

Application Guidelines for "Global Startup Expo (GSE) 2026" Startup Ecosystem Influencer Engagement & Podcast Production

1. Description

The Japan External Trade Organization (hereinafter "JETRO") supports international promotion activities for the Global Startup Expo (GSE).

Global Startup Expo (GSE) is a global startup conference held on 5-7 October 2026 in Osaka, focusing on deep-tech innovation, supported by the Japanese government, aimed at fostering international collaboration and showcasing cutting-edge technologies.

The purpose of this project is to engage a globally recognized influencer from the startup ecosystem and venture capital community to speak at GSE, and to produce and distribute one (1) podcast episode themed on GSE. The Contractor shall manage all logistics for the influencer, including travel and accommodation, from preparation through the event day.

2. Project Outline

The project comprises two (2) deliverables:

- ① One (1) speaking engagement at GSE by a prominent influencer in the startup ecosystem and/or venture capital community
- ② One (1) podcast episode themed on GSE, to be produced and distributed by or in collaboration with the influencer

The Contractor shall be responsible for identifying, securing, and fully coordinating the influencer's participation, including travel, accommodation, and on-site support on the day of the event.

3. Scope of Work

A. Influencer Invitation and Coordination

The Contractor shall:

- Contact and formally invite the selected KOL
- The KOL is expected to have several of the following characteristics:
 - Active early-stage investor (angel or GP)
 - Operator of a globally recognized startup media platform (e.g., podcast, newsletter, or conference)
 - Strong ability to convene founders and investors at scale
 - Significant global presence and influence within the startup ecosystem and/or VC community
- Manage all logistical arrangements, including:
 - International and/or domestic flights
 - Accommodation in Osaka during the event period
 - Local transportation
 - Per diem and other incidental expenses, as applicable

- Maintain regular communication with the KOL prior to and during the event
- Prepare and deliver briefing materials related to GSE

B. Speaking Engagement at GSE

The Contractor shall coordinate one (1) speaking session at GSE, including:

- Confirming speaking format (keynote, fireside chat, or panel) with JETRO
- Coordinating session content and messaging aligned with GSE's theme
- Managing pre-event rehearsal or briefing as needed
- Providing on-site support on the day of the event, including:
 - Reception and escort of the KOL
 - Schedule management on the day
 - Troubleshooting and support throughout the event day
 - Coordination with GSE organizers and JETRO staff

C. Podcast Production and Distribution

The Contractor shall coordinate the production and distribution of one (1) podcast episode themed on GSE. Specifically:

- Produce or facilitate the production of one (1) podcast episode featuring content related to GSE, the Japanese startup ecosystem.
- The podcast shall be published on the KOL's existing platform or another mutually agreed channel with significant reach
- The episode may be recorded before, during, or after the event.
- The Contractor shall provide JETRO with:
 - Published link and estimated reach upon release

Note: No guarantee of specific listener numbers is required; however, the channel should have a demonstrable and relevant audience.

D. Additional Podcast Production Staff

The number of podcast production staff members will be determined based on the actual production requirements and approved in advance by JETRO. The payment for this additional staff will be made according to the number of such approved podcast production staff members.

E. Reporting

The Contractor shall submit a work completion report by 10 November 2026,

4. Project Details

A. Location

Osaka, Japan (GSE venue; on-site support required on 5-7 October 2026)

B. Language

English shall be the primary working language.

C. Number of Influencers

One (1) KOL

D. Number of Podcast Episodes

One (1) episode

E. Budget

Maximum Total Budget US\$233,309 Applicants must provide a detailed cost breakdown in the attachment 3 Cost Guide.

5. Conditions for Contractor

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 in engaging influencers and KOLs within the global startup and venture capital ecosystem. Has experience in managing logistics for international speakers or talent.

C. Network in Startup and VC Community

Has close connections with globally recognized startup media personalities, investors, podcast hosts, and other thought leaders with significant reach in the startup and VC community.

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 project evaluation.

E. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Has knowledge and systems/tools for handling confidential and/or personal information accordingly.

F. Legal Compliance

Can comply with applicable laws and regulations, especially the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and state unfair competition laws.

G. On-site Capability in Japan

Is capable of providing on-site operational support in Osaka, Japan during the event period (5-7 October 2026).

6. Term of Contract

The term of the contract is from the date of signing until 30 November 2026.

7. Payments

JETRO shall pay the total amount to Contractor(s) in two installments.

(1) First Payment (50%): Payable upon receipt of an invoice following the execution of this agreement.

(2) Final Payment (50%): Payable upon receipt of an invoice after the submission of the final report and JETRO's confirmation of the completion of all contracted tasks. The invoice shall be submitted within 10 days of JETRO's confirmation.

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.

8. For Reference

About the Cabinet Office, Government of Japan

The Cabinet Office is enhancing Japan's innovation ecosystem 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 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.