

ManufacturingTech & HardTech

ManufacturingTech & HardTech Course

Application Guideline

Deadline : ~~2025 5/25 (Sun) 23:59 (JST)~~

2025 6/15 (Sun) 23:59 (JST)

industry 4.0
Accelerator

JETRO
Japan External Trade Organization



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Objective

Aim to understand the North American market, participate in local events and conduct Demo day event to cultivate potential customers and investors.

Couse Features

1

Accelerator with deep knowledge and wide network in manufacturing industry

2

Acquire knowledge of North American manufacturing markets and industrial technology areas

3

Develop potential customers, sales offices, sales channels and investors in Midwest US

Location

Tokyo (Japan), Detroit (US) and Online

Target Applicants

Eligible
Companies

Startups based in Japan

Stage

Pre-seed to Series A

Sector

HardTech, advanced manufacturing, mobility, electrification, automated systems, advanced materials, IoT, AI hardware



2 PROGRAM STRUCTURE | Program Overview

1 In-person Bootcamp@Tokyo



Overview, needs identification

Understand situation and needs of cohorts through 1-1 mentoring and group discussions with accelerator to gain a better understanding of the course as a whole and on-site program.

2 Online Sessions



Lectures, mentoring, and business MTG opportunities

Learn about business development and expansion strategies necessary for startup growth through lectures and mentoring, to deepen your understanding of your customers.

3 On-Site Program at Detroit



Attend local event business MTG and demo day

Develop potential customers and investors through attending innovation events in Detroit, matching individual companies for business meetings, and providing promotional opportunities through demo days.

4 Online Follow-up Sessions



Mentoring, follow-up

Achieve results based on the takeaways from the on-site program by meeting with mentors and following up on the connections formed in the field.

1 In-person Bootcamp@Tokyo | Overview, needs identification

Understand situation and needs of cohorts through 1-1 mentoring and group discussions with accelerator to gain a better understanding of the course as a whole and on-site program.

Dates /Venue

July 23 (Wed) - July 25 (Fri) or July 28 (Mon) - July 30 (Wed) Tokyo, Japan

Contents

- Face-to-face meetings between Industry 4.0 mentors and participating companies
- 1-1 mentoring to deepen understanding of each startup's product, stage, and value proposition
- Group discussions between mentors and participating companies, etc.

The date of the Bootcamp will be announced as soon as possible after notification of acceptance.

2 Online Sessions | Lectures, mentoring, and business MTG opportunities

Learn about business development and expansion strategies necessary for startup growth through lectures and mentoring, to deepen your understanding of your customers.

Dates
/Venue

Early August - Late September Online

Contents

Online Lecture Examples

- Value Proposition Refinement
- Customer Identification & Acquisition
- Go-To-Market Strategies
- Business Development & Pipeline Development
- Enterprise Tech Growth Strategies
- Fundraising Strategies

Providing opportunities to meet with individual cohorts

3 On-Site Program at Detroit | Attend local event business MTG and demo day

Develop potential customers and investors through attending innovation events in Detroit, matching individual companies for business meetings, and providing promotional opportunities through demo days.

Dates /Venue

Sept. 29 (Mon.) - Oct. 3 (Fri.) Detroit, US

Contents

Detroit Sessions (TBD)

- Henry Ford Museum, Greenfield Village, Ford Rouge Factory* tours
- Attend networking events at Lean Rocket Lab
- Pitch Opportunities at manufacturing industry-focused events
- Promotion opportunities at event such as Manufacturing Pop-Ups
- Attending, match making at Corporate Manufacturing Innovation Summit

*Ford Rouge Factory: A facility where visitors can see the innovative technology, sustainable design, and development mindset of Ford, one of the largest manufacturing companies in the US

4 Online Follow-up Sessions | Mentoring, Follow-up

Achieve results based on the takeaways from the on-site program by meeting with mentors and following up on the connections formed in the field.

Dates /
Venue

Week of October 13 (Online)

Contents

Lead Follow-up

- Meetings with mentors based on on-site program
- Identification of future issues
- Ongoing follow-up support for connections



5

Testimonials



Industry 4.0 had strong support from lecturers, who were also from manufacturing industry and were closely connected to manufacturing customers and partners. The way they delved into solutions was very specific from the industry's perspective. It was also a great opportunity to build connections with other startups who participated in the program.

