



## World Monuments Fund and Tiffany & Co. Announce Partnership to Launch First Professional Gold Leaf Craftsman Program in Japan

**April 27, 2022, New York, NY**—Today World Monuments Fund (WMF) and Tiffany & Co. announce the launch of Japan's first professional gold leaf craftsman training program in Kanazawa, a coastal city north-east of Kyoto. The project aims to collaborate with the city of Kanazawa in ensuring the sustainable preservation of traditional craftsmanship of Kanazawa Haku gold leaf production, which was recently inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List.

An essential material in Japan, gold leaf is used to decorate lacquer work, pottery, woven cloth, foods, cosmetics, Buddhist altars, contemporary interior goods, as well as traditional wooden architecture. Kinkakuji (Golden Pavilion) in Kyoto, for example, is an important Zen temple mostly covered in gold leaf from Kanazawa.

The launch of this project marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tiffany's arrival in Japan and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WMF's work in the country. The project further reinforces their shared commitment to the communities in which they operate.

Beginning in 2022, WMF will work with Kanazawa City, the Agency for Cultural Affairs (ACA) and the Society for the Conservation of Traditional Kanazawa Gold Leaf Techniques (SCTKGLT) to launch the program for eight qualified applicants who would be trained by masters of the technique in the basic skills of gold leaf production.

Together with Tiffany and project partners, WMF will make this first three-year training initiative a success through international and private-public sector collaboration and will design and develop a sustainable program encompassing both preparatory and basic skill courses. Taught by skilled craftsmen, with input from WMF's experience in the creation of an interiors training program in China and with Tiffany's tradition of beautiful craftsmanship, this partnership will serve as one possible model for passing Japan's extraordinary craft techniques to the next generation.

In 2022, together with the city of Kanazawa, the ACA and SCTKGLT and other local partners including the Kanazawa College of Craftsmanship and leading figures in the artisan community, the program starts for eight trainees fulfilling the requirements needed for learning the fundamental techniques of gold leaf production. For five days a week, trainees

will be given opportunities to gain practical experience in the workshops of exemplary Kanazawa gold leaf artisans; this training program will instill the knowledge and skills needed to make a lifelong career of this art, which is highly sought-after in Japan.

*“In Japan and around the world, the survival of heritage sites central to the cultural and spiritual life of communities is threatened by the loss of traditional skills,”* said **Bénédicte de Montlaur**, President and CEO, World Monuments Fund. *“We are thrilled to launch this new program with Tiffany & Co. and local partners to ensure sustainable preservation of the craftsmanship of Kanazawa gold leaf production for the benefit of future generations.”*

This commitment builds upon The Tiffany & Co. Foundation’s past support for WMF projects in Japan. In 2006, The Tiffany & Co. Foundation granted \$250,000 to the Japanese Imperial Buddhist Convents Conservation Project. With this financial support, WMF was able to engage world-renowned conservation specialists to restore the delicately painted paper sliding doors and walls in Chuguji and the Reikanji Imperial Convents. These doors and walls are integral parts of historically significant pavilions that were in need of major structural repair.

#### **About Tiffany & Co.**

Tiffany & Co., founded in New York City in 1837 by Charles Lewis Tiffany, is a global luxury jeweler synonymous with elegance, innovative design, fine craftsmanship and creative excellence.

With more than 300 retail stores worldwide and a workforce of more than 13,000 employees, Tiffany & Co. and its subsidiaries design, manufacture and market jewelry, watches and luxury accessories. Nearly 5,000 skilled artisans cut Tiffany diamonds and craft jewelry in the Company’s own workshops, realizing the brand’s commitment to superlative quality.

Tiffany & Co. has a long-standing commitment to conducting its business responsibly, sustaining the natural environment, prioritizing diversity and inclusion, and positively impacting the communities in which it operates. To learn more about Tiffany & Co. and its commitment to sustainability, please visit [tiffany.com](http://tiffany.com).

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#### **About World Monuments Fund**

World Monuments Fund (WMF) is the leading independent organization devoted to safeguarding the world’s most treasured places to enrich people’s lives and build mutual understanding across cultures and communities. The organization is headquartered in New York City with offices and affiliates in Cambodia, India, Peru, Portugal, Spain, and the UK. Since 1965, our global team of experts has preserved the world's diverse cultural heritage using the highest international standards at more than 700 sites in 112 countries. Partnering with local communities, funders, and governments, WMF draws on heritage to address some of today’s most pressing challenges: climate change, underrepresentation, imbalanced tourism, and post-crisis recovery. With a commitment to the people who bring places to life, WMF embraces the potential of the past to create a more resilient and inclusive society.

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