

Hakuhodo and Pangaea Ventures sign comprehensive partnership agreement to ramp up open innovation in the hard tech space

Pangaea Partner Andrew Haughian to speak at the Global Deep Tech VC Seminar on Feb. 12

Tokyo—January 21, 2026—Hakuhodo Inc., a leading integrated marketing and innovation company headquartered in Tokyo, is pleased to announce the conclusion of a comprehensive partnership agreement with Pangaea Ventures Ltd., a pioneering hard tech venture capital firm with offices in Phoenix, USA, Tokyo, Japan, and Vancouver, Canada. The agreement, signed in December 2025, relates to fostering collaboration between Japanese companies and overseas startups, generating innovations, and developing human resources.

Under the agreement, the two companies will team up on creating new value in the Japanese market by combining Pangaea's international startup network and venture capital expertise with the Hakuhodo Group's creative and marketing prowess and network of Japanese companies.

Background to the agreement

Hard tech comprises innovations in advanced materials, chemistry, biology, and other physical technologies designed to provide solutions to global challenges such as decarbonization, resource constraints, and the need to build resilient supply chains. The field is increasingly in the spotlight, but it is highly specialized, and there are considerable challenges to assessing and commercializing the technologies involved. It is therefore critical for Japanese companies to establish contact points in order to gain access to promising global startups and implement collaborations.

Pangaea is a venture capital firm focused on investing in planetary health solutions leveraging materials science, chemistry, and biology. It has been investing in hard tech for twenty-five years. Hakuhodo possesses creative and marketing expertise rooted in its *Sei-katsu-sha* Insight philosophy and enjoys access to an extensive network of Japanese companies. Under the agreement, the two companies will accelerate efforts to foster collaboration between Japanese and international startups and Japanese corporations.

Main areas of cooperation under the agreement

1. Planning and implementation of joint seminars and events for Japanese companies and startups
2. Business matchmaking between overseas startups, including Pangaea investments, and Hakuhodo Group clients
3. Joint research on Japanese market trends and innovations and dissemination of the findings
4. Studying ways to work with overseas startups seeking to enter the Japanese market (market research, localization, developing a marketing strategy, etc.)
5. Developing human resources by sharing expertise, implementing talent exchange programs, and holding seminars
6. Public relations activities related to the above

Further, as one initiative under the agreement, Pangaea Partner Andrew Haughian will speak at the Second Global Deep Tech VC Seminar on February 12, 2026, part of a seminar series jointly organized by Hakuhodo's MIRAI Design Unit and Corundum Systems Biology Inc. Mr. Haughian will explain the logic behind investment and partnership decisions in the hard tech field.

Media contacts for this news release:

Corporate Public Relations Division, Hakuhodo Inc. koho.mail@hakuhodo.co.jp
Pangaea Ventures Ltd. sayuri@pangaeaventures.com

About the Global Deep Tech VC Seminar series

Global Deep Tech VC Seminar is a series of webinars designed to help Japanese companies navigate the global innovation ecosystem. It draws on the strengths of each partner: the firsthand information and startup support network that only an international venture capital firm has at its fingertips, and Hakuhodo's access to an extensive range of Japanese companies.

Overview of the second seminar in the series

Title: Second Global Deep Tech VC Seminar Episode 2: How We Select the Top 1% of Deep Tech Startups (Out of 1,200 We Review Each Year)

Organizers: Hakuhodo's MIRAI Design Unit and Corundum Systems Biology

Featured speakers: Pangaea Ventures Ltd. Partner Andrew Haughian and others

Date and time: 8:00–9:30 a.m., Thursday, February 12, 2026 (Japan Standard Time)

Format: Streamed live online, with a highlights video archived for later viewing

Participation is free, but please sign up in advance.

Deadline to sign up: 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 10

Where to sign up: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Fd5bci0hSdWXoLvGuAaUrw

PLEASE NOTE:

- Depending on your security settings or system configuration, you may be unable to view the seminar.
- The seminar program is subject to change without notice.

Main topics to be covered by the Second Global Deep Tech VC Seminar

The Second Global Deep Tech VC Seminar draws on the expertise that Pangaea has developed over twenty-five years investing in hard tech. It is slated to cover the following topics:

- How does the hard tech renaissance of today (2025 and beyond) differ in market structure from the clean tech cycle of the mid-2000s?
- Why did startups with great technology fail to scale successfully in the past? What has—and hasn't—changed today?
- Decision-making pitfalls to which Japanese companies are prone (e.g., evaluation design, PoC design, roadmapping, etc.) and how to avoid them
- Pangaea's logic for selecting investments: framework for evaluating multidisciplinary fields (materials/bio/semiconductors, etc.) and how, specifically, investment decisions are made
- The true worth of a strategic partnership with a venture capital firm: It is not only a matter of what the company gets (information); it is about transferring the how (decision-making logic).

About Pangaea Ventures Ltd.

Pangaea is a venture capital firm focused on planetary health solutions leveraging materials science, chemistry, and biology. Founded in 2000, it is a recognized leader in hard tech and publishes its own exclusive report on the field, *The Hard Tech Report*. Pangaea has offices in Phoenix, USA, Tokyo, Japan, and Vancouver, Canada.

Hakuhodo and Pangaea first connected in May of last year at TECHNIUM Global Conference 2025, a deep-tech business matching event co-sponsored by Hakuhodo. With the support of fellow co-sponsor Corundum Corp., Corundum Systems Biology invited Pangaea, intermediating a dialogue between the two companies at the event.

■ About Hakuhodo

Founded in 1895, Hakuhodo is an integrated marketing solutions company headquartered in Tokyo, Japan. With offices in 20 countries and regions, and over 10,000 specialists working in Japan and around the world, the company is the core agency of Hakuhodo DY Holdings, one of the world's top 10 largest agency companies according to *Ad Age's* "Agency Report 2025."

Sei-katsu-sha insight is the foundation for Hakuhodo's thinking, planning, and brand building. It reminds us that consumers are more than shoppers performing an economic function. They have heartbeats. They are individuals with distinct lifestyles. Hakuhodo introduced this term in the 1980s to emphasize its commitment to a comprehensive, 360-degree perspective on consumers' lives.

With *sei-katsu-sha* insight as its cornerstone, Hakuhodo combines creativity, integrative capabilities, and data and technology to play a leading role in evolving companies' marketing activities and generating innovation for the completely digitalized era. This enables the company to impact and provide value to *sei-katsu-sha* and society.

Renowned for its creativity, Hakuhodo has won the Grand Prix at Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity twice, and was named Network of the Year at ADFEST 2021.

To learn more, visit: www.hakuhodo-global.com

Media contact for the Second Global Deep Tech VC Seminar:

Open Incubation Division, MIRAI Design Unit, Hakuhodo Inc.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdTZtoNUBXji78kD_-9WZjHmc8Bi2B5sSA60NNrJzdWyDf4xA/viewform