

German Japanese Innovation Initiative 160

“Tech Innovation Challenge”

Period: April-September, 2022

Organizers: Germany Trade & Invest (GTAI), Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)

Co-Organizer: Japanese-German Center Berlin (JDZB)

In 2021, JETRO launched [J-Bridge](#), a business platform to facilitate collaboration or alliances between Japanese companies and overseas start-ups/businesses in Europe. JETRO supports cross-border open innovation for accelerating digital transformation (DX) by providing information or supports by coordinators.

“Tech Innovation Challenge” is organized by GTAI and JETRO. In a first step, GTAI and JETRO will invite Japanese companies in Europe aiming to solve social challenges in cooperation with German startups. These startups are members of the Digital Hub Initiative launched by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) in order to promote the internationalization and digitalization of German startups. The organizers present the sophisticated needs of the Japanese companies and offer opportunities to identify “Best Practice Open Innovation” partners. The Digital Hub Initiative can also provide follow-up support between cooperating companies. GTAI, JETRO and JDZB will organize a final pitch event on August 31 (tbc).

German-Japanese Innovation Initiative 160

Celebrating the 160th Anniversary of Japanese-German friendship, JETRO and GTAI launched the “Japanese-German/German-Japanese Innovation Initiative 160” to promote practical solutions for current global matters such as aging societies, the COVID-19 crisis, SDGs etc. JETRO and GTAI will annually co-organize support programs and present successful innovative examples of Japanese and

German cooperation projects of startups and SMEs or even bigger companies.

The following events are planned:

1. Providing joint business networking platforms.
2. Presenting “Best practice examples for Japanese-German/German-Japanese innovation projects”
 - of large companies, SMEs and startups as well as organizations,
 - with the focus on SDGs, aging societies, the COVID-19 crisis and others.

Program Schedule

March-April 15, 2022	Invitation of Japanese companies
April 2022	Kick-off with GTAI, JETRO and JDZB, confirmation of proposals
Early May 2022	Introducing projects to startups of Digital HUB via GTAI (video conference)
May/Middle of June	Application period of startups for presentations
End of June 2022	After a screening of applicants, GTAI and JETRO present a short list of startups to the Japanese companies
July 2022	Japanese companies select 2 of the best startups for each project to pitch in a final event
August 31, 2022 (tbc)	Final pitch event (incl. networking reception at JDZB), start of the cooperation of Japanese companies and the winning startups
End of 2022	Wrap-up event

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Focus Areas

(to be expanded upon request)

- Carbon Neutrality: Sustainable use of energy and natural resources, circular economy, AI, NLP, blockchain (applications re. the climate change challenges)
- Digitalization: Robotics, VR/CD, Mobility, Communication, Fintech etc.

Participation Requirements

- Japanese subsidiaries in Europe as registered J-Bridge members
[J-Bridge Registration](#) (only Japanese)
- Submission of 1-2 project proposals
- Presentation of projects in video call format to member startups of the Digital HUB Initiative
- Participation in the jury and in the selection of the startup winners for own projects in the physical networking event

Selection Criteria

- Willing to cooperate with foreign start-ups/companies,
- Defined ideas for the cooperation with foreign startups/companies
- Capability of cooperating, i.e. financial background and suitable workforce within your own company
- Commitment to start a pilot project with the winning startup
- Willingness to actively contribute in the program, i.e. taking part in all meetings as well as in the final pitch (August 31, 2022)

Language

Basically English (case by case Japanese also possible)

Venue

Matchmaking: Online

Networking event: Japanese German Centre Berlin (JDZB)

Participation Fee

Free of charge

No refund of travel expenses for participation in the networking event in Berlin.

Application Deadline

(for the acquisition of Japanese companies)
April 15, 2022

Application and Contact Person

Please download the [Application Form](#)

and send it to JETRO Berlin, Hiroyuki KOSUGE (Mr.)

Email: Hiroyuki_Kosuge@jetro.go.jp

Tel.: +49(0)30-2094-5564

Reference

[Digital HUB Initiative](#)

German-Japan Innovation Initiative 160

[Overview](#)

[Kick-off Event - Agenda](#)

[You Tube Video of the Kick-off Event](#)