

## = A Serial Introduction Part 2 = Winners of ITU-AJ Encouragement Awards 2024

In May every year, The ITU Association of Japan (ITU-AJ) proudly presents ITU-AJ Encouragement Awards to people who have made outstanding contributions in the field of international standardization and have helped in the ongoing development of ICT.

These Awards are also an embodiment of our sincere desire to encourage further contributions from these individuals in the future.

If you happen to run into these winners at another meeting in the future, please say hello to them.

But first, as part of the introductory series of Award Winners, allow us to introduce some of those remarkable winners.

### Sugasawa Koichi

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Fields of activity: Telecommunication Infrastructure



### Building and providing high-quality Japanese optical telecommunications infrastructure through joint projects with local partners in Binh Duong province, southern Vietnam

I am sincerely thankful for receiving this prestigious award and would like to express my gratitude to everyone at the ITU Association of Japan and all others involved.

I began working in the region in 2019, as part of a joint project with Vietnam Technology and Telecommunication (VNNTT), our partner, and focusing on technology transfer, planning and execution of training, and facility design and construction to provide high-quality Japanese optical telecommunications infrastructure.

To build such high-quality facilities, we first conducted site surveys and created standard manuals for design/construction/inspection suited to the actual sites. We also invited specialists from NTT East to Vietnam to conduct on-the-job training to improve technical capabilities of VNNTT, which would be

responsible for construction. Training in Japan was also planned and conducted for VNNTT technical staff, to be specialists who could transfer technology and know-how to improve service quality in Vietnam.

Then, through continuous instruction to maintain the techniques learned, and operational improvements based on monthly fault analyses, we were able to greatly reduce fault rates and contribute to improved customer satisfaction.

We are still providing quality Japanese optical telecommunications infrastructure in new development areas, and I will continue working to develop the experience and know-how that I gained in this project broadly in other regions and countries and bring high-quality communications environments to many more people.

## Yasuki Suzuki

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Fields of activity: 3GPP RAN, O-RAN Alliance



### Contributions to 3GPP RAN, O-RAN Alliance Standardization

It is a great honor to receive this ITU Association of Japan Encouragement Award. I would like to sincerely thank everyone at the ITU-AJ and everyone else involved.

Since I joined KDDI in 2010, I have been working on commercial development of radio base stations for the mobile network and standardization with 3GPP and the O-RAN Alliance. For RAN4 at 3GPP, I gathered requirements from Japanese and foreign operators regarding Non-collocated intra-band EN-DC/NR-CA\* in Release 18, negotiated with device vendors and telecommunication equipment vendors, and finally reached agreement on starting standardization work (establishing a work item). I then promoted the standardization work as the rapporteur, working to organize and consolidate the results. The process of finding points of compromise, and the extremely heated discussion with the operators, device vendors and telecommunication equipment vendors, each with their own perspective and different focus, left a strong impression on me. I continued these efforts as the rapporteur for Release 19, endeavoring to restore the presence of Japanese enterprise in this process.

For about two years starting in 2020, I also participated in the O-RAN Alliance, working on an Open Fronthaul specification that could be used in Japan, with efforts such as proposing an O-RAN Open Fronthaul interconnectivity test specification.

Currently, discussion of Release 19 as 5G-Advanced is ongoing at 3GPP, but starting in 2025, there are plans to begin studying implementation of Beyond 5G as Release 20. At KDDI, we are contributing to creating value for customers and addressing societal issues with Beyond 5G in the 2030s. As part of that, I will work to use the experience I have gained in standardization of 4G and 5G to make even a small contribution to standardization of Beyond 5G.

- \* Non-collocated intra-band E-UTRA-Dual Connectivity/New RAT-Carrier Aggregation
- Informally called "non-collocated", this is a new technology that enables EN-DC, NR-CA between two 3.5 GHz to 4.0 GHz band base stations, even when they are physically separated.
  - Enabling two separated radio base stations to use EN-DC, NR-CA, can contribute to both promoting the spread of 5G, by expanding 5G areas using 5G Non-stand Alone (NSA), and also by expanding areas where NR-CA is introduced for 5G Stand Alone (SA), increasing the effective speed of 5G SA. In both of these cases, user through-put and efficiency of frequency utilization can be increased.

## Momoko Suyama

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Fields of activity: ITU-R SG4, SG5, SG6



### Activities at the ITU

I am very honored to receive this Encouragement Award from the ITU Association of Japan. I would like to express sincere thanks to everyone at the ITU-AJ and all others who have offered their guidance.

When I first participated in ITU meetings in November, 2021, the effects of COVID-19 were still being felt, and events were still being held on-line only. It was my first time participating in an international assembly, and I remember being overwhelmed by the openness of the discussion among delegates from each country.

I participated mainly in discussion related to satellite broadcasting in the WRC 23 meeting. NHK began regular

satellite broadcasting in 1989, started 4K8K broadcasts in 2018, and had many viewers, so it had become an important means of delivering high-quality broadcasts to viewers all over Japan. However, with recent unstable conditions in the world, there had been a rapid increase in global demand for satellite bandwidth. As such, we engaged in discussion from the perspective of ensuring that we could continue delivering reliable satellite broadcasts, now and into the future. Through relentless discussion and persistent negotiation, we finally achieved a result in which most of the proposals from Japan were adopted.

I intend to continue in these efforts, utilizing the experience I have gained working with the ITU-R.