

## **Two New Partners in Charge of Venture Investment Appointed**

### **Accelerate realization of JAFCO's mission**

### **“Commit to new business creation and jointly shape the future”**

JAFCO Group Co., Ltd. (Headquarters: Minato-ku, Tokyo, President & CEO: Keisuke Miyoshi, hereinafter “JAFCO”) is pleased to announce the appointment of two new partners, Yutaro Saka and Mizuki Takahara, responsible for venture investment.

JAFCO has introduced the partnership model since 2018, whereby the partners take the responsibility for fund operations to better demonstrate individual commitment to realizing JAFCO's mission of “Commit to new business creation and jointly shape the future.” During the past four years, JAFCO has continued to pursue highly selective, intensive investment under the partnership model, while taking various measures to reproduce success by leveraging its organizational strength.

Yutaro Saka has been a member of the business development division since 2018. He has built mechanisms for providing sales and administrative support for startups, expanding JAFCO's network of large companies and leveraging such network, based on his experience working closely with entrepreneurs at the investment division. Mizuki Takahara has consistently focused on investment activities in regions other than Tokyo and actively participates in the development of local ecosystems in an effort to create world-class startups from regional areas.

### **New Partner Yutaro Saka**



#### < Career >

Joined JAFCO in 2012. Main investments include Money Forward, Chartwork, and WACUL. Ranked No.2 in 2017 and No.9 in 2021 on the Forbes Japan's Midas List of most influential venture capital investors in Japan.

Other than investment operations, he has experience serving as CFO of a portfolio company and, as a member of the business development team, he has built the respective foundation of the current sales/marketing, HR, and back-office support operations.

#### < Comment >

I don't want to find the right answers for today, but to create the right answers for the future with entrepreneurs. Creating common sense for a future that no one has yet imagined is a difficult and lonely battle. That is why I want to be the one to turn to, to carve out the future with entrepreneurs as their first supporter.

## **New Partner Mizuki Takahara**



### < Career >

Joined JAFCO in 2010 after graduating from Doshisha University, Faculty of Law. After working at the Chubu Branch (currently West Japan Branch), he was appointed Manager of the Kansai Branch in March 2018. Main investments include Uniform Next and Wonder Planet. He has consistently focused on start-up investment and growth support for companies in regions other than Tokyo. In addition to IPO/M&A exits, he has experience in fundraising operations and plays an active role in extensive activities supporting entrepreneurs in various regions, including the Japan Startup Support Association and Osaka Innovation Hub Seed Acceleration Program.

### < Comment >

I am convinced that entrepreneurs who take on the challenge of solving major social issues come from all over the country, regardless of region. As the closest partner sharing common aspirations with entrepreneurs unique to each region, I am committed to making a significant contribution.

## **New Partner Structure**

The environment surrounding startups is changing rapidly at an unprecedented speed. JAFCO will continue to evolve to open up a new era together with entrepreneurs. We look forward to your continued support for powered-up JAFCO with the new partners.



(From left: Kitazawa, Isaka, Miyoshi, Saka, Takahara, Fujii)

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