

J-StarX UK DeepTech Accelerator Programme - Specifications

1. Background

“J-StarX” is a Japanese government-backed (METI) series of accelerator programs operated by JETRO to foster entrepreneurship and accelerate the global expansion of Japanese startups.

The J-StarX DeepTech Accelerator Programme in the UK aims to support the global expansion of Japanese DeepTech startups, particularly in the aerospace and national security technologies. The programme focuses on helping these startups formulate go-to-market (GTM) strategies, develop overseas markets, and raise capital from international investors.

The following services are outsourced to the Contractor, who shall be firmly rooted in the local ecosystem to ensure the effective delivery of the project.

2. Programme Outline

The programme consists of two phases:

- Phase 1: Preparation
 - Approximate two-month hybrid course for startups to build a strong international business foundation by understanding the UK and European market landscape for DeepTech startups, prepare them for discussions with DeepTech investors and understand the key questions those investors might ask.
 - Phase 1 shall mainly consist of several group online sessions, combined with an overseas in-person programme during Farnborough Airshow.
 - Through these workshops, startups are expected to develop market entry strategies for the UK and Europe and gain a comprehensive understanding of relevant regulatory frameworks. Additionally, participants shall learn effective pitching techniques to DeepTech investors to maximize networking opportunities during the events integrated into the programme.
- After Phase 1, the Accelerator shall evaluate the startups and select from Phase 1 participants to proceed to Phase 2.
- Phase 2: Intensive Mentoring/Onsite Execution
 - Approximate six-month hybrid course (online/onsite) for startups to refine their pitch to impact investors, identify potential customers and investors, and facilitate PoCs via mentoring, in-person workshops, attendance at conferences, industrial tours and business matching.
 - Phase 2 shall feature online group sessions and individual mentoring sessions, combined with overseas in-person programme of multiple event participations.
 - Startups shall participate in multiple dual-use-related events and conferences in Europe held during the

programme period. These opportunities are designed for startups to identify potential customers and investors, deliver pitches, and engage in high-level networking with key industry stakeholders.

- Through active participation in these events, startups aim to establish a strategic foothold in the European market and build a robust network of connections with customers, corporate partners, and international investors.
- Startups are expected to select and participate in multiple events from a provided list.
- By the end of Phase 2, startups are expected to be in a position where they can execute their UK market entry and pitch to UK and European impact investors:
 - All critical validations are identified.
 - Initial networks introductions are established.
 - A clear roadmap and immediate next steps for market entry strategy are clearly defined.

* (Optional but highly recommended)

The programme shall include one onsite kick-off session in Tokyo at the commencement of either Phase 1 or Phase 2.

3. Startups to be Supported

- Eligibility: Japanese startups or founders/ C-suite executives.
- Target sector: Orbital Infrastructure, Earth Observation, PNT & Comms, Edge & Cyber, Emerging Tech
- Target stages: Seed to Early (TBD after discussion with the Contractor)
- Number of startups:
 - (Phase 1) maximum 10
 - (Phase 2) maximum 6 (selected from Phase 1 participants)

4. Estimated Schedule

April 2026	Contract Execution
May	Application opens
June	Participants selection
Early July – Middle August	Programme delivery of Phase 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tokyo onsite kick-off(optional) - Workshop/Learning Session (Online) - Event participation at Farnborough Airshow
Late August	Selection for Phase 2
September – February	Programme delivery of Phase 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop/Learning Session/individual mentoring (Online/In-person) - Event participations

Late March	Final report submission
End of March	Completion of contract

5. Outsourced Tasks

(1) Promotional material creation

The Contractor shall provide JETRO with the following information or slides for the promotional materials to recruit participants:

- Detailed introduction of the Contractor including its strength and values offered in the programme
- Profiles of potential industry mentors and their areas of expertise. It is understood that the actual mentors chosen for the programme shall depend on the participant companies, and the Contractor is expected to ensure appropriate matching of mentors and startups.
- Value proposition and curriculum outline

(2) Application screening & Participant Selection

- a. The Contractor, in consultation with JETRO, shall determine the criteria for the selection of the startups.
- b. Conduct document screening followed by (video) interviews for applicants who pass the document screening.
- c. Based on the application documents and (video) interviews, the Contractor shall evaluate the applicants according to the selected criteria and report its evaluations with comments to JETRO and finalise the list of companies to participate in the course.

(3) Tokyo Onsite Kick-off Programme (Optional but highly recommended)

The Contractor shall deliver a face-to-face programme in Tokyo. The content of the kick-off session may cover and build upon the topics outlined in section (4)a (Workshop/Learning sessions).

Note: All travel expenses to Japan such as flight tickets and accommodation fees, must be included in the contract amount and shall be covered by the contractor. However, the venue cost in Tokyo shall be **excluded** from the contract amount, as JETRO's office facilities shall be available.

(4) Preparation Programme (Phase 1)

The preparation programme shall consist of several group online sessions, combined with an overseas in-person programme during Farnborough Airshow. In addition, the Contractor may also propose some ideas on how to support the startups more effectively.

a. Workshop/Learning session

The contractor shall hold lectures or interactive group coaching online sessions, which shall cover the following topics, including but not limited to:

- i. Introduction of the aerospace and national security technologies sector in the UK & EU
- ii. Navigating regulatory frameworks
 - Export Controls: ITAR, EAR, and Strategic IP Protection.

