

Niko McGrath

Saitama, Japan nikojmcgrath@gmail.com linkedin.com/in/niko-mcgrath-3743568b github.com/nikojmcgrath
nikomcgrath.com

Summary

Co-founder of SalmonCat Studios, a mechanical-keyboard company whose first kit raised \$231,849 in 30 days; I ran its suppliers, Shopify operations and fulfillment. Three years as Director of Photography on a documentary YouTube channel that grew past 600,000 subscribers. Since March 2025 I've taught English at a Saitama high school where the staffroom runs in Japanese. I build software for the work in front of me: order and inventory automation, a tool that cuts video to a script, a Japanese-learning product. From April 2027 I'm looking for operations, business analysis or product operations roles, in Tokyo or Southern California.

Experience

Freelance video editor, A Japanese-learning YouTube channel

Sep 2026 – present

Remote

- Edit two to three long-form educational videos a month, 10 to 20 minutes each, with custom motion graphics, graphic design and some filming.
- Built Roughcut, which finds every take of every script line in the footage and plans the rough cut for DaVinci Resolve.

In the portfolio: [Roughcut](#)

Assistant Language Teacher, Interac

Mar 2025 – present

Warabi Saitama Prefectural High School · Saitama, Japan

- Teach 18 classes a week to about 400 students, including 12 periods of debate and discussion for the school's international-language track, at around CEFR C1.
- Lead the second-year speech curriculum this year: I co-develop the course with my Japanese co-teacher and make all of its slides and materials.
- Lead the English Debate Club and judge at prefectural and regional competitions; co-led the English Drama Club to first prize at the prefectural competition.
- Coach third-years for university entrance-exam speaking tests and the TOEIC. Staff meetings, planning and day-to-day work happen in Japanese.

Director of Photography, James Klug

Feb 2022 – Mar 2025

Documentary YouTube channel · United States

- About 240 productions over three years for a channel that grew past 600,000 subscribers; a flagship short reached 17 million views.
- Planned shots, locations and lighting, ran multi-camera shoots on location, and carried out sponsors' creative briefs.
- Built the channel's shorts strategy around YouTube Premium revenue sharing, and launched a live-stream donation stream whose ad revenue per view ran about 600% above normal videos.

In the portfolio: [James Klug](#)

Co-founder, SalmonCat Studios

Feb 2021 – present

Mechanical keyboards · United States and Japan · Winding down since 2023

- Led the June 2021 launch of the Aozora kit: \$231,849 in 30 days on 849 orders, 4.6× the \$50,000 goal, from an audience we built ourselves.
- Cut the unit cost from over \$350 to \$138 across five design-for-manufacture rounds with the factory.
- Ran supplier negotiation, Shopify operations, community and fulfillment, and took hand-shipping from 20 to about 100 orders a day.
- Rebuilt operations in 2026 in Google Sheets and Apps Script: Shopify order sync, part-by-part inventory and reorder points.

In the portfolio: [SalmonCat Studios](#), [Aozora 69](#), [Aozora PCB](#), [Inventory Tracker](#)

Independent projects

- LiteralSubs** (2026): An AI pipeline that turns anime into Japanese study decks without flattening the literal meaning.
- Generators SMP** (2026): A DonutSMP-style economy Minecraft server on one custom Java plugin.
- Blueprint** (2026): A health team of six AI specialists that plans my training, meals and sleep each week.

Education

- BS Business Administration, International Business**, Cal Poly Pomona 2020 – 2024
- Dean’s List for two semesters in the final year.
 - Coursework in international business strategy, international agreements and negotiation, strategic management and financial accounting.
 - Co-founded the Japanese Language Learners Club and served a year as its vice president.

Skills

- Business and operations**
Community, E-commerce, Monetization, Operations, Product, Shopify
- Design and hardware**
3D, CAD, Electronics, Hardware, Industrial design, KiCad, PCB design
- Software and data**
AI agents, Automation, Claude API, Data, Google Apps Script, Java, NLP, Python, SQLite, Systems design
- Film and video**
Cinematography, Editing, Motion graphics, Production
- Teaching and language**
Curriculum design, Japanese, Teaching

Languages

- English**
Native.
- Japanese**
Used every day at work. JLPT N2 in July 2026: 88 / 180, two points short of a pass; next sitting July 2027.