



PRESS RELEASE

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KERING HELD THE FIRST KERING GENERATION AWARD X JAPAN CEREMONY

THE FIRST PRIZE WAS AWARDED TO FERMENTATION



Raffaella Cornaggia (CEO, Kering Beauté), Francois-Henri Pinault (Chairman and CEO, Kering), Masashi Shimizu (CEO, Micro Bio Factory), Lina Sakai (CEO and Founder, Fermentation Co, Ltd.), Kotaro Oda (Team Leader, Algal Bio), Jun Kamei (CEO and Founder, amphico), Marie-Claire Daveu (Chief Sustainability and Institutional Affairs Officer, Kering), Thierry Marty (North and Southeast Asia Pacific President, Kering), Tak Umezawa (Chairperson, CIC Japan)

Tokyo, March, 2025 – Kering held the First "Kering Generation Award X Japan" ceremony on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at TOKYO NODE HALL in Tokyo.

The first prize was awarded to Fermentation Co., Ltd., a Japanese venture company, while AMPHIBIO LTD (Trading as AMPHICO) came second, and Algal Bio Co., Ltd. received the third prize. Micro Bio Factory Co., Ltd. was awarded a "special prize".

During the ceremony, François-Henri Pinault, Chairman and CEO of Kering, and Kazuhide Sekiyama, Representative Executive Officer and President of Spiber Inc, leading Japanese bio-startup, took the stage for a special dialogue.

The top three awardees will receive training and networking opportunities at Kering's and its Houses' headquarters across Europe and the opportunity to exhibit at Global Innovation Summit "Change NOW" in Paris in April 2025. Additionally, the top winner will receive a prize of 10 million yen. Micro Bio Factory, which received the special award, will take part in the European training.

The trophies, made by the winner of the third Kering Generation Award in China, Yi Design, were presented to the winners by François-Henri Pinault, Chairman and CEO of Kering, Marie-Claire Daveu, Kering's Chief Sustainability and Institutional Affairs Officer, Raffaella Cornaggia, CEO of Kering Beauté, and Thierry Marty, President of Kering North & Southeast Asia Pacific.

K E R I N G



François-Henri Pinault, Chairman and CEO of Kering, shared a comment during the ceremony: *"It was a natural choice to host this award in Japan, a country that is a crucial hub for our business and has a deep understanding of innovation and craftsmanship. We strongly believe that innovation is essential as luxury transitions to a more sustainable model, and through the Kering Generation Award, we aim to promote ideas and solutions that contribute to a new paradigm in the fashion industry."*

Lina Sakai, CEO and Founder of Fermentation Co., Ltd., which won the top prize at the first "Kering Generation Award X Japan," said: *"I am filled with a deep sense of pride. I am proud of this team. For 16 years, they have truly given their best. I am very pleased to be given this opportunity by Kering, a company leading the world with its cutting-edge sustainability programs. Despite the headwinds against sustainability, we hope to contribute to the field of sustainable beauty. Thank you very much."*

Marie-Claire Daveu, Chief Sustainability and Institutional Affairs Officer at Kering, who also served as one of the jury members, commented on Japanese startups: *"I am very proud of the first Japanese edition of our Kering Generation Award which aims to identify and celebrate sustainable innovations. I believe that the coexistence of new technology and Japanese craftsmanship within the same organization is a very unique aspect. Japan has a sophisticated market, and the standard of quality is the highest in the world, which is also a characteristic of Japanese startups."*

Discussing "Crafting Tomorrow's Luxury" with François-Henri Pinault, Chairman and CEO of Kering, Kazuhide Sekiyama, Representative Executive Officer and President of Spiber Inc. stated: *"When running a business, many unexpected crises arise, but I believe there are just as many unexpected opportunities. Even when Spiber was going through tough times, we had the chance to collaborate with Kering, seized it, and managed to overcome and grow significantly. If you have the belief that you are truly facing sustainability for the sake of the world, I hope you will believe in yourself and keep striving."*

After the award ceremony, an exhibition showcasing the innovative technologies of the 11 finalists and the sustainability initiatives of Kering's Houses opened.

Highlights for Selection for the Top Three Companies and Special Award Winners

-Fermentation Co., Ltd. A research and development startup company that uses fermentation technology to produce natural aromatic essences from unused resources such as food waste, aiming to realize a circular society and effective resource utilization. The company was highly rated for its ability to create plant-derived functional ingredients without burdening the earth with new resource extraction and its potential for business expansion through licensing the production process without geographical restrictions.

-amphico was awarded second prize for its peculiar technology that achieves functional breathable waterproof textiles without PFAS, in response to PFAS regulations in the US and Europe. The concept of expressing over 1,000 colors using six threads and a unique dyeing algorithm attracted attention for its potential to reduce the environmental impact of industrial textile dyeing.

-Algal Bio Co., Ltd. Algal Bio, which was awarded third prize, is a bio-venture that has been researching algae, a marine resource of Japan, for over 20 years. Algae, which excels in CO2 fixation per unit area, contains functional ingredients and natural pigments useful for anti-aging, UV absorption, and moisturizing, and is expected to be utilized not only in healthcare but also in beauty and fashion.

-Micro Bio Factory is a startup aiming to decarbonize chemical manufacturing by utilizing biomass-derived raw materials for sustainable chemical production.

A special award was established for Micro Bio Factory, which showed remarkable progress through the selection process. The company was evaluated for its innovative approach to addressing environmental and social issues in the denim industry, a representative material of Japan, using bio-indigo technology.



Initiatives of Houses

GUCCI

Innovative sneakers [GUCCI cub3d] combining 3D printing technology and Gucci's independently developed sustainable material "Demetra." Collection from 2024.

