

【NEWS RELEASE】

August 3, 2026

Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, Inc.
Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation

Investment by GoAhead Fund III through GoAhead Pitch

Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, Inc. (President & Group CEO: Toru Nakashima) and its wholly owned subsidiary Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (President & CEO: Akihiro Fukutome; "SMBC") have jointly established the video pitch platform "GoAhead Pitch" (the "Platform") with GoAhead Ventures LLC, a Silicon Valley-based venture capital firm led by Managing Partner Takeshi Mori. The Platform is designed to provide startups based in Japan with pitching opportunities regardless of geography or network barriers.

We hereby announce that GoAhead Ventures III, L.P., a Delaware limited partnership ("GoAhead Fund III"), has made an investment in AOI Biosciences Inc. through the Platform.

Overview of the Investee Company

Investee Company	AOI Biosciences Inc.
Headquarters	Saito Bio-Innovation 7-7-20 Saito-asagi, Ibaraki-shi, Osaka, Japan
Representative	Shinichi Sueta
Established	2019
Business Description	Offers the "β2GPI Neoself Antibody Test," based on the Neoself theory concerning abnormal self-antigens believed to underlie autoimmune diseases, and supports the development of drugs and diagnostics aimed at fundamentally treating autoimmune diseases.

The Platform was launched in February 2026, and this is the first investment made through the Platform.

SMBC will continue to expand growth opportunities for startups through the Platform and contribute to the development of Japan's startup ecosystem.

Overview of GoAhead Ventures LLC

Year Established	2005
Headquarters	487 Bryant St, San Francisco, California 94107, USA
Representative	Takeshi Mori
Business Description	Operates investment funds focused on seed and early-stage startups in the United States
Website	goaheadvc.com

Overview of the Video Pitch Platform

Platform Name	GoAhead Pitch
Manager	GoAhead Ventures LLC
Launch Date	February 6, 2026
Eligibility Criteria	Seed and early-stage startups based in Japan
Investment Fund	GoAhead Ventures III, L.P., a Delaware limited partnership
Application Website	https://smbc.hiringplatform.com/282872-video-pitch-application/1083519-video-pitch/en

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