(Cohort in FY2024)



We were reminded of unnoticed voices on the shop floor, such as requests for robot specifications among multiple plants and requirements related to maintenance.

(Cohort in FY2024)



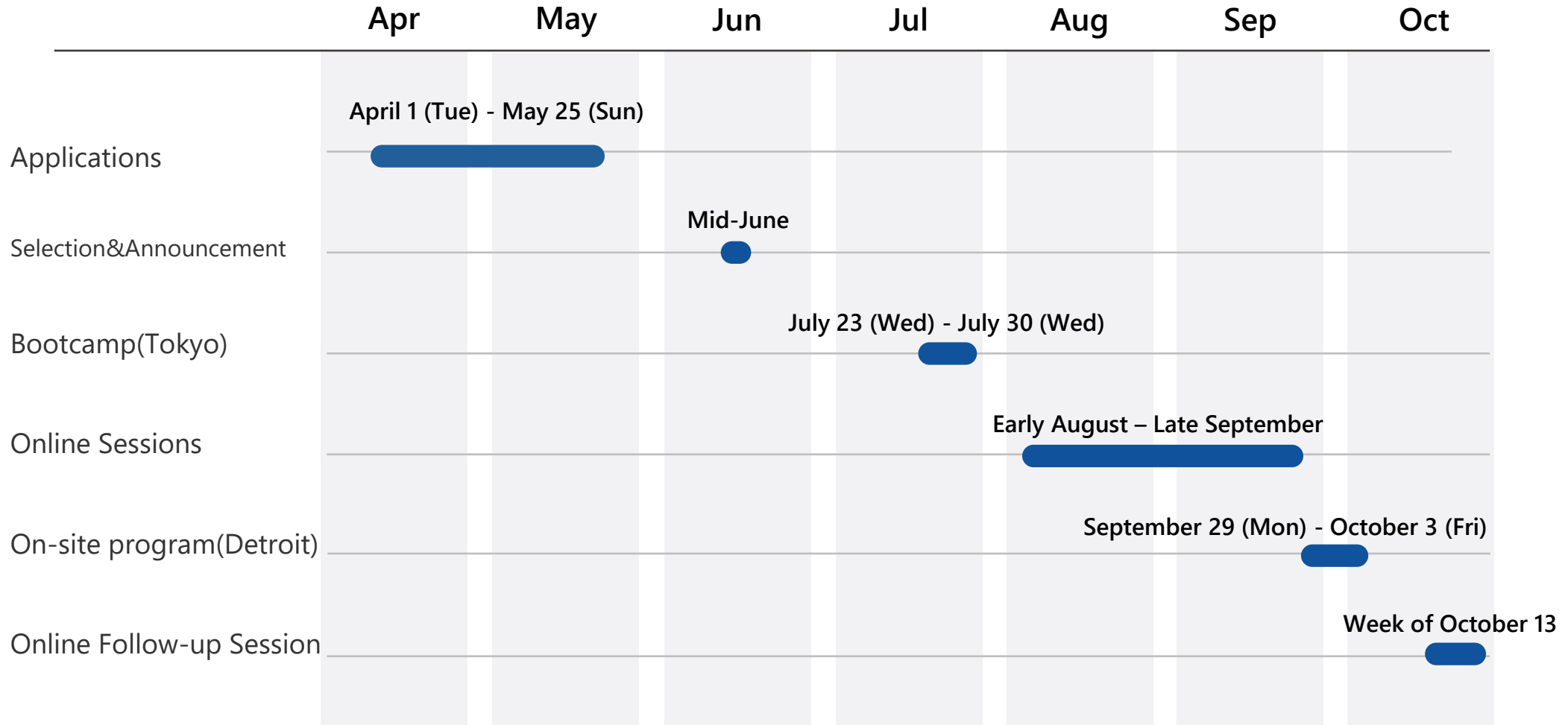
Through on-site visits and customer interviews, we realized that the product was missing features and needed improvement in terms of languages. We plan to release a version with new features in English soon.

(Cohort in FY2024)



We're able to eliminate psychological barriers with foreign countries. I talked with overseas visitors at exhibitions without resistance. The most important thing I gained was the horizontal connection. After returning to Japan, some of us keeping in touch and exchanged information even after the program ended. I felt that I had met wonderful friends.

