

**Announcement:**

**Startup/Ecosystem Players Sourcing Services in Western Europe**

**1. Background**

Japan External Trade Organization (hereinafter referred to as “JETRO”), a governmental agency promoting mutual trade and investment between Japan and other countries, launched a business platform in February 2021, the Japan Innovation Bridge (J-Bridge), to facilitate international open innovation, with various service menus including potential startups/scaleups sourcing customized for client Japanese companies (hereinafter referred to as “the Clients”).

In its 6<sup>th</sup> Medium-Term Plan (FY2023-FY2026), published in March 2023, JETRO specifically emphasized the importance for JETRO to support connecting Japanese innovation ecosystems and others to forge Japan’s footing in the global value chain.

In the reviewing process through several years of J-Bridge activities, as well as to modify its service framework to fit the objective stipulated in the 6<sup>th</sup> Medium-Term Plan, the following challenges have been identified for effective sourcing service provision.

- A. Network development between JETRO Offices and major ecosystem builders in each European country as well as regional ecosystem frameworks
- B. Response to diversified sourcing targets
- C. Effective prior/follow-up activities

**2. Objective of the Service**

The objective of the J-Bridge Startup/Ecosystem Players Sourcing Services in Western European (UK, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Ireland, etc.) regions (hereinafter referred to as “the Service”), is to connect the Clients with their appropriate business partners/ecosystem builders for ultimately achieving one of the following conditions:

- Business alliance project formation between the Clients and European startups/scaleups
- Development of international joint research between the Clients with European-related academia/research institutions
- Equity investment from the Clients into European startups/scaleups, or investment to venture capital (VC) fund as Limited Partnership (LP)

To achieve this goal, JETRO will outsource the Service to a specific company (hereinafter referred to as “the Contractor”) which has adequate resources and networks in the specific European regions.

**3. Contents of the Service provided by the Contractor**

The Contractor is to have an initial video call with the Clients to learn about and discuss their open innovation strategies, sourcing criteria and any other requirements and provide a list of potential business partners based on the requests from the Clients or JETRO offices.

If the Clients or JETRO offices request a meeting with a listed company, the Contractor is to make his/her best effort in setting up business meetings (video calls) for them.

JETRO expects selecting approximately 7 clients and conducting 2 meetings for each client (Numbers of clients and meetings are subject to change).

The details are as follows:

- A. Attending an initial online meeting (ca. 30 min.) with the Clients to acquire deep understanding of the objective, sourcing criteria, and any other requirements of the Clients. The record minutes are to be shared with the Clients and JETRO. In the event that a Client with a new request declines the initial video call, the Contractor may alternatively submit questions via email. This written communication shall be considered acceptable substitute for the initial online meeting, provided that JETRO deems the list of questions and the subsequent communication to be equivalent in terms of effort and preparation to those required for an initial meeting. In such cases, JETRO may proceed with the payment accordingly. For the purposes of this agreement, a “new request” is defined as a request from a new Client, or from a past Client whose current request differs in terms of target sectors and/or scope of collaboration.
- B. Listing up potential business partners (Startups/SMEs/Ecosystem Builders (e.g. government, local government funding agencies, universities, EU/national/regional research institutes, accelerators, and VCs from industry sectors)) based on A. The created List (“the List”) shall include the following information:
  - 20 or more companies/institutions
  - Company name, post address of head office, URL, email address, overseas office (name of the city, country), industry, sub-sectors, employee range, estimated revenue range, product/service, short introduction of the company (3-4 sentences)
  - Submission due: 3 weeks after placing an order unless agreed otherwise
- C. Arrangement of business meetings upon request by the Clients or JETRO offices (video calls, ca. 60 min)
  - The Clients will select the companies or institutions from the List, and request meetings. Upon the meeting request, the Clients will provide presentation material or company information for the companies/institutions that they requested meetings with.
  - The Contractor shall contact the selected companies/institutions to arrange an online meeting. The Contractor has to start making a contact to the selected company no later than 1 week after receipt of the meeting request.
  - If the companies/institutions accept to have a meeting, the Contractor shall arrange the online meeting with the Clients.
  - If the company that the Clients or JETRO requested a meeting with does not accept to have a meeting, the Contractor shall submit a contact report to JETRO. The date and the method of the contact, the name of the contact person and the reason of refusing the meeting must be included in the report.
- D. Attendance at business meetings and submission of meeting reports
  - The Contractor shall attend the arranged business meetings upon JETRO’s request.
  - Upon attending such meetings, the Contractor shall provide a report of arranged meeting by using the Appendix 1 and submit it to JETRO within a week after the meeting.

