, KPIA*, etc. (See [Osaka 25 Dynamics Dashboard](#) for inquiries generated - SDI CRM).
- An official SDI Japan Healthtech **Trade Development Opportunity (TDO) to create new trade pipeline** is currently in development with accompanying action plan of activity to execute over the next two years.
- Following substantial cooperation for Osaka Expo trade mission, JETRO and SDI currently investigating the possibility of formalising their relationship as sister agencies through a joint agreement or MOU to support companies to trade and collaborate in Japan.


SCOTTISH HEALTHTECH DELEGATION

Scottish Healthtech Companies

	<p>Mr. Alexandre Colle, Co-Founder & CEO, Konpanion Konpanion is an Edinburgh-based company dedicated to designing empathetic companion robots aimed at alleviating loneliness and enhancing well-being. Their flagship product, Maah, resembles a "living pillow" and offers emotional support by emulating pet-like behaviours.</p>
	<p>Mr. James Youell, Sales Director, Integrated Graphene (IGii) IGii (Integrated Graphene) specializes in the development of Gii™, a cost-effective, sustainable, secure, and scalable carbon nanomaterial, as well as in integrating Gii into innovative platforms that transform diagnostics by delivering clinical lab performance in a fast, simple, and cost-effective point-of-care device.</p>
	<p>Ms. Margo Mackay, Managing Director, Talking Mats Talking Mats is a Scottish social enterprise dedicated to enhancing the communication abilities of individuals with communication difficulties. Founded by speech and language therapists, the organization has developed an innovative visual communication framework known as 'Talking Mats'.</p>
	<p>Ms. Rebecca Cleary, CTO, Nami Surgical Nami Surgical produces miniaturised ultrasonic scalpels that can be used in minimally invasive surgeries. The device uses ultrasonic energy to cut and coagulate tissue, offering high precision and minimal thermal damage to surrounding areas. Its miniaturized design is essential for integration into robotic systems, allowing surgeons to perform delicate procedures with enhanced control and accuracy.</p>
	<p>Mr. Michael White, Business Strategy Director, J&D Wilkie J&D Wilkie is one of Scotland's leading textile manufacturers, family owned, dating back to 1868. They specialize in high-performance technical textiles for defence, automotive, filtration, aerospace, medical and industrial applications. The ageing population in Japan is driving demand for medical & hygiene textiles – wound care, bedding and gowns.</p>
	<p>Mr. Zaki Hussein, Founder and CEO, Touchlab Touchlab is a Scottish robotics company pioneering ultra-thin electronic skin (e-skin) technology that allows robots, prosthetics, and remote-operated machines to sense and respond to their environment with human-like tactile perception.</p>

Scottish Stakeholders/Speakers

	<p>Mr. David Lowe, Professor Health Innovation, University of Glasgow; Clinical Lead Innovation, Scottish Government Chief Scientist Office</p>
	<p>Ms. Donna Henderson, Head of International Engagement, Digital Health and Care Directorate, Scottish Government</p>
	<p>Ms. Hazel Dempsey, Innovation Programme Lead, North of Scotland Innovation Hub</p>

	<p>Ms. Katriona Brooksbank, Innovation Lead, West of Scotland Innovation Hub</p>
	<p>Ms. Samantha Smith, Senior Innovation Programme Manager, Southeast of Scotland Innovation Hub</p>
	<p>Mr. Ken Sutherland, President, Canon Medical Research Europe</p>
	<p>Ms. Lesley Palmer, Professor, Dementia Services Development Centre, University of Stirling</p>



Osaka Expo Panel Session, June 26, 2025



Tokyo Healthtech Reception with delegation, June 23, 2025

KEY EVENTS:

Pre-event Webinars & Market Report from partner Living Best

- As part of Expo event preparations, SDI Japan commissioned the delivery of a research report through Japanese age-tech consultancy firm Living Best, as well as two webinars, one delivered by Living Best to Scottish ecosystem leaders and Expo trade delegates to highlight market conditions and pre-mission considerations, and another delivered by Scottish healthtech leaders to promote the Scottish offering in advance to key buyers and partners.

Tokyo (UK Ambassador's residence) Panel Session and Networking Reception June 23 (100+ attendees)

- SDI Japan delivered a high-profile reception hosted at the UK Ambassador's Residence in Tokyo, featuring a panel discussion and networking reception. Attended by over 100 senior stakeholders from Japanese healthcare, life sciences, and government.

Japan Health Trade Show & Speaking Session – June 25 – 27

- SDI exhibited at the first Japan Health Trade Show to showcase Scottish life science SMEs. Included a Minister-led speaking session on Scottish strengths in medtech and healthtech innovation.

