UTA CAFÉ | EU-JAPAN WEBINAR SERIES | SESSION 1

Smart cities in action: from urban heat to human connection

Wednesday, July 22, 2026 09:00–10:30 CEST · 16:00–17:30 JST Online — Urban Technology Alliance

09:00–09:05
16:00–16:05 JST

Welcome and opening remarks

Dr. Levent Gürgen — President, Urban Technology Alliance & CEO, Kentyou

Welcome to participants and introduction to the UTA Café series, with a brief introduction to the Urban Technology Alliance (UTA).

09:05–09:15
16:05–16:15 JST

The UTA ecosystem: from innovation to deployment

Dr. Rodger Lea — Technical Director, Urban Technology Alliance

UTA's vision, mission and international ecosystem, highlighting the importance of collaboration between cities, academia and industry in addressing urban challenges.

09:15–09:25
16:15–16:25 JST

Urban heat islands (UHI): an emerging challenge in Grenoble

Laurent Deslattes — Smart City Project Manager, Grenoble Alpes Métropole

An emerging global environmental challenge: urban heat islands, and why it became a priority for Grenoble.

09:25–09:35
16:25–16:35 JST

UTA solution to the UHI challenge: digital twin for evidence-based decision making

Dr. Levent Gürgen — President, Urban Technology Alliance & CEO, Kentyou

UTA members' jointly built solution for the Grenoble challenge: a digital twin for the measurement, analysis, understanding, monitoring and visualisation of the impact of urban planning and construction projects on the urban heat island phenomenon.

09:35–09:45
16:35–16:45 JST

Satellite imagery and Earth observation for climate challenges

Mr. Gaetano Volpe — CEO, Latitudo 40

How Earth observation and satellite imagery can support urban climate analysis, environmental monitoring and urban heat island assessment, providing cities with valuable data for climate adaptation and urban planning.

09:45–10:00
16:45–17:00 JST

Smart cities for serendipitous social connections

Dr. Takuro Yonezawa — Associate Professor, Nagoya University

Smart cities should not only improve efficiency and convenience but also create opportunities for unexpected and meaningful social connections. This talk introduces our research on using urban AI technologies to connect people with places, activities, and communities that they may not otherwise encounter. Through these serendipitous connections, we aim to address social isolation and support more inclusive and human-centered cities.

10:00–10:15
17:00–17:15 JST

Data-driven urban mobility

Dr. Masahiro Mochizuki — Principal Researcher, Institute for Social Systems Research

Understanding how people and traffic move is difficult in cities without dense observation networks. JRISS studies low-cost ways to measure urban mobility — Wi-Fi packet sensors, CCTV, and vehicle probes — and how to use the resulting data for transport planning. Drawing on cases in Japan and abroad, including the 2024 Noto Peninsula earthquake, the talk also discusses where collaboration in UTA could go.

10:15–10:30
17:15–17:30 JST

Discussion, audience Q&A and closing remarks

Open discussion with the audience, followed by closing remarks.

All times shown in Central European Summer Time (CEST) and Japan Standard Time (JST).