

# **J-StarX Founder-Angel Training program**

## **Description**

The Japan External Trade Organization (hereinafter "JETRO") aims to make Japan a more attractive destination for global startups and investment by partnering with world-class angel investors, accelerators, and other startup ecosystem players.

The purpose of the Angel/Founder Training (hereinafter "Program") is to address two critical challenges limiting Japan's startup ecosystem growth:

1. Japanese entrepreneurs face limited access to overseas angel investment, restricting their funding options and international expansion opportunities
2. Japanese angel investors lack connections to global startup ecosystems, limiting their investment diversification and access to international deal flow

This program will provide both the entrepreneurs and the investors with key knowledge necessary for the early-stage funding activities from both side perspectives, and a unique opportunity to develop networks between the entrepreneurs and the investors in the cross-border environment. The program provides comprehensive cross-border education and networking to establish sustainable investment bridges in both directions.

## **Program Outline**

The program will be structured as a 10-week intensive program with the following components:

- Community Promotional Event: community engagement event to build awareness and excitement for the partnership
- Week 1: In-person intensive program in Japan (5 days)
- Week 2-9: Online accelerator program with structured activities and virtual networking (8 weeks)
- Week 5: Mid-program selection process (10 startups selected for US Demo Day)
- Week 10: In-person Demo Day and Investment Matching Event in the United States

## **Program Content**

### **1. Participant Composition**

- Participants

Japan-based Startups: 30 participants initially, with 10 selected for Immersion Program

Japan-based Angel Investors & Other Investors: 10 participants

- Mentor

-Lead mentors

-Overseas Angel Investor: 6 participants (experienced mentors from established international entrepreneur and investor education programs)

### **2. Program Structure**

#### **A. Pre-Program and Selection: Community Promotional Event**

Duration: 1 day

Location: Japan

Target Audience: Broader startup community, potential participants, media, and ecosystem partners

Content:

- Partnership announcement and program overview
- Keynote presentations from international and Japanese startup ecosystem leaders
- Networking opportunities for ecosystem stakeholders
- Application period launch and information sessions
- Evaluation and selection of Startups

#### **B. Week 1: Domestic Entrepreneur Bootcamp (Japan)**

Duration: 5 days

Location: Japan (flexible venue)

Mandatory Attendance: All participants (startups, Japan-based investors, overseas mentors)

##### **Day 1: Investor Education Workshop**

Target Audience: Japan-based angel investors & other investors (10

participants) + Overseas angel investor mentors (6 participants), optionally for Japan-based startups

Content:

- Global angel investment landscape overview
- Introduction to international deal flow opportunities
- Basic cross-border investment considerations
- Strategies for accessing overseas startup pipelines
- Case studies of successful Japanese investors investing internationally
- Networking strategies and best practices

### **Day 2-4: Entrepreneur Education Bootcamp**

Target Audience: Japan-based startups (30 participants, mandatory attendance) + All investors and mentors may participate

Content:

- International scaling curriculum adapted from leading entrepreneur education methodologies
- Understanding overseas angel investor expectations and decision-making processes
- Pitch deck optimization for international audiences across different markets
- Financial modeling and valuation methodologies for global expansion
- Cultural communication strategies for cross-border partnerships
- Legal frameworks and regulatory considerations for international fundraising
- Go-to-market strategies for overseas expansion (US, Europe, Asia-Pacific)
- Customer acquisition and user growth strategies in international markets
- Building remote teams and international operations
- Case studies of successful Japanese startups raising from overseas angels

### **Day 5: Networking & Team Building Activities**

Target Audience: All participants

Content:

- Speed networking sessions between entrepreneurs and all investors
- Panel discussions featuring successful cross-border investment cases
- Cultural bridge-building exercises and communication workshops
- Investment thesis sharing and collaboration discussions

- Formation of mentor-mentee relationships for continuing program
- Integration of Japanese investors with program network for future deal flow opportunities

※ The content herein is provided for illustrative purposes only and may be subject to modification, in consultation with JETRO, depending on the stage and other relevant circumstances of the selected startups.

