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Dear Members of the Creative City Network,

Over 99% of the gold leaf, and 100% of the silver leaf and nickel silver leaf produced in Japan is made in Kanazawa. These leaves possess both a soothing glimmer, as well a quality that does not degrade over time and is used in decorative artistic crafts, the restoration of historical structures and recently, there are efforts to use the leaves for interior design.

In these ways, Kanazawa leaf acts not only as one of the primary traditional craft industries, but also as an important element in supporting Kanazawa culture.

On the other hand, the Kanazawa leaf industry continues to shrink due to the competition from producers abroad. As a result, the number of people involved in the leaf industry has decreased, as well as a there being a growing concern for the succession of the accumulated techniques in the manufacturing process. There are other issues as well, such as whether to develop new products, and also whether to widen the uses of these products.

In order to tackle these issues and more, in the fall of 2010 we will be establishing the “Research Institute on the the Promotion of Kanazawa Leaf” (Temporary title). This research institute intends to promote Kanazawa leaf by providing manufacturing support, coordinating product development, coordinating research, and creating a Kanazawa Leaf Digital Archive.

In January of this year, a preparation room was established for the research institute. From here on, in order to prepare for the Kanazawa Leaf Digital Archive, we are collecting information concerning the industry, along with the regions that use the most leaves by working together with scholars of history and culture. Lastly, the research institute, as part of its implementation of training workshops and investigative research, will also be organising leaf worker exchanges between other domestic as well as international producers.

With that, we offer our best wishes towards your successful activities and continued good health.

Creative City Kanazawa Promotion Office, Japan

Attached Picture “Craft goods utilizing Kanazawa leaf”

