

## PRESS RELEASE

For Media Representatives

February 17, 2026

### [Three Japanese Companies to Support the Dream of Philippine Artist with 23M Followers] "Culture Bridge Partnership Project" Launched: Mona Gonzales' Growth to Address Japan's Social Challenges

The journey of fulfilling one artist's dream will transform the future of Japanese language education and music content exports.

#### ■ Key Highlights

- **Supporting a Dream:** Three Japanese companies unite to support the dream of Philippine artist Mona Gonzales (over 23 million SNS followers), who wishes to pursue music activities related to Japan.
- **Accelerating J-POP and Language Learning:** By broadcasting Mona Gonzales's journey of learning Japanese and singing Japanese songs on SNS, the project aims to increase Japanese language learners and accelerate the global expansion of J-POP.



Representatives of the participating companies and Mona Gonzales holding the signed MOU (From left: Shigehisa debari, Honoka Shinsaka, Mona Gonzales, Sakie Hosoya).

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Singer-songwriter **Mona Gonzales**, together with **FurukawaMeta Production LLC** (Head Office: Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo), **Voice Art Project Y Inc.** (Head Office: Konan-ku, Kanagawa), and **UPH Global Academy Japan LLC** (Head Office: Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo), has launched the “**Culture Bridge Partnership Project.**”

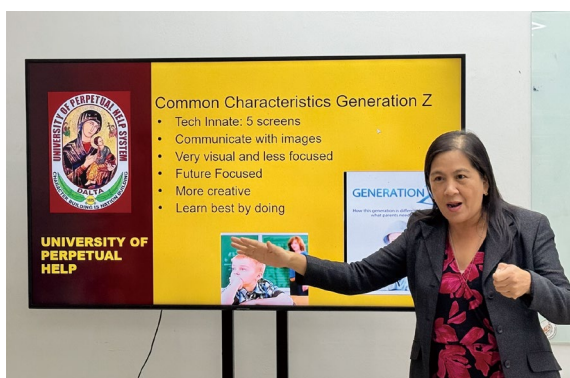
This project is an initiative designed to provide specialized support for the artistic activities of popular Filipino singer-songwriter Mona Gonzales, while also addressing two key challenges facing Japan: labor shortages and the overseas expansion of J-POP.

To advance this initiative, a signing ceremony was held on **February 13, 2026**, at the **University of Perpetual Help Molino Campus**, where Mona Gonzales and the three Japanese companies executed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** for a business alliance.

### ■ Addressing the "Structural Barriers" in Japanese Language Education

Severe Labor Shortage and the Barriers of Japanese Language Learning With Japan’s working-age population projected to decrease by approximately 30 million by 2070 (※1), the acceptance and retention of foreign talent is an urgent issue. However, Japanese is ranked as one of the "most difficult languages to master" according to the U.S. FSI (※2). As highly skilled human resources increasingly prioritize Western countries (※5), securing the "Middle-layer Gen Z" who are interested in Japan becomes a strategic priority. Currently, a "structural challenge" exists where potential talent drops out during the learning phase due to the lack of effective teaching methods (※6), placing Japan at a disadvantage in the global competition for human resources.

Current State of Japanese Language Learning in the Philippines Prior to the signing of the MOU, participating members conducted a class observation at the University of Perpetual Help Molino Campus and interviewed Principal Maribel D. Ordoñez of the university's junior high school. The university, following the policy of its President—a known Japanophile—is an educational institution that places a particularly high focus on Japanese language education in the Philippines. In the interview, Principal Ordoñez pointed out that "the average attention span of Philippine students is about 15 minutes, making engaging lesson designs essential to maintain motivation." She also stated that "increasing interest in Japanese songs and cultural backgrounds is extremely important for deepening language acquisition." Based on these realities, participants reaffirmed the "structural barriers" between Japanese education and learner needs, and resolved to develop "engaging mechanisms" using musical elements and new educational materials.



Maribel D. Ordoñez, Principal of the University of Perpetual Help Junior High School.



Scene from the Japanese language class observation.

## Over 2,000 Fans Enthusiastic for Japanese Music at the Ceremony Live

Following the signing ceremony, a live performance was held where Mona Gonzales and the Japanese group "Jun-Kokusan Voice" (Takahiro Okamoto, Eriko Matsuda, and others) performed Japanese anime songs and J-POP for a crowd of over 2,000 enthusiastic fans. At the climax, Mona Gonzales premiered her unreleased song "Ask Me Now" globally with a message for Japanese language learners. The venue reached its peak excitement as the entire audience shouted "Arigatou Gozaimashita" (Thank you very much) in Japanese at the end. (This event was held as part of the University of Perpetual Help Molino Campus's 30th Anniversary Celebration).

