

# Original and Saffron announce brand consultancy partnership in Japan

Original and Saffron will elevate Japanese brands to compete globally through strategy, creativity and experience.

**London / Madrid – 18 January 2023:** Independent global brand consultancy Saffron and Japanese content and consulting company Original Inc. have announced an exclusive partnership agreement to offer brand consultancy services in Japan to begin in March 2023.

The partnership will combine Saffron's global expertise in brand experience, innovation strategy, and design with Original's pioneering approach to tourism and urban planning. Together, the two consultancies share the ambition to empower Japanese public institutions, foundations and companies to position themselves as competitive global brands.

**Hiroyuki Fushitani, President of Original** said: "In Japan, people realise that branding is not just about logo design, but when it comes to branding that communicates globally, there may not yet be enough knowledge and know-how. Original has long stressed the importance of a narrative that communicates to the world. By partnering with Saffron, we are confident that we can help our clients create holistic brand experiences."

**Jacob Benbunan, CEO and co-founder of Saffron** commented: "Since working with Kyocera Document Solutions and Fujitsu Group, we have been fascinated by Japan's dedication to design and innovation. At the same time, we have observed that many Japanese brands lack compelling narratives that speak to the global audience. We are delighted to find the right partner to open a door of opportunity together with the country we so admire and respect. By utilising our 20+ years of experience with clients across sectors, we will connect Japanese clients to the wider world through strategically relevant, authentic, and differentiated brand experiences."

As part of the partnership, Saffron will locate **Mao Kawakami**, a Strategist and Region Representative in Tokyo as the key contact for clients in Japan. Kawakami is an English-Japanese bilingual with a diverse career in marketing, consultancy, sales, and government policy. Prior to working at Saffron, she worked at the British Embassy of Tokyo, Original Inc., and Kao Corporation. With Kawakami's constant presence in Tokyo, Saffron will work closely with Original to enhance client relationships in the region.

Original and Saffron will also serve as a hub of knowledge and solutions on branding through virtual and physical seminars and workshops. A conversation between the executives on the significance of branding in Japan is expected to be published in the coming weeks. There will also be an inaugural event in Tokyo where they will present the opportunities of the partnership (scheduled for February 2023). Details will be announced at a later date.

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### **About Original Inc.**

Founded in 2009, Original is a content and consulting company whose unique combination of local insight and global mindset stems from their operation of Time Out Tokyo. Time Out is a trusted city guide with origins in London and a global outreach of over 240 million monthly users. By leveraging their editorial experience and user insight, Original has expanded their services beyond media into market research, analysis, and strategy consultation. Key clients include Japan Tourism Agency, Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau, Mitsubishi Estate, and Tokyu Corporation.

### **About Saffron Brand Consultants**

An independent brand consultancy founded in 2001, Saffron creates brands that deliver on its promises and add value to those it serves. Saffron has worked with global companies and institutions across sectors including government, banking, retail, luxury, telecoms and nonprofits. Key clients include Kyocera, the Valuable 500, Meta (ex-Facebook), YouTube, Sodexo, Gulf Air, Siemens, Akzo Nobel, Visit London, and the City of Vienna. Committed to being natively global, today Saffron is made up of 100 professionals representing 25 nationalities, and speaking 15+ languages, all working as one team across London, Madrid, Vienna and Istanbul offices.