

## MPOWER Partners announces its growth investment in Teamshares



July 31, 2024; Tokyo, Japan: MPOWER Partners Fund, Japan's first ESG-focused global venture capital fund, has invested in Teamshares (headquartered in New York, NY and operating in Japan; founders Michael Brown, Alex Eu, and Kevin Shiiba), an employee ownership platform for small businesses. Teamshares recently expanded its employee ownership succession model to Japan and anticipates having its first employee-owned business in Japan this year.

Small business succession is becoming a major socio-economic problem in many developed countries, putting jobs and local economies at risk. In particular, Japan and the U.S. share similar issues where family-based small business succession has become very rare, and selling a small business remains challenging. The result is an overall supply-demand imbalance between sellers and buyers, leading business owners to work late into retirement age and in some cases, shut down operations entirely.

Founded in 2019, Teamshares is on a mission to make employee ownership the future of small business by creating a network of 10,000 employee-owned companies and \$10 billion in stock wealth for employees. Teamshares buys successful small businesses from retiring owners and transitions them to 80% employee ownership within 20 years. The result is a network of financially durable, permanently employee-owned companies that will never be sold again—to the benefit of retiring owners, employee shareholders, companies, and local communities alike.

Teamshares has acquired over 90 U.S. small businesses to date, representing 31 states, 42 industries, and more than 2,600 new employee owners, and it expects to establish its first employee-owned business in Japan this year.

MPOWER Partners has made a growth equity investment in Teamshares. It aligns perfectly with the fund's vision of integrating ESG principles into the core strategies of market-leading startups. Teamshares is a business that is good for small business owners, their employees, local economies, and Teamshares shareholders, and very much a '*Sanpo Yoshi*' business model. We are excited to help support and catalyze Teamshares' Japan expansion, joining other local partners, MUFG Innovation Partners and Nomura Holdings.



### **Comments from Teamshares**

“Teamshares is very grateful for the opportunity to partner with MPower. As we expand our employee ownership succession model to Japan, we are building relationships with leading institutions that can help accelerate our progress and help us earn the trust of local stakeholders. Our goal is to authentically adapt the Teamshares model to align with the specific characteristics and needs of Japan's economy,” said Kevin Shiiba, Founder, CTO, and Head of Japan for Teamshares.

### **About Teamshares**

Teamshares is an employee ownership platform for small businesses, driven by proprietary software, education, and financial products. Its mission is to make employee ownership the future of small business—creating \$10 billion in new stock wealth for wage workers along the way. Teamshares buys traditional small businesses from retiring owners and transitions them to 80% employee ownership within 20 years, providing new leadership and ongoing access to financial education, equity management software, and other specialized products. The company has acquired over 90 U.S. small businesses to date, representing more than 2,600 employee owners. Founded in 2019, Teamshares has 125 employees across North America and Japan.

Learn more at <https://teamshares.com/> and <https://www.teamshares.co.jp/>

### **About MPower Partners**

MPower Partners Fund is Japan's first ESG-integrated global venture capital fund that aims to support entrepreneurs providing solutions to societal challenges through the power of technology, and to promote sustainable growth by incorporating ESG (Environment, Social, Governance) into their core business strategies. The founding team draws on their extensive experience in the financial industry and ESG matters to support the global expansion of startups and strives to infuse ESG elements into the ecosystem.

Fund website: <https://www.mpower-partners.com>

For inquiries, please contact: [info@mpower-partners.com](mailto:info@mpower-partners.com)

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