KING SKYFRONT
Kawasaki INnovation Gateway at SKYFRONT
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Nurturing the Seeds of Future Business— A Challenge to Create New Value —



For many years, Mr. Michihiro Kaai spearheaded the development of acrylic polymers—a core technology for the company—at its Nagoya Research Center. Throughout his career, he has successfully commercialized the technologies he developed firsthand, transforming them into viable businesses. In January 2026, he was appointed Director of the Kawasaki Frontience R&D Center, having played a pivotal role in the facility's establishment from its earliest planning stages.
At the new center, Mr. Kaai is focused on advancing the development of innovative materials with a long-term perspective, fostering collaborative innovation with academic institutions and industry partners across the Kanto region, and cultivating the next generation of researchers with a global outlook. We spoke with Mr. Kaai about the strategic role of the new R&D Center and his vision for its future.

From Acrylic Polymer Research to Building Core Businesses

Mr. Kaai's career has its roots in polymer chemistry, which he studied at Nagoya University. Since joining TOAGOSEI CO., LTD. in 1986, he has devoted his career to the development of acrylic polymer products. In 1993, he attended McMaster University in Canada, where he acquired expertise in specialized polymerization techniques. Upon returning to Japan, he spearheaded the introduction of this technology and successfully commercialized a range of acrylic polymer products marketed under TOAGOSEI 's ARUFON ※1trademark.“Seeing a technology I developed become a commercial product and make a meaningful contribution to society is, above all, the greatest reward of being an engineer,” he reflects.
Subsequently, while serving as Director of the Nagoya Criatio R＆D Center, Mr. Kaai concurrently led the preparatory office for the establishment of the Kawasaki Frontience R&D Center, closely overseeing the facility's spatial design and interior planning. In January 2026, he was appointed Director of the Kawasaki Frontience R&D Center.

※1 ARUFON・・・The brand name for TOAGOSEI's acrylic polymer products obtained through its Uniform Functional Oligomer (UFO) technology.

A Research and Development Center Focused on the Future

While the Nagoya R&D Center focuses on improving existing businesses and technologies, the Kawasaki R&D Center pursues new research themes with a medium to long-term perspective, including medical materials, next-generation battery materials, and cellulose nanofibers.※2“Researchers at the Nagoya laboratory are expected to deliver results in the short term, whereas the Kawasaki laboratory provides an environment where we can dedicate ourselves to research with a long-term vision,” says Mr. Kaai.
The center also offers an environment conducive to research, featuring an open-plan office with a free-address seating arrangement. Furthermore, the center's location makes it easier for researchers to attend exhibitions and technical seminars held in the greater Tokyo area, providing more opportunities to gather information on the latest technological developments.

※2 Cellulose nanofibers・・・A lightweight, high-strength biomass material made by nanofibrillating plant-derived cellulose.

Fostering New Research Themes Across Organizational Boundaries

In addition to conducting medium- to long-term R&D, the center plays a key role in creating new research themes through collaboration with external partners. In addition to the new materials R&D team, the center brings together a team that identifies customer challenges and proposes research themes, as well as the Medical Business Division. This integrated structure makes it easier to connect the company's technologies with market needs.The decision to establish the center in King SkyFront was driven in part by a desire to strengthen ties with companies, universities, and research institutions. Since its establishment, the center has engaged in ongoing exchanges with neighboring companies, universities, and research institutions. As these interactions deepen mutual understanding of each other's technologies, new research opportunities are beginning to emerge.
Mr. Kaai emphasizes that the goal is not simply to foster interaction, but to build relationships that lead to tangible outcomes in R&D and business. By leveraging the local network to encourage deeper technical dialogue, the center aims to explore new possibilities and create opportunities for future innovation.

Believing in young talent, building businesses for a global future

In his management approach, Mr. Kaai emphasizes researchers' personal fulfillment and a clear goal. Instead of waiting for instructions, we value proactive ideas like "This is what I want to do." Once the direction is set, we leave the rest to creative freedom.

We nurture eyes that see the full picture—from costs and manufacturing to market needs—as we work toward the ultimate goal of commercialization. Another key expectation for our young researchers is to take on global challenges.

“Our competitors are not just at home; they are all over the world. I want the younger generation to break free from an inward-looking mindset and discover the excitement of exploring the latest technologies and engaging with researchers from around the world,” he says. Drawing on his own experience studying in Canada, he is also actively driving the research and adoption of international technologies. "We would like to bring our current key projects to market and continuously start new ones for future needs, expanding the core trunk of our business," says Mr. Kaai enthusiastically. From the Kawasaki Frontience R&D Center, the challenge to create next-generation technologies and businesses continues.


Mr.Kaai with the young employees who will shape the future of TOAGOSEI

About TOAGOSEI CO., LTD. ▶

NEWS

Metagen Therapeutics Launches a Joint Clinical Trial in Japan and the U.S.

