

May 18 - May 24 (Published May 27th)

PERSPECTIVES by Steve Payne

23 Crypto Private Financings Raised: \$262M
Rolling 3-Month-Average: \$337M
Rolling 52-Week Average: \$399M
Deals \$50M and over: 1

Tokyo-based JPYC, the first domestic funds-transfer provider to issue a yen-backed stablecoin under Japan’s regulatory framework, has completed a Series B totaling roughly ¥5 billion (~\$33M). The round brought in a mix of traditional financial and corporate Japan, including Life Design Fund, IHD Strategy Fund, Awagin Future Creation Fund, Meiji Yasuda Future Co-Creation Fund, and Sumitomo Life’s Sumisei Innovation Fund, alongside digital-asset-adjacent names like bitFlyer Holdings and Metaplanet. JPYC began issuing in October 2025 after receiving funds-transfer registration in August and has since opened 18,000 accounts, reached over ¥2.5 billion in cumulative issuance, and processed more than ¥35 billion in transaction volume. That is a real early lead, but not yet a durable moat: the same regulatory clarity that enabled JPYC’s launch is now drawing in banks, corporates, and regional stablecoin players.

Japan underpins the market story behind the deal. The FSA-backed Payment Innovation Project includes a megabank stablecoin joint-issuance pilot involving MUFG Bank, SMBC, Mizuho, Mitsubishi Corporation, Mitsubishi UFJ Trust and Banking, and Progmatt, plus a separate tokenized-deposit and interbank-settlement track involving DeCurret DCP, GMO Aozora Net Bank, and ABeam Consulting. New FSA rules effective June 1, 2026 also create a legal path for qualifying foreign trust-type stablecoins to be treated as electronic payment instruments under the Payment Services Act. JPYC is positioning for that more open environment, with LINE NEXT’s Unifi wallet integration announced on May 22, JPYC issuance on Kaia beginning earlier in May, and Circle positioning JPYC within its Partner Stablecoin and StableFX framework alongside USDC and EURC. JPYC has a first-mover advantage, but its regulatory lead could narrow once the June 1 rules take effect and qualified foreign issuers secure domestic access.

JPYC is not alone in the regional buildout. Singapore-based Startale Group (which also has strong Japanese roots) closed a \$63 million Series A backed by SBI and Sony Innovation Fund in March 2026 to scale Strium and JPYSC, while Hong Kong-based RedotPay raised \$107 million in December 2025 to extend stablecoin payments across 100+ markets. The competitive set spans institutional rails, cross-border consumer payments, and onshore regulated issuance.

PAST WEEK NOTABLE TRANSACTIONS						
Company	Size (\$M)	Date	Post-Money Valuation (\$M)	Stage	Lead Investors	Subsector
Variational	\$50.0	5/20	\$525.0	Series A	Dragonfly Capital	Brokers & Exchanges
SignalPlus	40.0	5/20	Undisclosed	Later Stage VC	HashKey Capital	Investing & Trading Infrastructure
JPYC	31.6	5/22	Undisclosed	Series B	Asteria	Payments Infrastructure
PopDEX	30.0	5/22	Undisclosed	Seed	Foresight Ventures	Brokers & Exchanges
Catena Labs	30.0	5/20	235.0	Series A	Acrew Capital, Andreessen Horowitz	Developer Tools & Infrastructure
Foundation	19.8	5/21	Undisclosed	Later Stage VC	Fulgur Ventures	DApp: Consumer
American Fortress	8.0	5/22	Undisclosed	Seed	OG, Moon Pursuit Capital, SAVA	Developer Tools & Infrastructure
Checker	8.0	5/19	Undisclosed	Seed	Al Mada Ventures, Framework Ventures, Galaxy Ventures	Payments Infrastructure
Aeon	8.0	5/18	Undisclosed	Seed	YZi Labs	Payments Infrastructure
Blocksky	7.0	5/20	Undisclosed	Later Stage VC	Undisclosed	Enterprise Solutions