Global Healthcare Challenge Ministerial Speaking Session June 25

- SDI Japan arranged for a ministerial speaking session as part of the Global Healthcare Challenge initiative with JETRO and METI Japan.

Osaka Expo (UK Pavilion) Panel Session and Networking Reception June 26 (100+ attendees)

- Showcased Scotland's ageing and digital health capabilities at the UK Pavilion at Expo 2025. A joint panel and networking reception attracted 100+ high-ranking life science participants from Kansai area. Included involvement of two in-market Global Scots, Rodney Kelly and Prof. Tsuneaki Sakata, as panellists and the Scottish Trade Envoy to Japan, Stephen Baker, as event MC.

MEETING PROGRAMME SUMMARY:

Company Meetings	Focus Area	Opportunity	Strategic relevance
Institute of Science	Medical technologies, advanced materials, data-driven healthcare	Joint research collaborations and knowledge exchange programs	Alignment with Scotland's innovation strengths
Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster	Life sciences cluster with corporate links	Business establishment, partnering activities, and promotion of Kobe as a landing platform	Strategic entry point for Scottish firms into Japan
Shibuya Deeptech Accelerator	AI drug discovery, synthetic biology, robotics	Soft-landing support, corporate introductions, and deep-tech collaboration	Gateway for Scottish startups into Japan's innovation ecosystem
Canon Inc.	Imaging, medtech, AI-enabled diagnostics	R&D partnerships and co-development initiatives	Expansion of existing Scotland-Japan ties in high-tech sectors
Mediva	Agetech, care home operations, digital health	Piloting and localization of Scottish aging-related solutions	Strong partner for market entry in Japan's aging and healthcare sectors. Stirling University's own partnership with Mediva was highlighted as an example of Scottish excellence and strengthened through further engagement. Mediva CEO also supported mission as panellist for Tokyo event.
Air Water	Medical and dental technologies	Collaborative product development in medical devices, dental materials, and surgical technologies	Synergy with Scottish innovations in advanced healthcare technologies
Astra Zeneca	Biopharmaceutical, covering drug discovery to development	data sharing for AI. Expert advice on ethical and regulatory advice for MedTech Innovation	Gateway for Scottish companies and partnerships / collaborations.

KEY LEADS SUMMARY:

See Scorecards for more detail: [Scorecard APAC FY25-26.xlsx](#)

Public Entities/Partners (Highlights – names withdrawn for GDPR):

Kobe City	International Coordinator
JETRO (London)	Key Account Manager (Life Sciences)
KAHM	CEO
METI Kansai	Director, Corporate Planning & Co-Innovation Creation Unit
ATR	Senior Executive Vice President
Innovation Dojo	CEO
Shibuya Startups	CEO
Fukuoka City	Deputy Mayor of Fukuoka City
Kitakyushu Prefectural Gov	Mayor of Kitakyushu City
Japanese Government Digital Secretariat	Assistant to Councillor Suga
KPIA	Director General

Private companies (highlights – names withdrawn for GDPR):

Fujitsu	Global Government Affairs Department
Nihon Kohden	Business Planning Department
Chiba University Hospital	Associate Professor of Medicine at Chiba University Hospital, Representative Director of Aging Japan
Panasonic	Overseas Representative
Sumitomo Heavy Industries	Deputy General Manager, New Business Development Office
Systemex	Manager, R&D Strategy Dept. Technology Strategy
TOA Corporation	Director
Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology	Head of Department
Kawada Technologies	Deputy Manager, Humanoid Robots
Cowellnex	Manager, Corporate Venture Capital
Kawasaki Heavy Industries	Non-Executive Board Member

SOCIAL MEDIA OVERVIEW:

As part of the promotion for the events, SDI/Scottish Government secured a PR agency (Candlewick), who produced two press releases for a Japanese audience, and was covered by **57 media outlets total:**

- [Health Tech Trade Mission Visits Japan](#)
- [Osaka Kansai Expo "Scotland Health Tech Day" to be held on June 26th - Strengthening collaboration in medical innovation](#)

Coverage was captured from some of Japan's top media outlets, including the following: Toyo Keizai Online, NIKKEI COMPASS, Nikkei Biotechnology & Business, and Mainichi Shimbun Digital. Interviews at the Expo pavilion with Scottish companies and senior industry/government figures were also captured through Candlewick, with plans in place to utilize these high-quality materials for further marketing collateral over the coming FY.



