

Japan–UK Deep-Tech Bridge Commercialisation Programme Specifications

1. Background

Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) is a Japanese governmental organisation that promotes trade and investment between Japan and other countries. One of our core activities is to facilitate innovation between Japan and other countries. As a part of this, JETRO supports the global expansion of Japanese startups, and also creates born-global startups.

Based on this, JETRO London will organise a venture-building programme for Japanese researchers in Japan to commercialise their intellectual property (IP) and found a startup, ideally in collaboration with entrepreneurs with multinational backgrounds.

2. Programme Outline

This programme is designed to support Japanese researchers in commercialising their ideas/technologies of deep-tech and start businesses with suitable co-founders, targeting international market from day 0.

It is an approximately 6-month hybrid programme of online and face-to-face sessions, and key activities include matchmaking with potential entrepreneurs, mentoring with experts, networking with investors, etc. All in-person activities will take place basically in Japan.

3. Participants

(1) Researchers

- Maximum of 8 participants based in Japan
- Applicants must be PhD holders, post-doctoral researchers, or professors. Master's students may be included depending on the application volume.
- Must be developing prototypes or have solid product/service concepts stemming from research IP ready for commercialisation.

(2) Entrepreneurs

- Same number of participants as the researchers
- Approximately 2 participants should be based in the UK or other countries being able to participate all face-to-face sessions; Approximately 6 participants are based in Japan.
- In preparation for potential substitutions, a pool of reserve candidates equal to or greater than the number of researchers must be secured. Participants may be substituted at the discretion of the Contractor, subject to JETRO's approval, if deemed unsuitable for the programme's objectives.
- Must have experience of business development within sectors relevant to the researchers. Serial entrepreneurs are preferred.
- Must possess multinational backgrounds

(3) Business sector: Climate & energy (hardware-led)

4. Goals of the programme

Participants to achieve the following:

(1) For researchers

- a. develop CXO mindset (Ideally CTO or CSO – not only CEO since not everyone is suitable for it)
- b. Establish relevant connections and networks with potential co-founders

(2) For both

- a. Forge connections with other key individuals, including investors, relevant to their specific business
- b. Engage with successful role-model startups founded by researcher-entrepreneur teams that have achieved product-market fit (PMF) in global markets
- c. Understand the UK's business cultures and market
- d. Create, assess, and adjust the business plans, marketing strategies
- e. Ideally, launch businesses

5. Estimated Schedule

Early-August 2026	- Sign contract - Start pre-recruitment of entrepreneurs
Early August – Early September	Application opens for researchers and entrepreneurs - online briefing session for researchers
Early September	Participants selection
Late September – March 2027 - Late September - October - November – March	Programme delivery - Sprint 1 (only for researchers) - Recruitment of entrepreneurs and matching - online briefing session for entrepreneurs - Sprint 2 - 4
20 March 2027 31 March 2027	Final report submission Completion of contract

6. Outsourced Tasks

(1) Recruitment

- a. Providing marketing material for participants recruitment

The Contractor shall provide JETRO with information and creatives for the promotional materials to recruit participants, such as a brief introduction of the Contractor including its strength, values offered in the programme, candidate mentors, programme outline.

- b. Recruitment

The Contractor shall support JETRO to recruit researchers in Japan and be responsible for recruiting entrepreneurs in the UK and Japan.

The contractor shall start pre-recruitment as soon as possible after signing the contract and shall be highly recommended to collaborate Japanese VCs/Accelerators to recruit entrepreneurs in Japan.

The contractor shall conduct briefing session to explain details of this programme for researchers and entrepreneurs.

(2) Participants selection

In close consultation with JETRO, the Contractor

- a. Shall determine the criteria for the participants selection.
- b. Shall conduct screening with a written application prior to online/video interview to select maximum 8 participants.

- c. Assess the candidates based on the application documents and interviews, adhering to the agreed criteria. The Contractor shall report its findings with comments to JETRO and discuss with JETRO to finalise the participants.

(3) In-person sprints in Japan

The in-person sprints will be conducted in Japan, and each sprint runs approximately 10 days including preparation and weekend.

The programme will consist of the following contents. In addition, the Contractor may also propose some ideas on how to support the participants more effectively.

a. Sprint 1

- Kick-off day to meet the cohorts and set expectations.
- 1:1 mentoring sessions, with the three mentors matched across the cohorts.
- Four to five working sessions on topics such as competitive analysis and theme-relevant material, go-to-market, and IP readiness.
- Deliverable at the end of the week: for each venture, an assessment of its status and readiness, a diagnosis of team gaps, and a concrete plan to find collaborators in the UK or further afield.

b. Between Trips

- The contractor shall continue remote mentoring between sprints as well as asynchronous follow ups and advice, and targeted introductions.
- the contractor shall actively source and put out targeted calls for entrepreneurs and specialists who may be interested in collaborating with the Japanese ventures.
- The contractor shall host matchmaking meetings with Japanese researchers Matching happens remotely first; in-person travel is reserved for moments where it clearly adds value (and at JETRO's discretion) — building trust, understanding the technology, and testing whether a team is productive together.

c. Sprint 2-4

- Each sprint opens with a progress report against milestones, followed by deeper venture-building.
- After the first trip, the contractor shall finalise a more detailed curriculum that will be bespoke and designed to the particular needs of the ventures in the cohort.
- The contractor shall open sessions beyond the core cohort to a wider audience of teams considering entrepreneurship in order to inspire and educate.
- The contractor shall conduct rigorous go/no-go reviews to determine which teams continue.
- The final sprint shall build to a Showcase, presenting the ventures to investors, JETRO leadership, and the broader UK–Japan ecosystem.

Note: Any expenses below should be **included** in the contract amount:

- ❖ Venue for all activities. However, if requested in advance, it may be possible to use JETRO HQ's meeting rooms (seminar style, capacity approximately 30-80 people) subject to coordination with other JETRO HQ activities.

- ❖ Travel expenses of the Contractor and overseas entrepreneurs recruited by the contractor during the onsite programme

7. Final Report submission

- (1) The Contractor shall submit a report to JETRO by 20 March 2027, summarizing the results of all the activities for the outsourced related content.
- (2) The report should include suggestions to assist JETRO with hosting similar programmes in the future.

8. Term of contract

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

9. Payment Terms

After the start of the contract, 50% of the total contract amount, including VAT and other taxes, shall be paid within 40 days of receipt of the invoice. The remaining amount shall be paid within 40 days of receipt of the invoice after confirming completion of the work.

The contractor shall issue the first invoice within 10 business days following the execution of the contract. The second invoice shall be issued as soon as possible upon completion of the work, and no later than March 31, 2027.

10. 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 organisation.
- (2) Has effective experience of implementation of acceleration programmes solely tailored and focusing on Scale-up in 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.

11. 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 any information of your founder pool, for example number of registrations, background of them, etc. (if applicable).
- (3) Your proposal needs to include your mentor list who may be mentors for the programme participants, and industry (sector) list you can handle.
- (4) Personal information collected will only be used within the programme for the purposes defined prior and will be shared within JETRO.