While the high demand for Japanese music in the Philippine market was reaffirmed, a national-level strategy to support it is currently lacking. Although the Japanese government aims to expand content exports to 20 trillion yen by 2033 (※3), it currently relies on the efforts of individual companies and lacks a state-led platform like South Korea's (※4). Many Japanese artists also lack clear global strategies or images for global expansion.



Mona Gonzales performing.



The audience enthusiastic for Japanese music.



The audience enthusiastic for Japanese music.



Eriko Matsuda from True Japan Voice performing.



Students and audience members supporting with mobile phone lights.



Mona Gonzales singing among the audience.

## ■ What is the "Culture Bridge Partnership Project"?

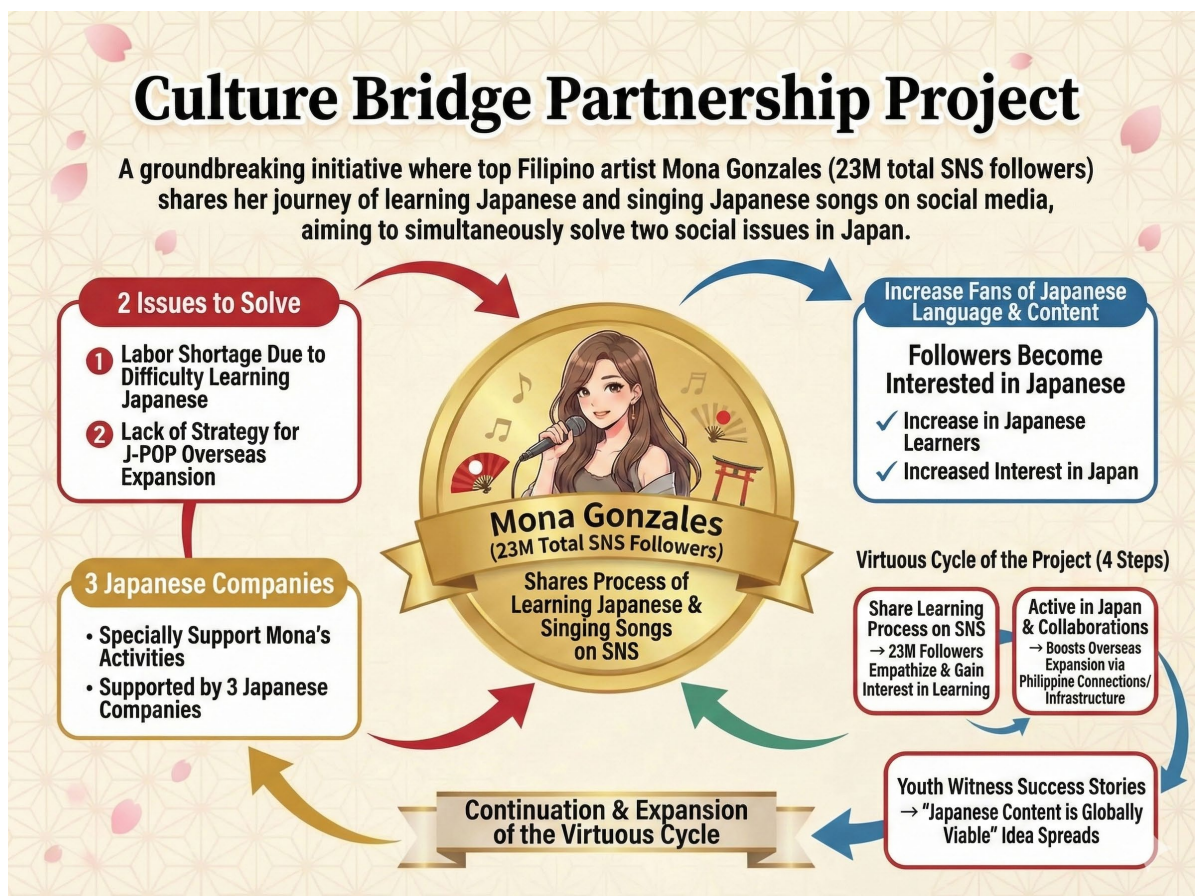
### Project Overview

The project is a groundbreaking initiative where Japanese companies support top Philippine artist Mona Gonzales (23M SNS followers). By broadcasting her journey of learning Japanese and singing Japanese songs on SNS, the project aims to simultaneously address two major social challenges:

