

Founder University in Tokyo

Application Guideline

Deadline **December 7th, 2025, 11:59 P.M. (JST)**

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01 OUTLINE | コース概要

Purpose

To provide the essential knowledge and practical experience for early-stage fundraising, and to enhance entrepreneurial strategy and skills through networking with angel investors.

1	Acquire the essential knowledge and skills for fundraising activities in the early stages
2	Build networks with mentors and angel entrepreneurs to gain an international perspective for entrepreneurship

Assignment Location

Silicon Valley, USA

Recruitment Target

Target Audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Entrepreneurs of startups established in Japan or those preparing to launch a startup• Japanese founders of startups aiming to raise funds, both domestically and internationally
Stage	Early-stage
Field	None



02 PROGRAM STRUCTURE | プログラム構成 – 全体像



1 Domestic Program



Japan-based Bootcamp (30–35 participants)

Provides six days of lectures and workshops in Tokyo. Lectures cover fundamentals of Go-to-Market (GTM) strategy and business models, with additional sessions on specialized topics like international legal regulations.

*Program content and format are subject to change.

2 Online Acceleration Program



Online Program (30–35 participants)

Progress is managed through weekly 1-2 hour live sessions and mentoring, along with weekly surveys. The online acceleration curriculum is structured in stages, covering entrepreneurial mindset, MVP development, business model design, market validation, TAM analysis, and competitive assessment.

3 Travel Program



Workshop & Demo Day (10 participants)

In Silicon Valley, the mecca of startups, we conduct workshops on scaling strategies, market entry approaches, and pitch coaching. Through Jason Calacanis' network, participants gain direct exposure to the U.S. startup ecosystem, build connections, and secure opportunities to engage.

1 Japan-based Programs ※Details updated as needed

A four-day lecture and workshop in Tokyo, plus online discussions and mentoring. Lectures cover the fundamentals of entrepreneurial mindset and business models.

Capacity Approximately 30-35 participants

Schedule

In-person Bootcamp @Tokyo:

- 【Founder University Tokyo Session】 January 12 (Mon) – January 14 (Wed)
- 【Networking with Angel Investors 】 January 16 (Fri)

Online Sessions: January – March

Overview

In-Person Bootcamp:

- Learn about entrepreneurial mindset, customer discovery, and more
- Planned speed networking and discussions between entrepreneurs and investors

Online Sessions:

- Held weekly (approximately 60-90 minutes) as online discussions or small pod sessions with 3-5 startups + 1-2 mentors
- Lectures on competitive analysis in overseas markets and opportunities to evaluate startups from an investor's perspective

※ Language of instruction: English

3 Travel Program | Lectures, Networking, Demo Day

Capacity 10 participants (selected through program screening)

Schedule March 16 (Mon) - March 20 (Fri) @San Francisco or Austin *TDB

**Overview
(Tentative)**

- Arrange meetings with potential customers suited to each startup or entrepreneur through Jason Calacanis' network
- Gain opportunities to evaluate startups from an investor's perspective through Demo Day
- Lectures and sessions related to U.S. business expansion

※ Language of instruction: English

Support Organization Information



LAUNCH

URL: <https://www.launch.co/>

LAUNCH is a startup support and investment organization based in San Francisco, USA, operating under the philosophy "We Back Builders." Its CEO is renowned angel investor Jason Calacanis, known as an early investor in companies like Uber and Robinhood. It operates the Founder University education program for entrepreneurs and the LAUNCH Accelerator, which provides investment and growth support. With investments in over 300 companies, it boasts a strong track record, including eight companies becoming unicorns. Its integrated support model combining education, media, and investment provides comprehensive assistance from entrepreneur development to fundraising.



Jason Calacanis

Technology entrepreneur and fund manager. Host of the podcast "This Week in Startups" and known as co-host and executive producer of the All-In Podcast. He began his career as a scout at Sequoia Capital, a top Silicon Valley venture capital firm, and later invested as an angel investor in over 550 early-stage startups, including Uber.



Capacity

Approximately 30-35 participants

Eligibility

Eligible Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurs of startups established in Japan or those preparing to launch a startup • Japanese founders of startups aiming to raise funds, both domestically and internationally
Stage	Early-stage
Field	None

Application Requirements

Program participants* must meet one of the following criteria

1. Be an entrepreneur or aspiring entrepreneur based in Japan
2. Be a startup founded by Japanese nationals, established either in Japan or overseas
3. Be an early-stage startup seeking overseas funding, or be preparing to launch a startup aiming for overseas business expansion
4. Companies with a clear path to monetization and progress in market validation
5. *Willingness to cooperate with post-participation surveys, etc.

*This program is a collaborative project between the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and JETRO, which will conduct follow-up surveys and growth progress assessments as needed.

Expenses borne by participants

- Other expenses incurred overseas, such as transportation, meals, communication fees, visa fees, insurance fees, etc.
- (For in-person events only) Domestic transportation and accommodation expenses for the domestic program and follow-up sessions
- International airfare
- Accommodation expenses during overseas stay
- All expenses other than those covered by JETRO as listed on the right

Costs covered by JETRO

- Program tuition fee



Selection Criteria

- Is the idea/prototype clear and does it contribute to solving societal challenges?
- Does the business idea show potential for future growth and commercialization?
- Does the applicant demonstrate entrepreneurial drive and a willingness to learn?
- Is the motivation for participating in the program clear?
- Is the applicant interested in starting a business overseas in the future?
- Is the applicant a candidate expected to grow through the program?
- Do you possess the English proficiency required to attend lectures conducted in English?
- As a general rule, not having participated in the travel program of any other J-StarX program this fiscal year

Application Form

Deadline: Sunday, December 7th, 2025, 11:59 PM (JST)

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- Applications will be reviewed based on the submitted content, and notification of acceptance will be provided.
 - Individual interviews by JETRO may be conducted as necessary.
 - Please note that we cannot respond to any inquiries regarding the screening criteria or results.
 - Please prepare your **pitch video** and enter it into the application form.
(Refer to the following pages for format and method)
 - Please complete all sections **in English**.

Points to Note When Creating and Submitting Pitch Videos

Please note that submissions not adhering to the following points may be excluded from review.

Pitch Video Guidelines

Topic: "Your current business, business idea, or what you aim to achieve through this program"

Duration: Within 3 minutes

Language: English

*The pitch deck used in the video must also be submitted

Submission Method: Via the application form

Video → Submit as a public link within the application form

Pitch Deck → Submit as a link (e.g., Google Drive, Canva)

Deadline: By 5:00 PM (JST) on Sunday, November 30, 2025

*If you cannot submit your video via the application form, please send it to the following address.
Use the subject line "Founder/Angel Course_Pitch Materials Submission_Your Name" and include your name in the email body.

【Submission Address】

JETRO Startup Division, Attn: Satsuki Ibaraki, Erika Suzuki, Elly Okura

j-starx@jetro.go.jp

08 CONTACT | お問い合わせ



Course Name : Founder University in Tokyo

Affiliation : JETRO Innovation Department, Startup Division

Contact : Satsuki Ibaraki, Erika Suzuki, Elly Okura

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