Press release with Japanese ambassador to UK, 19th June 2025

IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES (COMPANIES & STAKEHOLDERS)

- Immediate inquiries from: Kobe City, TOA Corporation, Nitto Corporation, ATR Science City, Tokyo Metropolitan Institute for Geriatrics and Gerontology, KPIA, etc. See [Osaka 25 Dashboard](#) for inquiries generated (SDI CRM).
- Very positive immediate feedback from companies and public sector participants, with immediate follow up already underway. Innovation leads very keen to continued Japan engagement and have agreed to regular SDI meetings to work on an action plan.
- MOU signed between one of the Scottish company delegates (**Talking Mats**) and their Japanese partner.
- Some of the Scottish companies have already contacted JETRO for support and JETRO invited **iGii** to pitch as part of a Japanese femtech opportunity.
- Through IGS support two delegate companies have committed to a return trip to Japan this financial year.
- Meeting arranged between SDI and ATR/*Keihanna* Science City who are very interested in future collaboration opportunities around innovation in DeepTech sectors.
- Donna Henderson, SG Head of International to connect **Talking Mats** to Highland Hospice and ECHO and the Ukraine (Braintree Training and Kelly Blasko previously of the US Defence Health Agency), linked to their work on end-of-life care. Has also introduced a potential person for their Board. Donna will also highlight the clinical trial **Touchlab** are doing in Helsinki to the Finnish Health Ministry colleagues. Several of the Scottish companies also discussed collaborating and working together between themselves.
- Opportunity to explore collaboration/MOU with the Japan Health Ministry, on topics such as dementia innovation, active and healthy ageing, workforce, etc.
- **Konpanion** and **Mediva** agreed upon areas for collaboration and continued engagement. **Konpanion** has also signed an NDA with TOA Corporation and discussions are encouraging.
- **Konpanion** and **University of Stirling**, Dementia Development Centre are planning a joint project. **Konpanion** has also linked now with Innovation hub in North to have a session with dementia contacts from across NHS Grampian and Highlands.
- The Innovation hubs offered introductory calls and connection with clinical experts to the Scottish delegates to gather clinical opinions.
- **Astra Zeneca Japan** meeting provided 3 tangible outcomes: data sharing for AI and other technical projects for training & validation, potentially test bed deployment to make products globally relevant and ready. Expert advice on ethical and regulatory advice for MedTech Innovation. As well as access for SMEs to the i2.JP network and agreement to share Astra Zeneca's AI training plan for NHS staff.
- **Canon Inc** – the meeting and events provided an opportunity for Canon Medical Edinburgh to strengthen relations and remind the Japan leadership team of the strength of Scotland's triple helix, which supports the Edinburgh location and helps secure their future.
- **J&D Wilkie** had 3 successful meeting outcomes, Sumitomo were introduced to the company by Stephen Baker and there is potential for a large-scale project for undersea cables. They also met GSI Creos and there is an opportunity around tent

materials. As well as a successful meeting with Kanematsu Corporation who are looking for anti-cut material for backpacks and ballistic material for vests in defence.

CHINA-RELATED OUTCOMES

- Connected **Lesley Palmer** with GlobalScot Mark Dodds, CEO of DWA Architects China, who focusing on elderly care facility design in the market.
- Introductions made to 2 potential customers to **Talking Mats** (Deepsprings, and another programme focusing on school education led by Epass International Education).
- Introduction of potential customer and partner AutoBio to **iGii**.
- Supports provided to **Touchlab** and **Konpanion** for market insights and potential customers, with promising ongoing discussions between the Chinese company Touchstone and **Touchlab**.



Trade Mission Full Delegation at Osaka Expo, UK Pavilion, June 26, 2025

DIRECT FEEDBACK FROM DELEGATES

*“The programme was well crafted and ran very well. It was an intense week of engagements, but the **good planning and strategic delivery meant it flowed well**. The meetings we had and **contacts made were of a relevance and seniority that will assist us** in continuing to build on the very strong relations between Scotland and Japan. I felt the **support provided to the Scottish businesses travelling with us was brilliant** and I know they all found the mission worthwhile and productive [...] **the team ensured Scotland was promoted in the best light**” - Neil Gray, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care*

*“Participation in the Osaka Expo and the wider trade mission programme has been **highly beneficial** for our company. It provided a **unique platform to showcase our capabilities** to a diverse international audience and allowed us to gain visibility within the Japanese market.” - CEO, Scottish Company*

*“The programme **facilitated direct engagement with key industry stakeholders**, including established companies, government bodies, and innovation hubs, which has **significantly expanded our network**.” - Sales Manager, Scottish Company*