### 2 Challenges to be Solved

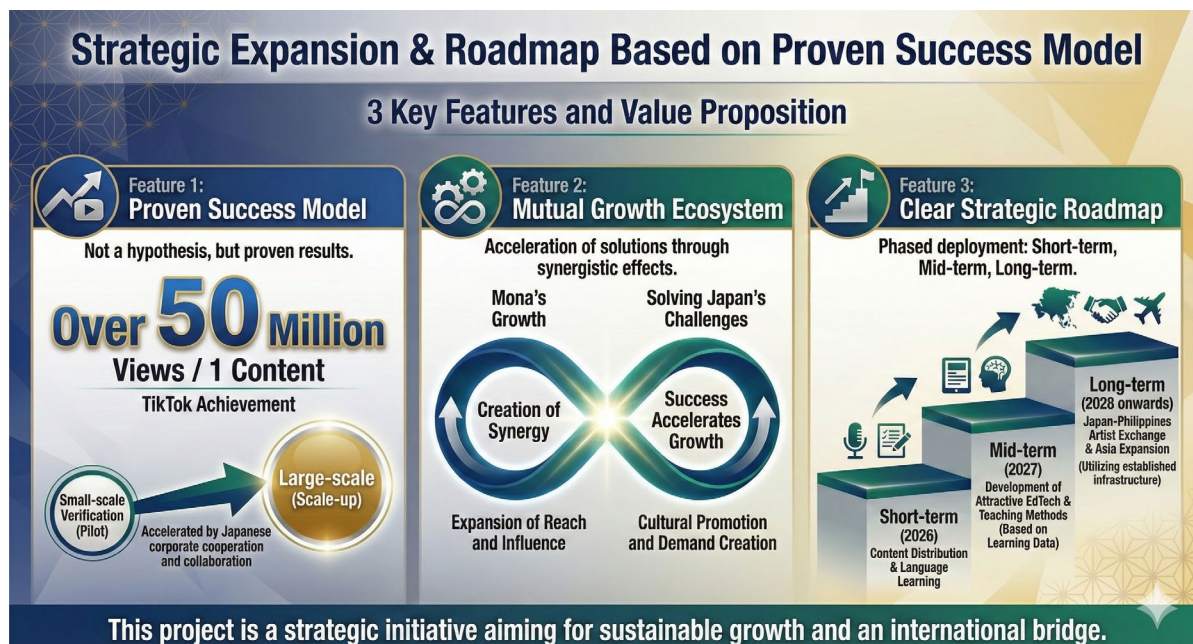
1. Labor shortage due to the difficulty of Japanese language learning.
2. Lack of strategy in the overseas expansion of J-POP.

### Relationship Map: The Project Mechanism



Project Mechanism Three Japanese companies professionally support Mona Gonzales's Japanese studies and music activities, sharing her challenges with her approximately 23 million followers. This initiative creates a motivation among overseas youth to "spread Japanese music," "learn Japanese," and "work/live in Japan," thereby increasing the number of Japanese language learners and those interested in Japan. Simultaneously, by showcasing successful cases of Japanese content being embraced abroad, it aims to inspire Japanese artists and leverage the established support infrastructure for their international expansion.

## Three Key Features of the Project



### 1: Proven Success Model:

Scaling up a model that has already seen content reach over 50 million views on TikTok

### 2: Mutual Growth Model:

A design where Mona Gonzales's growth and the solution to Japan's challenges create a synergistic effect.

### 3: Clear Roadmap:

- Short-term (2026): Broadcasting Japanese learning and song covers to increase fans of the language and music.
- Mid-term (2027): Development of engaging Japanese learning materials and methods based on her learning records.
- Long-term (2028+): Artist exchange and Asian expansion using the established infrastructure.

## ■ Why Mona Gonzales?

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### A Massive Global Community of Japanese Culture Fans

Mona Gonzales is a passionate Japanophile and a singer-songwriter from the Philippines who has been captivated by Japanese City Pop, R&B, and anime songs since childhood. Driven by her deep love for Japanese music, she began sharing Japanese covers of J-POP and anime songs on social media platforms like TikTok. She has since grown into one of the Philippines' leading influencers, boasting a total SNS following of over 23 million (including more than 19 million on TikTok).

While her personal dream is to pursue music activities related to Japan, it is equally important to note that the majority of her followers consist of global fans who already love Japanese music and culture. In other words, her 23 million followers represent much more than a simple headcount; they signify the existence of a massive community of "J-POP fans and potential Japanese language learners".

### Proven Track Record with Japanese Professionals and Sustainability

In January 2025, Mona Gonzales released her first LP, *Love, Mona*, through Sony Music Philippines. The production of this work was a collaborative effort involving a specialized Japanese team. Vocal trainer Yuichi Furukawa handled voice training and recording direction, while KEY-K from "Team Alternate Channel / No Junk" managed the mixing and mastering.

This history of practical, professional collaboration with Japanese experts has built a foundation of mutual understanding and trust. This relationship serves as a critical base for ongoing cooperation between Japan and the Philippines in the fields of culture, education, and music. Based on these experiences, her current Japan-related activities are not isolated, one-off events, but are rooted in an established collaborative framework and a proven track record. This existing foundation of trust ensures that future partnership activities with Japan can be promoted in a continuous and stable manner.