- Defence Procurement: UK MOD and NATO Interoperability Standards.
- Compliance: Security Clearances, Dual-use, and Sovereign Capability.
- iii. Advanced networking and pitching for defence Investors
- iv. Strategic collaboration with prime contractors: Exploring partnership models and supply chain integration with primes.
- v. Go-to-Market (GTM) and growth strategies in the UK & EU: Distribution channels, strategic scaling, developing roadmaps.
- b. Participation in “Farnborough Airshow”

The contractor shall support the startups in Farnborough Airshow especially through Meeting arrangements with relevant stakeholders. The Contractor shall arrange an average of 5 business matchings (individual meeting or group networking) per startup with local KOLs, potential research partners, users, investors and so on.

(5) Intensive Mentoring/Onsite Execution (Phase 2)

Phase 2 shall go into more depth on the subjects covered in Phase 1, as well as helping develop the market entry strategy and facilitating in-person meetings with investors and potential customers.

The contractor shall provide necessary contents and customised mentoring by assigning industry experts, experienced startup executives and advisors, and other professionals as mentors to each startup. Mentors shall work with the startups to refine their business plan and go to market strategy, review and refine the pitch to investors and, where appropriate, provide feedback on product (e.g. product market fit), appropriate market validation or other elements to both validate the commercial plan and prepare the startups for discussions with potential investors and customers.

Phase 2 programme shall consist of the following content. In addition, the Contractor may also propose some ideas on how to support the startups more effectively.

- a. One-on-One Mentoring (Online)

The Contractor shall assign mentors best suited to each startup. The Contractor shall facilitate an initial introductory meeting, followed by mentoring sessions to be held at least once every two weeks.

The Contractor shall provide reports about the progress of mentoring with comments from each mentor after each mentoring session. The Contractor or JETRO shall use this reporting to adjust the mentoring or suggest key topics to explore as necessary (e.g. when the mentoring is not yielding expected results).
- b. Pitch Coaching (Online)

The Contractor shall provide pitch coaching, especially for impact fundraising.
- c. Meeting arrangements with relevant stakeholders

The Contractor shall arrange an average of 6 business matchings (individual meeting or group networking during the event) per startup with local KOLs, potential research partners, users, investors and so on.
- d. Multiple Event Participation

Participants shall attend premier aerospace and national security technologies events and conferences held across the UK and Europe. These engagements are designed to provide startups with strategic opportunities for networking, pitching, and business development with key stakeholders, including local ecosystem stakeholders, customers, international investors, strategic industry partners.

From a curated list of industry events scheduled during the programme, participants may select and attend up to two (2) events that best align with their growth objectives.

The events listed below are indicative examples of the types of opportunities available. The Contractor is expected to suggest further relevant events or conferences that align with the programme's objectives.

- Europe Defence Expo
- IAC 2026

Note:

- any expenses mentioned below shall be **included** in the contract amount:
 - Venue for all activities. However, if requested in advance, it may be possible to use JETRO London's meeting rooms (seminar style, capacity approximately 30 people) for part of the programme, subject to coordination with other JETRO London activities.
 - Travel expenses of the Contractor during the onsite programme

6. Final Report submission

- (1) The Contractor must submit a report to JETRO by 15th March, 2027, summarizing the results of all the activities for the outsourced related content.
- (2) The report shall include suggestions to assist JETRO with hosting similar programmes in the future.

7. Term of contract

The term of the contract is from the contract start date to March 31, 2027.

8. Payment Terms

The total contract amount, including VAT and other taxes, shall be paid in four (4) quarterly instalments. The Contractor shall submit an invoice at the end of each quarter after confirming the completion of the services for the respective period, and JETRO shall make payment within 40 days of receipt of a valid invoice. The payment schedule is as follows:

- (1) First Payment (25%): Payable upon receipt of an invoice following the completion of the first quarter (end of June 2026).
- (2) Second Payment (25%): Payable upon receipt of an invoice following the completion of the second quarter (end of September 2026).
- (3) Third Payment (25%): Payable upon receipt of an invoice following the completion of the third quarter (end of December 2026).
- (4) Final Payment (25%): Payable upon receipt of an invoice after the submission of the final report and JETRO's confirmation of the completion of all outsourced tasks (end of March 2027). The invoice shall be submitted within 10 days of JETRO's confirmation.

9. Conditions for the Contractor(s) engaged in the programme

- (1) Has an established organizational structure and capabilities to manage and complete the project properly. Has a global network, and knowledge necessary for implementing the project as an Accelerator, Venture Capital, or any other related organization.
- (2) Has effective experience of implementation of acceleration programmes specifically tailored to, and focused on, scaling up within Europe.
- (3) Ideally has experience building up unicorns in the past years.
- (4) Has investment arms and has close connections with European top tier VCs.
- (5) Has proven track-record in various European countries and experience working with the European Union.
- (6) Can adhere to JETRO's requests, as well as report to, communicate with, and consult with JETRO and outsourcing partner to support this programme in an adequate manner. Can present efficient data for programme evaluation.
- (7) Has knowledge and systems/tools for handling confidential and/or personal information accordingly.

10. Other

- (1) If any matter not described in this specification arises during the programme, it shall be discussed with a person in charge and a response shall be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- (2) Your proposal needs to include your mentor list who may be mentors for the programme participants, and industry (sector) list you have experience in. It is recognised that this initial list of potential mentors shall be indicative and that the actual mentors chosen will depend on the startups participating in the programme and their specific needs.
- (3) Personal information collected shall only be used within the programme for the purposes defined prior and shall be shared within JETRO.