### **C. Week 2-9: Online Accelerator Program**

Weekly Structure:

- Live Sessions: 1-2 hours per week (split format for different time zones)
- Asynchronous Learning: Access to recorded content and resources
- 1:1 Mentoring: Structured pairing of entrepreneurs and mentors
- Progress Tracking: Weekly surveys and milestone reporting

#### **Weekly Curriculum:**

- Week 2: Being a Founder - Foundational entrepreneurship principles and mindset development
- Week 3: Building an MVP - Product development methodologies and rapid prototyping
- Week 4: Business Model - Business model optimization for cross-border scaling
- Week 5: Customer Profiles - Customer discovery and market validation techniques
- Week 6: Validation Research - Market research and competitive analysis (International vs. Japanese markets)
- Week 7: Metrics & TAM - Key performance indicators and total addressable market analysis
- Week 8: Iterating on MVP - Product iteration based on market feedback
- Week 9: User Feedback & Competitive Matrix - Customer acquisition strategies and competitive positioning

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### **Ongoing Activities:**

- Virtual office hours with program team
- Peer-to-peer learning sessions
- Deal flow sharing and evaluation
- Progress reporting and accountability check-ins
- Access to contractor's network and resources

### **D. Week 5: Mid-Program Selection Process**

Process: Selection of 10 startups from the 30 initial participants for US

Demo Day

Selection Committee: Overseas angel investor mentors in consultation with JETRO

Selection Criteria:

- Readiness for international expansion
- Business model scalability and market potential
- Team execution capability and progress during program
- Market opportunity size and competitive advantages
- Investment readiness and fundraising potential

### **E. Week 10: Immersion Program (United States)**

Duration: 5-10 business days (※ 1-2 free days may be included)

Note on Free Days: "Free days" are not designated leisure days but are intended as flexible time to encourage participating startups to pursue their business development.

Location: United States (to be determined based on participant preferences)

Format: In-person with virtual participation options

Mandatory Participants:

- Selected 10 Japanese startups (post-selection)
- Overseas angel investor mentors (6 participants)
- Head of accelerator and lead mentors

Optional Participants:

- Japan-based angel investors & other investors (upon request)

Content:

- Days 1-2: Accelerator Prep & Perfecting Pitch - Final pitch rehearsals and investor preparation
- Day 3: Demo Day presentations - Formal presentations to investor audience

- Days 4-5: Investment discussions - One-on-one investment discussions and deal structuring sessions

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## **Contractor Requirements**

### **1. Mentor Recruitment**

The contractor shall recruit and coordinate:

- 6 overseas angel investor mentors with proven track records in international startup education and investment
- All overseas mentors should have:
  - Foreign angel investor base outside Japan with interest in Japanese market
  - Minimum \$50,000 investment capacity per deal
  - Track record of startup investments and mentoring
  - Network and expertise relevant to target sectors
  - Experience in established entrepreneur/investor education programs

### **2. Program Delivery**

- Coordination of all program logistics for Japan and US components
- Content development and delivery aligned with international best practices
- Facilitation of mentor-entrepreneur matching and ongoing relationships
- Management of selection process and demo day execution

## **Program Details**

### **A. Location**

- In-Person Week 1: Japan (flexible locations)
- Online Program: Virtual platform with global accessibility
- Demo Day: United States (location determined by participant feedback)

### **B. Language**

English (with Japanese translation support available when needed)

### **C. Participants**

**Entrepreneurs (30 initial participants, 10 selected for Demo Day):**

- Japan-based entrepreneurs and pre-entrepreneurs (nationality irrelevant if

startup established in Japan)

- Japanese founders with startups established both in and outside Japan
- Early-stage startups seeking funding across borders
- Clear path to revenue and market validation

**Japan-based (Angel) Investors (10 participants):**

- Track record of startup investments
- Network and expertise relevant to target sectors

**D. Osaka Global Startup Expo (GSE) Expert Panel Invitation Element**

At the request and discretion of JETRO, the Contractor shall support the planning, coordination, and on-site execution of a session at the Global Startup Ecosystem (GSE), a global deep-tech conference to be held in early October 2026 in Osaka, Japan.

The session is expected to take the form of a panel discussion consisting of a total of four participants: one JETRO representative serving as moderator, two global investors, and one representative of the Contractor. Thus, the Contractor will arrange up to three (3) panelists (two investors and one Contractor representative). However, the composition and number of participants may be subject to change.

The scope of work may include, but is not limited to, program design, speaker selection and invitation, and travel and logistical arrangements related to the participation of overseas speakers. Travel and accommodations will be included for three (3) panelists for three (3) days and four (4) nights.

The invited investors are expected to be top-tier global venture capital investors who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Have the capability or track record to invest in Japanese startups;
- Have an interest in establishing a Japan-focused fund; or
- Are affiliated with a Tier 1 venture capital firm outside Japan.

In all cases, it is preferable that the investors be at the partner or general partner level with investment decision making power, not only in operations. Potential candidates should be proposed to JETRO before confirming.