Metagen Therapeutics, Inc. was featured in Nikkei BioTech on September 4, 2026. The company has launched a joint Phase 1b/2a clinical trial in Japan and the U.S. of MGT-006, its oral fecal microbiota transplantation (FMT) drug candidate, for patients with ulcerative colitis. The first patient in Japan received a dose in August 2026.
The article also covers the company's clinical trial strategy in Japan and the U.S., its plans for future expansion into the U.S., and its efforts to secure an out-licensing deal.

URL of the article published in Nikkei Biotechnology & Business :
https://bio.nikkeibp.co.jp/atcl/news/p1/26/09/03/14991/

Metagen Therapeutics, Inc. website

NEWS

TEKMOF's MOF Technology Contributes to Structural Analysis in the Red Yeast Rice Issue

TEKMOF Co., Ltd. was featured in Nikkei BioTech on September 8, 2026, for its technical support for research related to the red yeast rice incident. Commissioned by a research team including the National Institute of Health Sciences, TEKMOF used its MOF-based crystalline sponge method to analyze Compounds Y and Z, whose structures had been difficult to determine using conventional methods. TEKMOF's technology helped reveal the compounds' three-dimensional structures.

URL of the article published in Nikkei Biotechnology & Business :
https://bio.nikkeibp.co.jp/atcl/column/16/020100064/090400040/?n_cid=nbpnbt_twed

TEKMOF Co., Ltd. website

TONOBITO

"TONOBITO" is a feature series that introduces the personalities and everyday lives of the people working at KING SKYFRONT, offering a chance to get to know them and fostering opportunities for connection.



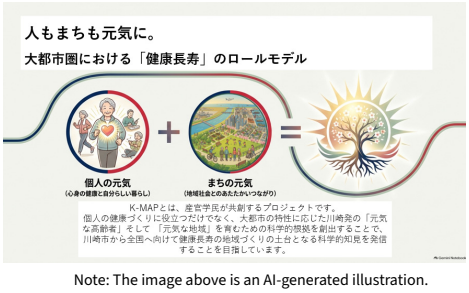
The HOTEL Well-hub Haneda
Mizuki Ishihara

For more details

We spoke with Ms. Mizuki Ishihara, who handles guest relations and sales promotion at The HOTEL Well-hub Haneda (formerly Kawasaki King SkyFront Tokyu REI Hotel).
Following the hotel's rebranding this July, the number of external partners has grown. Ms. Ishihara is helping lay the foundation for the new hotel by serving as a bridge between hotel staff and partners, connecting them through information and ideas. Starting from scratch brought some uncertainty, but she says her greatest reward is the moments when everyone shares their thoughts on the ground and comes together as a team.
Her goal is to make the hotel "a place anyone can feel comfortable visiting." Although the way the hotel operates has changed, she remains committed to helping local residents enjoy memorable experiences.
As a student, Ms. Ishihara devoted herself to volleyball. The persistence she developed through demanding practices now helps her take tough feedback on promotional materials in stride and come back with a revised proposal. At the end of the day, she looks forward to a beer; on days off, she enjoys drinks at home while watching movies or anime.
With her trademark perseverance, Ms. Ishihara continues to set up the next play for the hotel's future.

The "Kawasaki Mirai Active Project (K-MAP)" Has Launched—Jointly Organized by Keio University Tonomachi Town Campus and Kawasaki City

Keio University Tonomachi Town Campus, in collaboration with Kawasaki City, has launched a large-scale joint research project titled the "Kawasaki Mirai Active Project (K-MAP)," featuring approximately 1,000 independent residents aged 75 to 79.This project will comprehensively and integrally analyze various aspects of daily life, including physical activity and dietary habits, community engagement, genetic and biomarker data, as well as medical and long-term care insurance claims (receipt) data.
The goal is to scientifically elucidate the factors that allow individuals to maintain their health over time, while developing a unique "Vitality Index" (Genki Indicator) designed to visualize and enhance individual physical/mental/social well-being and life satisfaction. Through this work, we seek to generate practical insights that foster "vibrant communities." We are currently focusing on launching a prospective cohort study involving approximately 1,000 participants.
By integrating rich insights gained from previous centenarian (100+ years old) and Kawasaki elderly (85–89 years old) research studies, this project will bring together industry, government, academia, and local citizens to advance sustainable social systems and foster new services and products that contribute to preventive medicine and public policy. Together, we aim to build a solid foundation that ensures both residents and the local community remain vibrant for years to come.



Note: The image above is an AI-generated illustration.



Scenes from the Public Lecture



Professor Yuko Oguma,
Sports Medicine Research Center / Graduate School of Health Management, Keio University

At the Kickoff Kawasaki City Public Lecture, held on June 29, 2026



September Survey: Pre-Survey Staff Meeting
(at the Survey Venue, Kawasaki City Industry Promotion Hall)

K-MAP
川崎みらいアクティブ・プロジェクト

This magazine shares a variety of information about KING SKYFRONT-affiliated institutions. Please send us your feedback via the QR code survey.
Additionally, please send inquiries regarding news publication requests to the email address below.

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