

Application Guidelines for the
J-StarX Deeptech Commercial and Government Advanced Program (USA)

1. **Subject:**

J-StarX Deeptech Commercial and Government Advanced Program (USA)

2. **Description:**

The purpose of the J-StarX Deeptech Commercial and Government Advanced Program (USA)" (hereinafter "**Program**") is to foster global human resources innovation and help build a strong global network for future Japanese innovators aiming to enter the U.S. government procurement and commercial market, in collaboration with top-level U.S. accelerators, angel networks, VCs, and other startup ecosystem builders (hereinafter "**Accelerator(s)**") in the U.S. and Planning and Operation Companies (hereinafter "**Partner(s)**"), by selecting [5 to 10] persons/startups to participate in the **Program, with a focus on U.S. stakeholder validation, commercial translation, federal readiness, and execution foundations especially relevant to U.S. public-sector and government-procurement opportunities.**

The Japan External Trade Organization (hereinafter "**JETRO**") will sponsor the **Program** to be provided by **Accelerator(s)**.

Accelerator(s) will provide JETRO a report by the end of the contract.

3. **Program Outline:**

JETRO will provide the program in cooperation with **Accelerator(s)** as stated below. The program structure and schedule may be adjusted accordingly after discussions between JETRO based on the request of **Accelerator(s)** in the U.S..

a. **Schedule / Location**

The **Program** starts with a 6-week application phase, which then moves on to a 4-week selection phase consisting of a screening period and an interview period. During the selection phase, JETRO and **Accelerator(s)** will screen applications to choose [10 to 12] persons/startups, conduct interviews with them individually, to then select [5 to 10] persons/startups in total that can participant in the **Program** based on their motivation, commitment, preparedness, etc. The Virtual program will be provided mainly online which includes the information sessions provided by JETRO as well as **Accelerator(s)** and conduct a final pitch session to decide the [5 to10] persons, and a minimum of [5] startups and entities,

that will advance to the Local program based on the level of idea / product, business stage, commitment and team set-up.

The Local Program will be held primarily in the region where the selected accelerator is based, and will last for 1-3 weeks.

[J-StarX Deeptech Commercial and Government Advanced Program (USA)]

Phase	Period	Location	# of ppl
Selection phase Screening period Interview period	4 weeks (June-July)	Online	10 – 12
Virtual Program phase	3 weeks (July)	Online	5 - 10
Local Program phase	1 -3 weeks (Aug)	In-person in the U.S.	5 - 10
Follow-up phase	Until the end of Feb, 2027	Online	5 - 10

*Final schedule will be determined after discussion between JETRO based on the request of **Accelerator(s)** in the U.S.,.

b. **Language**

The **Program** will be held primarily in English with supplemental Japanese on an as-needed basis.

c. **Participants**

JETRO will accept applications from **Early, middle-to-growth stage startups** that are planning to launch or expand their business in the U.S., including those aiming to pursue U.S. government procurement and related public-sector opportunities in addition to private-sector procurement. **Accelerator(s)** will be involved in selecting suitable participants for the **Program** together with **JETRO**. The participants' verticals are primarily

1. Advanced manufacturing and industrial modernization,
2. Autonomy, robotics, and unmanned systems

3. Cybersecurity and resilient critical infrastructure
4. Sensing, edge computing, and situational awareness enablers
5. Advanced materials and next generation production methods
6. Aerospace/Space Tech
7. Quantum
8. Semiconductor

To include, other applicable dual-use or government innovation as well.

Accelerator(s) will be required to customize the **Program** based on the qualified startups' products, services, and needs.

d. **Budget**

Maximum Price: \$409,502 (This includes the interviewing of [maximum of 12] companies in the Screening phase, [5 – 10] companies for the Virtual Program, [5 - 10] companies for the Local Program, and Follow up phases.

Accelerator(s) should propose the base price, which is the price for [10] companies for the Virtual program, Local Program and Follow-up phase, then state how much the increase will be by adding one additional company to count to the **Program**. The maximum price is when there are [10] companies in the Virtual Program, Local Program and Follow-up phase. This price should not exceed the maximum price of \$409,502.

Participating startups may be granted the option to continue their activities while receiving mentoring from the Accelerator through an extension of up to two additional weeks following the core one-week Local Program period.

The startups to be granted this option will be determined through discussions between JETRO and the Accelerator.

Please specify the cost per additional week. Note that this option may not be granted to all participating startups.

Maximum Price:

* Total price of [12] companies for the interview, [10] companies for the Virtual Program, 3 weeks Local Program and Follow-up phase. Price should not exceed \$409,502.

e. **Scope of Work:**

Accelerator(s) will provide the following contents:

i. **Application Phase**

Note: JETRO will open participation for this program and share the applicants' information with Accelerator(s)

1. **Recruiting** - Work closely with **JETRO** for a media / marketing schedule and plan to get the largest reach of applicants

ii. **Selection Phase**

1. **Screening**

Select prospective participants of the **Program** with JETRO and select the applicants that will advance to the interview process

2. **Interview**

Conduct interviews with approximately double the number of expected dispatches to the Virtual/Local Program

iii. **Virtual Program Phase**

NOTE: Each session shall focus on defining each startup's objectives and identifying the resources required to achieve them, in order to maximize outcomes during their stay in the U.S.