*“Overall, the experience has **strengthened our strategic positioning** in the region and **laid a strong foundation** for future growth and partnerships.” - CEO, Scottish Company*

*“The trade mission was **hugely beneficial** [...] The visit **gave our brand credibility** through our association with the Scottish Government and Health minister.” - CEO, Scottish Company*

*“The programme was **well structured and gave a good introduction to culture of innovation and key strategies** to address the market. We came away with a better understanding of the key driving factors in healthcare in Japan.” - CEO, Scottish Company*

Feedback Highlights from Delegates:

- Direct engagement with the Japanese healthcare market provided valuable, real-world insights.
- Strengthened relationships with the Scottish healthcare community and business partners in Japan.
- Gained deeper cultural understanding, building trust with local stakeholders.
- Brand credibility was boosted through alignment with the Scottish Government and Health Minister. Having a Minister attend was seen as crucial.
- Gained international visibility by showcasing products on a respected platform.
- Developed practical knowledge of market opportunities and key drivers in Japanese healthcare.
- Benefited from expert logistical support, freeing up time to focus on networking and strategy.
- Participated in structured programming that introduced innovation culture and market-entry strategies.
- Hugely beneficial to connect with key stakeholders during pitching and networking events.
- Companies enjoyed the opportunity to interact with government bodies, network with other Scottish companies and to meet and engage with innovation hubs.
- Received strategic support from organisations like JETRO and SDI, aiding in market entry planning.
- Gained financial backing and structural support by joining the government-led delegation.
- Set the foundation for future partnerships and potential growth in the Japanese market.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

- An official SDI Japan Healthtech **Trade Development Opportunity (TDO) to create new trade pipeline** is currently in development through SDI Japan (Science and Tech) with support from S&T Scotland, with an accompanying action plan of activity to execute over the next two years.
- Follow-up underway by SDI Japan to further engage with Expo week meeting partners, notably **Institute of Science, Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster**, and **Shibuya Deeptech Accelerator**, and **Astra Zeneca Japan**.
- Similar Japan-side follow-up meetings with partners and stakeholders who attended Expo-related events, particularly **Shibuya Startups**, **METI Kansai**, **Fujitsu**, **Panasonic**, and more.
- As a result of the large and diverse delegation travelling to Japan Expo, this has enabled SDI Japan to establish a strong list of key contacts and opportunities to support a healthy Scottish SME pipeline, which will be actioned as follow-up within this FY (triaging of contacts and broader follow-up plan for companies and stakeholders is currently underway by SDI Japan and Scotland)

- We highly recommend a **follow up mission** with companies, or at the very least individual company visits, ideally within this financial year, be considered to build on connections made and cement relationships with key Japanese contacts.
- Following substantial cooperation for Osaka Expo trade mission, JETRO and SDI currently investigating the possibility of formalising their relationship as sister agencies through a joint agreement or MOU to support companies to trade and collaborate in Japan. Ideally this would lead to reciprocal visits for Japanese companies to engage with the Scotland ecosystem and potentially expand into investment opportunities.
- As well as JETRO, opportunities exist to formalise collaborations with the following:
 - Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster
 - Shibuya Deep-Tech Accelerator
 - Mediva (elderly care consultant with strong links to University of Stirling)
 - Institute of Science (Tokyo)
 - LINK-J (Tokyo)
- Scoping for further international partnerships between Japanese organisations and Scottish counterparts such as Edinburgh’s National Robotarium also underway through outreach from SDI (UK Ambassador to Japan scheduled to visit Robotarium site in October to support this initiative).
- Innovation leads who attended are keen to continue discussions and regularly meet SDI to work on actions and follow up and to support Scottish companies, as well as strengthen dialogue with public sector and industry stakeholders in Japan to support execution of longer-term healthcare objectives aligned with common challenges, such as healthy aging, delivering healthcare in rural areas etc.
- Webinar materials (produced pre-mission in partnership with local agetech consultant Living Best) to be propagated through SDI networks to Scottish and Japanese audiences to boost market awareness and Scotland branding to potential customers. Similarly, planning for further market awareness engagement (webinars, resources etc.) to highlight opportunity to Scottish companies also underway.

APPENDIX (Further feedback/learnings)

Lessons Learned – Positive:

Stakeholder Engagement & Networking

- Strong collaboration between companies, Innovation Hubs, SG/NHS stakeholders, and the Minister fostered valuable relationships.
- Working with the Welsh Government in advance and during the week helped strengthen ties, leverage joint events for greater visibility, and added credibility.
- Networking among companies encouraged potential collaborations and peer learning.
- Opportunity to replicate the networking model in Scotland via the UNITE project, aligning with ILG ambitions.
- Advance pitching opportunities at the Tokyo reception, Expo Day, and trade show gave companies a platform to raise their profile in front of an audience of senior industry leaders in Japan.

