



## **Believe further expands in Japan, unveils new imprint dedicated to championing Japanese hip-hop with ¥ellow Bucks, Red Eye, and Issei Uno Fifth**

**Thursday, February 8th, 2024** – Believe, one of the world’s leading digital music companies, announces today the launch of ‘PLAYCODE’, a new imprint dedicated to championing the growing Japanese hip-hop music scene, including partnering with some of Japan’s leading acts: ¥ellow Bucks, Red Eye, and Issei Uno Fifth.

This launch marks a new step in Believe’s expansion in Japan, less than a year since it began operating in the country, in October 2023. As part of Believe Japan’s Artist Services offering, ‘PLAYCODE’ aims at nurturing the booming local hip-hop music scene. It will combine Believe’s unique digital artist development capacities – strategic, marketing and financial support –, unrivalled local hip-hop expertise, and long-term partnerships with key digital players to accompany its artists at all stages of their careers reach wider audiences and grow their careers locally and internationally.

With +450K monthly listeners on Spotify and 66,7K followers on YouTube, ¥ellow Bucks is one of the most influential hip-hop artists in Japan, whose breakthrough hit ‘YESSIR’ cumulates +36M views on YouTube and +25M listens on Spotify to date. After Red Eye winning the 16<sup>th</sup> High School Rap Championship in 2019, Red Eye has become a force to be reckoned within the hip-hop music scene, cumulating over 500K followers across all social platforms, with his ‘POCKET’ series reaching +8 million streams. Issei Uno Fifth’s massive hit ‘SLIDE’ gained popularity on TikTok, reaching +1.6M streams on Spotify and leading him to be one of the winners of TikTok’s Spotlight Programme.

After creating a series of hip-hop focused imprints in Thailand (bYOND), Italy (MAST) and France (Avant-Garde, AllPoints and Morning Glory), the launch of ‘PLAYCODE’ confirms Believe’s long-lasting commitment to nurture and drive hip-hop independent artists to their utmost level all around the world, all the while remaining in full control of their creative freedom and careers.

**Mari Ochiai, Head of Artist Services, Believe Japan, said:** *"Hip-hop in Japan is undergoing a massive shift, with more and more artists reaching growing audiences, both locally and beyond. The level of talent is outstanding and the potential for growth is massive. I am convinced that the launch of 'PLAYCODE' will open a new chapter in Japanese hip-hop's history. I look forward to joining hands Japan's very best hip-hop talents, putting Believe's unrivaled digital artist development expertise at their service to create the future of Japanese hip-hop!"*

**Sylvain Delange, Managing Director, APAC, Believe, said:** *"Only a few months after the launch of Believe in Japan, we are proud to unveil 'PLAYCODE', with the aim of supporting the growth of a*

*healthy, professionalized and industry-leading hip-hop ecosystem in Japan. We could not dream of better ambassadors than 'Yellow Bucks', 'Red Eye', and 'Issei Uno Fifth' to join force with us and ascend Japanese hip-hop to mainstream acclaim. Coupled with Mari's unparalleled expertise, deep-rooted passion for Japanese Hip Hop and visionary leadership, we are confident that 'PLAYCODE' will serve as a beacon for the entire Japanese hip-hop community, fostering creativity, collaboration, and innovation."*



*The 'PLAYCODE' logo was designed by Sho Hanafusa. Previously senior designer at Complex Networks and creating a multitude of hip-hop-centric design works for Vice, he now handles promotional designs for NIKE and Jordan at Hovercraft.*

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#### **About Believe**

Believe is one of the world's leading digital music companies. Believe's mission is to develop independent artists and labels in the digital world by providing them the solutions they need to grow their audience at each stage of their career and development. Believe's passionate team of digital music experts around the world leverages the Group's global technology platform to advise artists and labels, distribute and promote their music. Its 1,720 employees in more than 50 countries aim to support independent artists and labels with a unique digital expertise, respect, fairness and transparency. Believe offers its various solutions through a portfolio of brands including Believe, TuneCore, Nuclear Blast, Naive, Groove Attack, AllPoints, Ishtar and Byond. Believe is listed on compartment B of the regulated market of Euronext Paris (Ticker: BLV, ISIN: FR0014003FE9). Believe.com

#### **Press contacts:**

Manon JESSUA – [manon.jessua@believe.com](mailto:manon.jessua@believe.com)

Anass BENDAFI – [anass.bendafi@agenceproches.com](mailto:anass.bendafi@agenceproches.com) | Cell: +33 6 80 42 51 84

#### **Investor Relations contact:**

Emilie MEGEL – [emilie.megel@believe.com](mailto:emilie.megel@believe.com) | +33 6 07 09 98 60