BALENCIAGA

A coat made from LUNAFORM™, the first sustainable biomaterial that does not use plastic or animal-derived ingredients. Microorganisms create ultra-crystalline patterns in a nutrient-rich environment, and natural ingredients are added to form a special 3D material. The material itself is not made of microorganisms but is a byproduct of their activity. The entire process is vegan and non-GMO. 2024 Summer collection.

BOUCHERON

The iconic "Jack de Boucheron" collection adopts recycled material Cofalit®. Cofalit® is industrial waste considered to have no further utility. Through research and trial and error, the value of the material was redefined and sublimated into precious jewelry. Announced in 2022.

Under the concept of "NO PACK IS THE NEW PACK," a jewelry case made only from two recyclable natural materials, aluminum and wool felt. Optimizing every step of the lifecycle, from material selection to post-use recycling.

Jury Members

Amelia Juhl	Country Director, Conservation International Japan
Kathy Matsui	General Partner, MPower Partners Fund L.P.
Daijiro Mizuno	Professor at Kyoto Institute of Technology, Specially Appointed Professor at Keio University Graduate School, Design Researcher
Satoshi Yamazaki	CEO, Satis Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.
Takao Watanabe	President, Goldwin Inc.
Francois-Henri Pinault	Chairman and CEO, Kering
Marie-Claire Daveu	Chief Sustainability and Institutional Affairs Officer, Kering
Raffaella Cornaggia	CEO, Kering Beauté
Thierry Marty	North and Southeast Asia Pacific President, Kering

Advisory Board Members

Tomomi Ishida (Capitalist/Impact Officer, Environmental Energy Investment), Hiroyoshi Iwata (Doctoral Program in Technology Management Strategy, Future Vision Research Center, Research Assistant Tokyo University), Akihiro Omatsuzawa (Technical Group Leader, Japan Chemical Fibers Association), Kanako Kajihara (President, KAJIHARA DESIGN STUDIO Inc.), Arisa Kamada (Co-Representative Director, unisteps), Yoshio Nakamura (Reporter, Senken Shimbun), Takashi Hasegawa (Director, International Commerce Publishing Co., Ltd., Editor in Chief of International Commerce), Chiaki Hayashi (President, Q0 Inc.), Kenji Higashi (Executive Officer and European Branch Representative, Spiber Inc.), Yasushi Hibi (Head of Sustainability, Nozomi Energy K.K), Chizuru Muko (Sustainability Director, WWDJAPAN), Takako Yano (Editor in Chief of BeautyTech.jp, istyle Inc.), Tak Umezawa (Japan Chairman, Kearney / Chairperson, CIC Japan), Angie Yu (Kering Greater China, Venture Manager)

Eleven Finalists for the 1st Kering Generation Award X Japan

Algal Bio Co., Ltd, AMPHIBIO LTD (Trading as AMPHICO), Synflux Co., Ltd., FiberCraze Corporation, Fermenstation Co., Ltd. ,MICRO BIO FACTORY CO. LTD. ,ARCHIVESTOCK Inc. , Comvey, Inc., STANDING OVATION.inc, Spacewasp Co., Ltd., MANGATA Co., Ltd.

K E R I N G



Kering's Sustainability Strategy:

Sustainability was placed at the core of Kering's strategy over almost 15 years ago, committing to a longer-term, all-round, and authentic sustainability from environment and ecology perspectives. Kering's Sustainability Strategy incorporates the Group's Houses and is underpinned by a series of milestone targets across three key pillars: Care, Collaborate and Create.

Six years into the Group's "Crafting Tomorrow's Luxury" strategy, Kering published its "2020-2023 Sustainability Progress Report" in March 2023, showcasing key achievements including reduction of its total environmental impacts by 40% in 2021, 4 years ahead of agenda. The Group announced in the meantime a new commitment to reduce its absolute greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2035, on a 2021 baseline. This new target covering scopes 1, 2 and 3 of the greenhouse gas protocol.

About Kering Generation Award

Designed as one of the key initiatives for innovation under Kering's 2025 Sustainability Strategy, the Kering Generation Award was launched in China in 2018 and has since been aiming to drive industry-wide transformation by recognizing and supporting startups that bring about positive environmental and social impact while addressing challenges in alternative raw materials, green supply chain, retail & use and the circular economy. The program has already been held four times in China – last year, the Group debuted its Saudi and Japanese editions. Additionally, a "Kering Generation Award X Jewelry" was launched with the cooperation of the Polytechnic University of Milan, expanding Kering's support program to the jewelry sector.

About Kering

A global Luxury group, Kering manages the development of a series of renowned Houses in Fashion, Leather Goods and Jewelry: Gucci, Saint Laurent, Bottega Veneta, Balenciaga, Alexander McQueen, Brioni, Boucheron, Pomellato, DoDo, Qeelin, Ginori 1735 as well as Kering Eyewear and Kering Beauté. By placing creativity at the heart of its strategy, Kering enables its Houses to set new limits in terms of their creative expression while crafting tomorrow's Luxury in a sustainable and responsible way. We capture these beliefs in our signature: "Empowering Imagination". In 2024, Kering had over 47,000 employees and revenue of €17.2 billion.

About CIC Institute

CIC Institute leverages its expertise in building innovation ecosystems and supporting startups, particularly in the deep tech sector, to collaborate with government bodies, local municipalities, universities, and others. Our team focuses on supporting the growth of startups capable of global success and facilitating ecosystem development. Currently, CIC Institute is engaged in various projects with government agencies and universities, contributing to economic development through ecosystem advancement and innovation. Moving forward, we will continue to execute more projects in response to the increasing demand from government agencies and private enterprises, closely coordinating with CIC, including CIC Tokyo, to promote innovation and foster collaboration.

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