

Application Guidelines for the "Global Startup Acceleration Program"
- "Equity-Based Program (Silicon Valley Hub Program)" -

1. Description

The purpose of the Global Startup Acceleration Program "Equity-Based Program (Silicon Valley Hub Program)" (hereinafter "**Program**") is to build an innovation bridge between the Silicon Valley ecosystem and Japanese ecosystems by partnering with top-tier accelerators and/or venture capital firms (hereinafter "**Accelerator**").

The Japan External Trade Organization (hereinafter "**JETRO**") will introduce a minimum 12-week program to be provided by the Accelerator. The first cohort must receive seed funding as a rule, as well as opportunities to achieve product-market fit and develop a go-to-market strategy for the US Market. The program may include classes, mentorship, introductions to investors and potential customers, a demo day, and other components. The program content and workshops will be designed collaboratively with JETRO. The Accelerator provides opportunities for cohort startups to take part in the flagship acceleration program based in the US. All selected cohorts, except for non-Japanese startups, will automatically qualify to participate in the US or Global flagship program with no additional tuition fees required.

2. Program Outline

The Accelerator will provide a minimum 12-week acceleration program (US Preparation Program) in Japan for at least nine startups in collaboration with JETRO and other partners in Japan and worldwide. The program structure and schedule may be flexibly adjusted based on the Accelerator's requirements and requests.

1st Step: Program Development / Sourcing and Selection

The Accelerator will collaborate with JETRO and other Japanese government entities to design a program that strengthens relationships between the Silicon Valley and Japanese startup ecosystems. During this period, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and

mandates will be established, along with defining the focus areas in the following target sector:

Target Sector: B2B

The Accelerator will source startups from both the global and Japanese markets, ensuring that at least 50% of selected startups have a strong Japanese connection (one of the program's mandates). JETRO and other Japanese government entities and private partners may participate in the selection process as requested by the Accelerator.

To improve applicants' investment readiness, the Accelerator, in collaboration with JETRO, will host a workshop or a seminar on key investment structures such as SAFE, J-KISS, and the Accelerator's business model. Additionally, to ensure that applicants can make neutral and informed decisions, JETRO has the right to review term sheets and investment contracts presented by the Accelerator. From a neutral standpoint, JETRO may also provide consulting in collaboration with lawyers. While the Accelerator remains responsible for investment discussions, JETRO will provide informational support to help applicants navigate the process with confidence and clarity.

The Accelerator will provide JETRO with a program overview report, including details on startup recruitment. The application process must be shared with JETRO in real time via a secure system that does not contain personal information.

2nd Step: US Preparation Program (Minimum 12 weeks)

The Accelerator will conduct a minimum 12-week in-person or virtual acceleration program in Japan and US, during which the Managing Director and Accelerator team will guide the nine startups using their global mentor networks. The program content and workshops will be collaboratively designed with JETRO, aiming to prepare participants in Japan for the flagship program in the U.S. or globally (3rd step).

The acceleration program should include mentorship, classes, introductions to mentors/investors/potential customers and demo days (If needed). Some virtual programming is possible, allowing overseas mentors and guest speakers to participate remotely and enabling networking opportunities with international investors and customers. The Accelerator will provide a final report detailing the program outcomes, including the progress of each participating startup and potential next milestones.

Demo Day

The Accelerator must invite overseas investors to the Demo Day in Japan. While the format (online or offline) is flexible, participation by overseas investors is mandatory. The primary goal of the Demo Day is to facilitate the cohort's transition into the U.S. or global program, increase their sales, and secure angel and seed investments while in the U.S. or globally.

3rd Step: US Program (2-3 weeks)

After completing the second stage, it is essential to prepare a program in the United States or globally to facilitate participation in the flagship program. To effectively prepare for the flagship program, it is desirable to offer a program that allows participants to experience aspects of the flagship program. This program should be designed for a 2-3 week stay and tailored to meet the specific needs of the startups.

4th Step: Flagship Program (in the future) *No commitment

After the acceleration program, the Accelerator will provide continued support to program alumni. All graduates except non-Japanese startups will receive guaranteed placement in the Accelerator's flagship acceleration program in U.S. or globally with no additional tuition fees or equities required. Accelerator must support the visa process for Japanese cohorts participating in the US program.

3. Condition for the Program

a. Location:

U.S. Preparation Program – 1st or 2nd: Japan or Online

U.S. Program – 3rd: U.S.

*Program development, sourcing and selection may be provided virtually from global resources by the Accelerator with support from Japanese Managing Director and teams.

b. Language:

English

c. Participants

The Accelerator will make an open call for this program and will accept applications from startup companies globally.

d. Verticals

The participants' vertical is expected to be various although this cohort will be B2B focus. The Accelerator must suggest priority sector(s) and may include them in the application to achieve the mandate of at least 50% "Japanese" startups in the cohort. The Accelerator will be required to customize the program based on the qualified startups' products, services, and needs.

e. Budget

Maximum price: US\$941,000

*Maximum price should not exceed US\$941,000

f. Investment

All startups in the cohort must receive the seed funding from the Accelerator as a rule. JETRO itself will not invest in participating startups, nor in Accelerator's fund as a limited partner or otherwise.

4. Conditions for the Contractor(s) Engaged in the Project

- a. Must have an established organizational structure and the capabilities to manage and execute the project effectively. Should have a global network and expertise relevant to the project.
- b. Must have broad and effective experience in implementing global acceleration programs.
- c. The Accelerator should have a track record of supporting startups that became unicorns.
- d. Must be able to invest in startups through an acceleration fund. Preferably has additional funding for follow-up investments. Should also have close connections with top-tier VC firms for later-stage investments.

e. Must operate a flagship acceleration program in U.S. or globally

5. Term of Contract

The effective term of the contract is from the contract start date through March 31st, 2026.

6. Payment

In compensation for the services to be provided by the Accelerator to JETRO, JETRO shall pay a total amount to the Accelerator in two payments. The first half payment of the program will be made by JETRO to the Accelerator upon execution of this agreement. The second half payment of the program will be made by JETRO to the Accelerator upon the completion of the program.

If the Accelerator requires any advance payments to adequately execute the program, due consideration and adjustments shall be made accordingly. The Accelerator should note any such requests in writing.

If the program is conducted in-person in Japan, the Accelerator must take necessary tax processing procedures.

<For reference>

About the Cabinet Office, Government of Japan

The Cabinet Office is enhancing Japan's Innovation and formulated "Beyond Limits. Unlock Our Potential. -Strategies for creation of startup ecosystem to compete with the world top ecosystems-"

(<https://www8.cao.go.jp/cstp/openinnovation/ecosystem/>).

In line with this strategy, the cabinet office has selected eight areas (Hokkaido, Sendai, Tokyo region, Nagoya region, Kansai region, Hiroshima, and Fukuoka), as Startup cities and providing startup support the programs vigorously.

(<https://www.j-startup-city.go.jp/>)

About JETRO

JETRO is a government organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment

between Japan and the rest of the world. Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO's core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping Japanese startups and scaleups maximize their global potential.