

AI 'boy' granted residency in central Tokyo

November 4 2017



Shibuya said the attempt was aimed at making the district's local government more familiar to residents so that officials hear opinions more from residents on how to run the local government

An AI character was made an official resident of a busy central Tokyo district on Saturday, with the virtual newcomer resembling a chatty seven-year-old boy.

The boy named "Shibuya Mirai" does not exist physically, but he can



have text conversations with humans on the widely used LINE messaging app.

Tokyo's Shibuya Ward, an area popular with fashion-conscious young people, has given the character his own special residence certificate.

This makes him Japan's first, and maybe the world's first, artificial intelligence bot to be granted a place on a real-life local registry.

Mirai, whose name means "future" in Japanese, is supposed to be a first grader at an <u>elementary school</u>.

He can reply to messages and make light-hearted alterations to selfies he is sent.

Shibuya said the project aimed to make the district's local government more familiar to residents and allow officials to hear their opinions.

"His hobbies are taking pictures and observing people. And he loves talking with people... Please talk to him about anything," the ward said in a statement with Microsoft, the joint developer of the AI character.

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