

SAYA and United Cybersecurity Alliance (UCA) Host Cybersecurity Woman of Japan 2025 Awards

Celebrating the Women Shaping Japan's Cybersecurity Future

TOKYO, JAPAN, January 22, 2026

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[Cybersecurity Woman of Japan 2025](#)

[Awards](#) were held on December 17 at Tunnel Tokyo, the coworking space located within the headquarters of SEGA SAMMY Holdings Inc.

Organized by [the United Cybersecurity](#)

[Alliance](#) (UCA) in collaboration with

[SAYA University](#), the awards recognize

women who have made outstanding contributions to advancing

cybersecurity in Japan. The 2025

ceremony brought together leaders and professionals from government, enterprise, education, and the broader cybersecurity community to celebrate the achievements of women who play a vital role in supporting Japan's digital society.

This year, seven exceptional professionals were selected in recognition of their leadership and impact across Japan's cybersecurity landscape:

Asuka Nakajima, Senior Security Research Engineer, Elastic
Cybersecurity Women Supporter of Japan 2025

Isabelle Theisen, Group Chief Information Security Officer, Nomura
Woman Cybersecurity Leader of Japan 2025

Yuki Unno, Senior Security Director, Fujitsu Research
Cybersecurity Woman Hacker of Japan 2025



Yukimi Sohta, Chief Security Evangelist
Japan, Director of Japan Marketing,
Proofpoint
People's Choice Award 2025

Maho Sugihara, Security Delivery
Manager, Accenture
Cybersecurity Woman Educator of
Japan 2025

Chinatsu Oshiki
GRC Professional of Japan 2025

Akiko Kubota
Cybersecurity Woman in Government
of Japan 2025



Each award recipient was recognized not only for their advanced expertise and professional achievements, but also for their continued commitment to confronting complex challenges, demonstrating leadership that brings others along, and carrying forward knowledge and opportunity to the next generation. Their individual journeys serve as important guideposts in shaping the future of cybersecurity in Japan.

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CSWJ recognize leadership that strengthens security through people. SAYA proudly supports this initiative to set a standard and spotlight the vital role women play in Japan's cybersecurity future.”

Jonathan Hiroshi Rossi, Co-founder, SAYA University

Commenting on her recognition, Isabelle Theisen, Group Chief Information Security Officer at Nomura and recipient of the Woman Cybersecurity Leader of Japan 2025 award, said:

“Thank you Carmen Marsh from the United Cybersecurity Alliance and Jonathan Rossi at SAYA for establishing this valuable cybersecurity forum for Japan. Almost two years ago, I moved from New York and stepped into a role that is equal parts mission and marathon, which was to build one security organization across regions, cultures, and

business lines. After 20 years of being a CISO, I can tell you the truth – this CISO job is not the movie version. There's no hoodie, no dramatic typing, no neon map of the world lighting up behind you. Real security is not as glamorous... and it is a lot more human than that...It's about conversations, decisions, and follow-through. It's about accountability. It's about closing gaps – and turning all of that work into something real, something you can point to as risk reduction. And it's never finished – it's an ongoing journey. But I also want to be clear about what powers that journey: it's passion – and yes, this can be a very ungrateful job. But passion keeps you moving forward. Passion for protecting people and the business. Passion for doing the

unglamorous work when nobody is clapping. And for me, it always comes back to one thing: Can we explain that journey clearly? I like to tell stories outside of my CISO role, and it's the same skill. If you cannot make the risk understandable, you cannot get people aligned – and you cannot drive real change. I didn't do any of this alone. I'm grateful to my teams, my mentors, and the partners who keep choosing progress. So, to the next generation of women in cybersecurity: We need you. Keep showing up, keep asking the hard questions, keep leading – and NEVER GIVE UP.”

The ceremony was moderated by Jonathan Hiroshi Rossi, Co-Founder of SAYA University, a Japan-native cybersecurity awareness platform advancing human-centric digital safety education. He was joined by Natsue Ishida, Executive Officer, Group Privacy Officer, Managing Director Legal, SEGA SAMMY Holdings Inc.

Reflecting on the purpose of the awards, Jonathan Hiroshi Rossi, noted that the Cybersecurity Woman of Japan Awards “recognize leadership that strengthens security at its foundation—through people.” He added that SAYA continues to support the initiative to set a visible standard for women's leadership in cybersecurity and to highlight the role women already play in shaping Japan's cybersecurity landscape.

Commenting on this year's awards, Carmen Marsh, Founder of the Cybersecurity Woman of Japan Awards and CEO of the United Cybersecurity Alliance, emphasized:

“I am deeply moved by the intelligence, resilience, leadership, and humanity demonstrated by this year's award recipients. Each honoree embodies not only exceptional expertise, but also the courage and integrity to lift others as they rise. When this community comes together with purpose, society moves forward.”

About SAYA University

SAYA University is a Japan-native trust and safety platform that strengthens digital security and everyday peace of mind through comprehensive Japanese-language cybersecurity education. Through anime-style micro-learning, SAYA delivers short, focused training modules based on real-world incidents and emerging threats, emphasizing changes in human awareness and behavior as the foundation of effective cybersecurity.

Its growing digital micro-learning library includes AI security awareness and family- and children-focused digital safety series such as “Protect Our Kids” and “What You Should Never Ask AI,” addressing everyday digital risks across both households and workplaces. Serving enterprises, local governments, and educational institutions, SAYA supports stronger organizational and societal resilience through practical, culturally aligned cybersecurity education.

About Cybersecurity Woman of Japan (CSWJ) Awards

Now in its third year, the Cybersecurity Woman of Japan (CSWJ) Awards—launched in 2023 by the United Cybersecurity Alliance with SAYA University as an early collaborator—continue to recognize women shaping Japan’s cybersecurity future.

By highlighting outstanding achievements across technology, education, public policy, and legal and regulatory fields, the CSWJ Awards strengthen Japan’s cyber resilience while elevating the country’s presence and influence in the global, human-centered security landscape.

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