(Cohort in FY2024)





Industry 4.0 Accelerator

<https://www.i40accelerator.com/>

An organization that helps startups with advanced manufacturing technologies commercialize and expand their businesses in the Midwest. Provides support through pitch events, demo days, and company and investor introductions.

Notable Collaborations



Members with extensive experience and network in hardtech industry



Interviewed over 600 startups, Incorporated more than 150 into portfolio



Helped more than 300 startups connect with companies and investors



Portfolio startups have received more than \$170 million in cumulative funding

Operations

Lean Rocket Lab

<https://www.leanrocketlab.org/>



Incubator and accelerator based in Jackson, Michigan, the heart of the automotive industry. Brilliant at business development, sales, and marketing strategies, offers market entry and customer relationship building opportunities.



Centrepolis Accelerator

<https://www.centrepolisaccelerator.com/>

The organization is based out of Lawrence Technological University. It has deep technical expertise in engineering, prototyping, and product roadmapping, and excels at helping technology concepts evolve into commercial reality.



Brandon Marken

Lean Rocket Lab CEO

In charge of a business incubator and accelerator specializing in manufacturing technology



Dan Radomski

Executive Director, Centrepolis Accelerator

Expertise in commercialization support for hardware, manufacturing, cleantech, circular economy, etc.



Scott Phillips

Mentor/Program Director

Cross-cutting mentoring including manufacturing, development, sales, marketing, financial management, etc.



Zach Kraabel

Assistant Program Manager

Helping startups and manufacturers work together



Michael Magdich

Mentor/Program Manager

Has extensive experience in supporting organizational restructuring, new business launches, customer base building, M&A, etc. Experience in Japan



Ryan Cahalane

Mentor

Many achievements in digital transformation, new business development, and manufacturing business reform

Mike Folster**Mentor**

Supporting improvement and efficiency through robotics, automation, and artificial intelligence in the manufacturing industry

Joe LaRussa**Mentor**

Assist in optimizing manufacturing strategies, costs, and ROI of new technologies

Mo Abuali**Mentor**

Driving Change in Manufacturing IT and OT Responsible for Automotive, Aerospace & Defense, Machinery, etc.

Steve Tebbetts**Mentor**

Expertise in automation, assembly and material handling

Tim Stuart**Mentor**

Expert in innovation process development in the field of advanced manufacturing

Pedro Guillen**Mentor**

Mobility and advanced manufacturing NPD, support for advanced technology development, and technical consulting expertise

Requirements

Must meet all requirements 1-5 and agree to the terms and conditions

1. Japan-based startup.
2. Actively planning global expansion or fundraising.
3. Business-level English proficiency
4. **Founder's participation**
5. Agreement to [program terms](#), [online program conditions](#) and post-program surveys.

Notes

- Past participants of Startup City Acceleration Program or Global Startup Acceleration Program may apply.
- Data might be shared with Cabinet Office, METI, and partner accelerators.

Selection Criteria

Applications reviewed by StartX and JETRO based on submitted materials. Finalists may be invited for interviews. No status inquiries accepted.

1. Team expertise, network, and language skills.
2. Product/service growth potential and market fit.
3. Alignment between course content and business goals.
4. Bonus points for Ecosystem Hub City-based startups.

Costs

◆ JETRO covers

- Program fees

◆ Participant covers

- US program travel and accommodation
- Domestic travel/lodging for Bootcamp
- U.S. entry costs (ESTA/VISA/insurance etc...)
- Program-related communication fees
- All other non-JETRO-covered expenses

The following both items must be submitted to complete your entry.



◆ English Pitch Deck (10 slides max, PDF/PPT) including:

✓ Product/service (problem solved + solution)

✓ Business model, market size, competitive advantage

✓ Past achievements and future plans

✓ Team background (include founders' LinkedIn profiles)

* Data might be shared with Cabinet Office, METI, and partner accelerators for selection and program operation

【Consultation with JETRO】

[30 Min MTG
request form](#)

For applicants uncertain about course selection or needing assistance with the application process, JETRO offers 30-minute advisory sessions. However, use of this service does not affect selection decisions and application deadlines may be adjusted based on submission volume.

CONTACT

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