## **Budget**

Maximum US\$1,107,195

Please specify the pricing for each program in the proposal.

- ① Pre-Program and Selection: Community Promotional Event US\$---
- ② Domestic Entrepreneur Bootcamp(5days) US\$---
- ③ Online Accelerator Program (8 weeks) US\$---
- ④ Immersion Program US\$---Immersion Program US\$---
- ⑤ Osaka Global Startup Expo (GSE) Expert Panel Invitation Element (3 nights and 3 people) US\$---

## **Conditions for the Contractor(s) engaged in the Project**

### **A. Organizational Structure and Capabilities**

Has an established organizational structure and capabilities to manage and complete the project properly. Has a global network, and knowledge necessary for the implementation of the project.

### **B. Experience and Track Record**

Has broad and effective experience of implementation of education programs for entrepreneurs and investors in the world. Has experience of building up unicorns or facilitating significant investment deals in the past five years (desirable).

### **C. Network and Investment Arms**

Has investment arms and has close connections with world top tier VCs and angel investors. Can provide access to high-quality mentors and industry experts.

### **D. Communication and Reporting**

Can adhere to JETRO's requests, as well as report to, communicate with, and consult with JETRO in an adequate manner. Can present efficient data for the program evaluation.

### **E. Data Protection and Confidentiality**

Has knowledge and systems/tools for handling confidential and/or personal information accordingly, particularly investment-related sensitive information.

### **F. Legal Compliance**

Can comply with applicable laws and regulations, especially the Foreign Corrupt

Practices Act and state unfair competition laws.

### **G. Japan Investment Interest**

Is willing to invest in Japan and establish an entity in Japan (desirable).

\*Contact JETRO SF, if considering investing in Japan, forming a fund, or partnering with a Japanese company.

### **H. International Network and Mentor Recruitment**

Can recruit and bring 6 experienced overseas angel investors to serve as mentors throughout the program. These mentors should have proven investment track records, experience in cross-border deals, and genuine interest in expanding Japanese angel investors' access to global opportunities.

### **I. Collaboration with JETRO**

Can work effectively with JETRO to provide comprehensive program content, particularly in areas requiring local expertise such as Japanese startup ecosystem overview, regulatory guidance, and government support initiatives.

### **Term of Contract**

The term of the contract is from the contract start date through March 19th, 2027.

### **Payment**

In compensation for the services to be provided by Contractor(s) to JETRO, JETRO shall pay the total amount to Contractor(s) in structured payments.

### **Payment Structure**

- **First payment (50% of proposed price)** will be made by JETRO to Contractor(s) upon execution of this agreement.
- **Second payment (25% of proposed price)** will be made by JETRO to Contractor(s) upon completion of Week 5 mid-program selection process and confirmation of 10 startups selected for US Demo Day.
- **Final payment (25% of proposed price)** will be made by JETRO to Contractor(s) upon completion of Week 10 program and receipt of final program report from Contractor(s).

Payment will be made by wire transfer to Contractor(s)'s bank account designated by Contractor(s) in writing. JETRO will pay the requested payment amount within 40 days after receiving the billing statement.

## **Performance Reporting**

The Accelerator(s) is required to regularly report on each company's business progress to JETRO. JETRO demands the submission of two official reports aimed at facilitating payments—one interim and one final. These reports must include detailed descriptions of the program structure, evaluations, delivery specifics, achievements and feedback from the participating companies, the impact of Demo Day, and promotional activities. The final report will be submitted to JETRO by March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026. The format will be provided by JETRO.

## **Required Reporting Elements**

- Investment deal tracking between overseas angels and Japanese entrepreneurs
- Network formation and mentorship relationship outcomes
- Program impact assessment on Japan's startup ecosystem international connectivity
- Mid-program selection process documentation and rationale
- Demo Day outcomes and follow-up investment activities
- Recommendations for future cross-border investment program iterations

## **Program Schedule**

The contractor will propose a tentative schedule for the above services. Upon contract execution, the contractor will work with JETRO to finalize the schedule leading up to the start of the program.

## **Proposed Timeline**

- Contract execution and planning: 1-2 months
- Program delivery (10 weeks): As scheduled
- Follow-up and final reporting: post-program completion

## **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 13 areas (Hokkaido, Tohoku region, Tokyo region, Nagoya region, Kansai region, Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Hokuriku region, Nagano/Niigata, Setouchi region, Kumamoto, and Okinawa) as Startup Cities and is providing startup support programs vigorously.

### **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.