1. **Seminars/Sessions**

Provide at least 2 industry/area specific training sessions and record those for archive purposes.

2. **One-on-one mentoring sessions**

Provide at least 2 one-on-one mentoring sessions (1 hour) per startup

3. **Final Pitch**

Conduct a pitch session as part of the final selection process to conclude the Virtual Program

iv. **Local Program Phase**

NOTE : The Accelerator shall conduct regular check-ins between the Virtual Program and the Local Program and provide necessary support for participants' goal achievement.

1. **Venue with Supervision**

Accelerator(s) will arrange and equip a meeting space designated for training, networking, and demo-day activities. This venue will be overseen

by personnel with robust industry experience, who will be readily available to offer in-person guidance and assistance to startups as required.

2. ***Seminar and Interactive Group Coaching Session (optional)***

May provide seminars or supplementary video training.

3. ***One-on-one Mentoring Session***

Provide one-on-one mentoring sessions (1-hour, at least 2 times in a week) with industry experts per startup. Additional mentoring should be provided to companies per request or seemingly need it.

4. ***Business/Feedback Meeting Arrangement***

Business meetings to be arranged with potential investors including relevant government procurement stakeholders, angel investors, VCs, CVCs and/or potential partners/clients. At least 3 valuable introductions per startup should be delivered during the **Program**.

5. ***Direct Networking Events***

Accelerator(s) may include 2-3 optional networking opportunities, including business matching events, VC speed dating or additional pitch events or any other ecosystem events in the region to maximize the outcome of the **Program**.

f. Follow-up Phase

The follow-up phase may include additional mentoring, business matching arrangement or any other events such as VC speed dating.

g. PR

Reach out to media / networks in Japan for recruiting participants and sharing the program.

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

- a. Not under the circumstances of being denied participation due to unethical and/or unlawful activities by either JETRO or Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)

- b. 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.
- c. Has broad and effective experience of implementation of acceleration programs in the world. Has experience of building up unicorns in the past five years (desirable).
- d. Has investment arms and has close connections with top tier global VCs.
- e. 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.
- f. Has knowledge and systems/tools for handling confidential and/or personal information accordingly.
- g. Can comply with applicable laws and regulations, especially the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and state unfair competition laws.
- h. Is willing to invest in Japan and establish an entity in Japan (desirable).

In addition, prospective contractor(s) will be evaluated by the following preferred specifications:

- Project implementation skill
- Wide, various, open mentor network which matches this program
- Strong connection to Angel, VC and CVCs, including list of contacts in each selected sector
- Experience supporting companies in each selected sector
- Ability to support alumni companies through follow-ups and checking in
- Experience working with government agencies or any other economic organizations to build local ecosystem all over the world

5. Term of Contract

The term of the contract is from the contract start date through February 28th, 2027.

6. Payment

In compensation for the services to be provided by **Accelerator(s)** to JETRO, JETRO shall pay a total amount to **Accelerator(s)** in two payments. The first half payment of the **Program** will be made by JETRO to **Accelerator(s)** upon execution of this agreement and will be half the amount of the base price of the contract. The second half payment will be made by JETRO to **Accelerator(s)** upon the completion of the **Program** and submission of the final report and will be the actual value minus the first amount JETRO paid to **Accelerator(s)**.

7. Preparation of Application

Non-oral, telephone, or facsimile will be accepted. All costs of preparation shall be borne by the Applicants.

The proposal document or presentation submitted by the applicant should include the following:

a. Project implementation

- Project details about each phase
- Implementation structure (arrangement of personnel(s) in charge / responsibilities of each personnel(s))
- Operating procedure, Method, Proposal on how to complete all the tasks of the project in an effective manner and enhance project outcome
- Ability to conduct online *Description of online tools to be used
- Frequent communication *Description of digital communication tools with companies and JETRO to be used

b. Experience and Capabilities of the Organization

- Experience with similar projects
- Networking and information gathering skills to enhance project outcome
- System to manage personal/confidential information
- Include 2 or 3 notable recent successful case studies of international alumni going global from their local market

c. Project implementation skills of assigned personnel(s)

- Mentor network list with mentor profiles
- Profiles of each project personnel(s)
- Sector experience
- Strong connection to VCs, accelerators, corporates, universities
*List of the Angeles/VC/CVC/ connections or partners should be included (They should be invited to the pitch/networking events)

d. Government Procurement-Related Networks and Qualifications

- Government procurement-related networks and institutional connections
- Required public procurement qualifications and registrations
- Government procurement trends and needs analysis capability

<For reference>

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.