

# Intelligence with a Face: Storytelling and the Rise of Human-Centric Virtual Humans from Japan

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 | 12:50 – 1:50 PM  
Room 440, Geffen Hall, Columbia Business School



*Featuring:*

**Yumi An King**, Executive Director, Aww Inc.

*Moderator:*

**Dr. Yumiko Shimabukuro**, Faculty, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University; Co-Founder, Japanese Management Leadership Program, CJEB

*Notes: This event was limited to current Columbia University ID holders, Columbia alums, and CJEB affiliates, and is part of CJEB's [Japanese Management Leadership Program](#).*

Aww Inc. is a global pioneer in emotionally impactful digital storytelling, best known for creating imma, Asia's first virtual human. Ms. King spoke about how Aww Inc.'s virtual humans have shaped culture, built fandoms, and powered Japanese and global brand campaigns. She explained why Asia leads the way in virtual IP adoption and acceptance. She also shared her views on the opportunities, risks, and questions of trust that AI agents with human-like faces raise, and the implications of this new frontier.