Tiktok : <https://www.tiktok.com/@mngnzls>

## ■ Messages from Participating Representatives and the Artist

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**Honoka Shinsaka,**  
**CEO, FurukawaMeta Production LLC:**

"This partnership marks the beginning of a 'New Standard from Japan' centered on the rare talent of Mona Gonzales. The process of supporting her dream will enhance the presence of Japanese education and music. We look forward to broadly welcoming more artists, companies, and local governments who share this vision."



**Sakie Hosoya,**  
**Executive Emissary, Voice Art Project Y Inc.:**

"To ensure the program's excellence, we have incorporated the vocal education expertise cultivated over 17 years at our 'School of Song and Voice' along with insights from 'Interactive Teaching' at the University of Tokyo's Center for Research and Development of Higher Education. We provide comprehensive support, from Japanese language education to vocal training, pronunciation, and intonation."



**Shigehisa, Debari**  
**CEO, UPH Global Academy Japan LLC**

"Building an educational platform is the foundation for future human resource exchange. Leveraging our track record of partnerships with universities and local governments, we will function as a robust gateway connecting this project to education, employment, and tourism."



**Mona Gonzales**

"Performing in Japan is my biggest dream. By singing Japanese songs, I hope people in the Philippines and around the world will come to love Japan, want to learn Japanese, and want to visit Japan. I will deliver the best music to become that bridge."

## ■ Participating Companies and Organizations

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### **Furukawa Meta** プロダクション

#### **FurukawaMeta Production LLC** (Management & Strategy)

A Japan-based entertainment production company. Founder Yuichi Furukawa has provided vocal instruction to top artists across Asia and members of the Imperial Family. The company develops wide-ranging businesses including artist management via SNS, song provision to domestic and international labels, and global expansion support for artists.



### **Voice Art Project Y** Professional Voice Training

#### **Voice Art Project Y Inc.**

##### **(Japanese Language & Music Education)**

Operator of the "School of Song and Voice" for 17 years, providing vocal training, speech training, and Japanese language education. It has schools in Bunkyo, Takadanobaba, and Yokohama (Kamiooka), and partner schools in Takanawa, Osaka, and elsewhere. Certified with the "Omotenashi Standard" by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry in 2017. In 2023, it achieved Japan's first partnership with the University of Perpetual Help as an educational support service.

### **UPH** グローバル アカデミー

#### **UPH Global Academy Japan LLC**

##### **(Industry-Academia-Government Collaboration)**

Established in 2012 as the Japanese window for the University of Perpetual Help System DALTA, one of the largest private comprehensive universities in South Metro Manila, Philippines. Based on the representative's experience in overseas business and European management at global corporations, the company focuses on international human resource development and promotes educational collaboration between Japan and the Philippines.

## ■ Related Press Release

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March 18, 2025: "[Leveraging the Reach of 19 Million] Bringing Japanese Tourism and J-POP to the World: FurukawaMeta Production Signs MOU for Comprehensive Business Alliance with ShowBT Philippines"

<https://prtimes.jp/main/html/rd/p/000000003.000159105.html>

## ■ Citations

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※1: Projections of Japan's Future Population (2023 Revision) - National Institute of Population and Social Security Research

[https://www.ipss.go.jp/pp-zenkoku/j/zenkoku2023/pp\\_zenkoku2023.asp](https://www.ipss.go.jp/pp-zenkoku/j/zenkoku2023/pp_zenkoku2023.asp)

※2: Foreign Language Training - U.S. Department of State (FSI)

<https://www.state.gov/national-foreign-affairs-training-center/foreign-language-training>

※3: New Cool Japan Strategy - Cabinet Office, Government of Japan

<https://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/titeki2/chitekizaisan2024/pdf/siryou4.pdf>

※4: House of Representatives Committee on the Cabinet (Nov 26, 2025) - Remarks by MP Yosuke Mori

[https://www.shugiintv.go.jp/jp/index.php?ex=VL&deli\\_id=55998&media\\_type=](https://www.shugiintv.go.jp/jp/index.php?ex=VL&deli_id=55998&media_type=)

※5: JETRO Overseas News (2024 Edition) - IMD World Competitiveness Ranking

<https://www.jetro.go.jp/biznews/2024/06/f228876d68486d7d.html>

※6: Agency for Cultural Affairs - Japanese Language Education

[https://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/kokugo\\_nihongo/kyoiku/](https://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/kokugo_nihongo/kyoiku/)

## ■ Contact Information for Inquiries

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Inquiry Form:

[https://furukawapro.co.jp/news/mou\\_mona-culture-bridge-partnership-project/](https://furukawapro.co.jp/news/mou_mona-culture-bridge-partnership-project/)