- Meng Xue supporting the mission from SDI China worked well for logistical support, and there was a large contingent from China at Japan Health. The companies and Meng therefore had the chance to discuss wider opportunities within Asia, specifically around robotics.

Strategic Partnerships

- JETRO's involvement was pivotal, providing market briefings and facilitating meetings. Several companies have already followed up with JETRO.
- Presence of a senior Government official added weight to the delegation and attracted audiences. Direct engagement with the Cabinet Secretary was appreciated.
- Living Best: the team at Living Best delivered an excellent pre-event webinar to the delegation and we have a detailed and re-useable report on Japanese market opportunities.
- Globalscot involvement for briefings and panel discussions was also crucial to the success of the week. Rodney Kelly delivered a briefing to the delegation and chaired a panel session at Expo. Professor Sakata agreed to be a panellist at Expo.

Programme and Events

- Leveraging existing networks of companies and stakeholders helped shape a more authentic and effective programme.
- Expo setup worked well, providing each company with a screen and table, supporting visibility and engagement at the networking reception.
- Decorative elements like the Highland coos, Scottish flag, and branded pens were well received and helped attract attention.

Key Bray Leino improvements (see full Bray Leino report for details):

- Learnings from Consumer Industries Expo Day challenges were considered and invitations were in this instance issued by the SDI Japan team and tickets and joining instructions were sent out direct from DBT team. This was a smoother process which meant SDI had more control over timings and handling guest relationships.
- All tech worked well on the day and the quality of the translators was much improved.
- The tours of the exhibit area of the UK pavilion whilst the room was being turned around worked well and none of the audience was lost in the transition period.
- Bowl food and having gin alongside the whisky for the reception was well received.

Aspects to Improve for future events:

Meeting Programme

- Two of the companies used Intralink, a consultancy firm to set up one to one meetings whilst they were in Japan. Contracting an external agency to help with company specific meetings (small-scale contract) would have taken pressure from SDI Japan team to pull together a meeting programme on top of existing heavy workload of organizing other key activities and events.

Presentation, Translation & Communication

- Advance pitch feedback for companies would have improved presentation quality – pre-event coaching (e.g. from Global Scot supporters) could be a possible addition.

- Japanese transcription of presentations should be prepared ahead of time to support local engagement.
- Innovation profiling with stakeholders in advance of the week could have potentially boosted media coverage.
- The Living Best organised webinar which Scotland delivered to a Japan audience pre-trip had lower attendance than expected due to short turnaround time to advertise opportunity (3+ month window is ideal in Japan to gather an audience) - still, it was a worthwhile exercise for the stakeholders to prepare presentation material.
- Translation tasks were time-consuming so outsourcing to a Japanese agency would have eased the burden on the Tokyo team.
- Name badges were missing at key events, so spares should be prepared and distributed at the first gathering, especially for large delegations.

Event Experience

- Welcome dinner venue did not facilitate easy mingling; therefore, future venues should allow for more interaction between companies and wider delegation.
- Expo visibility for innovation hubs during the networking reception was limited, an additional table or screen would have helped.
- Expo attendee list used on the day was misplaced by Bray Leino. While digital contact detail records exist, a digital system for use on the day is essential for future events to ensure secure and accessible records to confirm on-the-day attendees.
- At the Japan Health trade show, company visibility on the stand was limited due to minimal signage, relying solely on logos, so more engaging and creative display methods should be considered to better showcase each business. Future events would benefit from having at least two people managing the Scotland stand to handle emergencies and assist exhibitors more effectively.
- Events team support would have helped ease the burden of the project team to manage the contract and stand design with the event organisers.
- Lower than expected attendance at the trade show (partly due to competition with Expo) led to neutral feedback from companies. While it offered profile-raising opportunities, it may not be a priority event to revisit in 2026, especially if other clashing events draw audience away from site.

Bray Leino further improvements (see full Bray Leino evaluation for more detail)

- Some tickets ended up in spam folders of recipients. If an SDI team member was copied in this could be resolved.
- Similar to above, more translation required for holding slides and signage rather than everything being in English. An external resource to be taken on to ease the burden of staff.
- Poser tables in the centre of the room would have given guests a place to rest glasses and bowls of food and provided areas for discussion.