#### **4. Beneficiary**

Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)  
Ark Mori Building, 6F, 1-12-32, Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-6006 Japan

## 5. Payment

JETRO can make quarterly payment based on the achievements (number of the lists and the meetings arranged and conducted) indicated on the invoice from the Contractor. Please note that the fees for the meeting arrangement (Article 3-A, Article 3-C, Article 3-D) are payable only when the meetings have taken place.

## 6. Requirements for the Contractor

- The Contractor has enough experience, good knowledge and a large network to provide the services described in Article 3.
- The Contractor has knowledge about the Japanese business culture
- The Contractor has enough capacity to provide the services described in Article 3 by each deadline.
- The Contractor has a base (legal entity) in Europe to provide the Service.

## 7. Contractor selection

The contract is offered to the applicant with the highest scores whose offer does not exceed the ceiling price set in advance by JETRO. For score calculation, please see the Annex 1. Please note that JETRO will not disclose the reason of the scoring to the applicants.

## 8. Contract Term

From the day of signing the contract until 18<sup>th</sup> March 2027

## 9. Contact Person

Erina Oguma (Ms.)

E-mail: [Erina\\_Oguma@jetro.go.jp](mailto:Erina_Oguma@jetro.go.jp) / TEL: +49 (0)211 13 60 2 – 31

Takayasu Fukui (Mr.)

Email: [Takayasu\\_Fukui@jetro.go.jp](mailto:Takayasu_Fukui@jetro.go.jp) / TEL: +49 (0)211 13 60 2 – 15

## 10. How to Apply

Applications will take place in two stages.

### STAGE 1

Please submit the documents listed below to the contact person shown at section 9. no later than 27 April 2026 by email.

- 1) Corporate profile and relevant business achievements.
- 2) Experience history of persons who are to be engaged with the Service provision including managing the quality of the Service, and an organizational chart for the Service execution. Please name **only those who would be involved with the Service**. Please note that changing the previously proposed assigned persons is not permitted after submission of the document.
- 3) Suggestions for efficient and effective execution of the Service. Please note that submission of 3) is optional. JETRO reserves the right to accept, reject, or amend the suggestion provided. Please also note that JETRO will not bear any cost for preparing the application.

### **IMPORTANT:**

**Please do not send the offer/quotation/estimate/pricing at this stage** (Please refer to STAGE 2).

## STAGE 2

After evaluation of the submitted documents, **JETRO will invite the applicant to submit the offer (quotation). Please send the offer to the contact person shown at section 9. by the deadline set by JETRO which will be indicated in the invitation.**

Document evaluation by JETRO is expected to take about 5-10 business days.

NB: the price of the offer must be calculated based on the documents that the applicant submitted at STAGE1.

(End)

## Contractor Selection

The contract is offered to the applicant with the highest scores whose offer does not exceed the ceiling price<sup>1</sup> set in advance by JETRO. The ceiling price will not be disclosed to applicants.

The score consists of 1. Economic Score and 2. Technical Score. The final score will be the sum of 1. Economic Score and 2. Technical Score.

### 1. Economic Score

Economic Score is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Economic Score} = (1 - (\text{Price of the applicant's offer} / \text{the ceiling price})) \cdot 100$$

### 2. Technical Score

The Director-General, the Deputy Director-General, and the Director in charge of Open Innovation (“the Evaluators”) will evaluate the submitted documents based on the table shown below.

The average figure of the evaluation will be the technical score of the applicant.

If one or more of the Evaluators gives 0 as score for any of the essential items, the applicants will be regarded as “not qualified”.

Technical Score Table

	Evaluation Item	Score	
		Essential	Added Bonus
Essential	The applicant has a European base (legal entity) and is financially solvent.	10·0	
Essential	The applicant offers a relevant service and business history with which JETRO can believe that the applicant has a capacity to execute the Service provision.	10·0	
	The applicant has enough experience, deep knowledge and a large network to provide the Service		60·40·20·0
	The applicant has sufficient business experience with Japanese customers (private and public sectors)		30·20·10·0
	The persons to be assigned to execute the Service provision have relevant experience and deep expertise		60·40·20·0
	The applicant has outstanding proposals to the Service execution, or has background information with which JETRO can believe that the applicant is expected to contribute greatly to execute the Service.		30·20·10·0

Evaluation for added bonus	Score	
	Full score 60	Full score 30
Highly evaluated	60	30
Very much so	40	20
To some extent	20	10
No relevant information available/Not applicable	0	0

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<sup>1</sup> If the applicant’s offer exceeds the ceiling price, the applicant will be eliminated from the selection of the contractor regardless of the technical score.