

Application Guidelines for “JETRO Born Global / Kansai Student Global Pre-Startup Program”

1. Background and Purpose

The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) is an independent administrative institution under the jurisdiction of Japan’s Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). Through its support for the overseas expansion of Japanese companies and its fostering of startups, JETRO contributes to Japan’s economic growth and the development of its innovation ecosystem.

JETRO seeks to strengthen the entrepreneurial talent pipeline of the Kansai region (Osaka, Kyoto, Hyogo, Nara, Shiga, and Wakayama prefectures, hereinafter the “Kansai Region”) by cultivating a global mindset among high school and university students at an early stage of their academic and professional development. Exposure to leading entrepreneurship education and to the U.S. innovation ecosystem — particularly Silicon Valley — is intended to build the foundation for future born-global startup creation originating from the Kansai Region.

To this end, JETRO will implement the “Born Global / Kansai Student Global Pre-Startup Program” (the “Program”). JETRO seeks a professional service provider (the “Contractor”) to design, operate, and execute the Program on its behalf, in close coordination with JETRO.

2. Program Overview

The Program is an entrepreneurship development initiative for high school to university students whose primary academic or professional activities are based in the Kansai Region. The Program shall be conducted primarily in English and shall consist of four (4) phases, implemented over a period of up to seven (7) months:

- 1) Phase 0 – Recruitment and Selection
- 2) Phase 1 – Domestic Program (conducted in Japan)
- 3) Phase 2 – Mentoring
- 4) Phase 3 – Overseas Immersion Program (conducted in the United States)

3. Scope of Work

3.1 Phase 0 – Recruitment and Selection

Period:

Prior to the commencement of Phase 1 (approximately two (2) weeks to one (1) month). JETRO will conduct information sessions and outreach activities targeting educational institutions, support organizations, and communities within the Kansai Region to raise

awareness of the Program. The Contractor may be requested to provide support as necessary.

In addition, the Contractor shall:

- Design and administer the application format;
- Evaluate applicants; and
- Select participants (the “Participants”) for admission to the Program.

3.2 Phase 1 – Domestic Program

Period:

October – December 2026.

Activities shall primarily be conducted on weekends and Japanese public holidays, for a total of approximately forty (40) to fifty (50) instructional and program hours.

Participants:

- Approximately thirty (30) students.
- Eligible participants include high school students, technical college students, undergraduate students, master’s students, and doctoral students whose primary activities are based in the Kansai Region.

Program Components

- Ice-breaking sessions;
- Introduction to startups and comparison of Japanese and U.S. startup ecosystems;
- Design thinking, including business idea exploration and entrepreneurship fundamentals;
- Business model development and planning;
- Pitch deck development workshops; and
- A final pitch competition and evaluation for selecting one (1) to five (5) participants who will advance to Phase 2.

3.3 Phase 2 – Mentoring

Period:

December 2026 – February 2027.

Following completion of Phase 1, the Contractor, in cooperation with JETRO, shall select one (1) to five (5) students (the “Selected Participants”) to advance to Phase 2. The Contractor shall provide mentoring services to the Selected Participants, with each Selected Participant assigned one (1) mentor with relevant entrepreneurship expertise.

Mentoring Activities:

- Individual mentoring sessions;
- Introduction to relevant professional networks; and
- Guidance on business development and commercialization.

Each Selected Participant shall receive approximately one (1) mentoring session per week, totaling at least ten (10) hours over the course of Phase 2. Group mentoring sessions and additional mentoring activities may be conducted as needed, in consultation with JETRO.

Mentor Requirements:

Mentors assigned to the Program shall:

- Possess expertise in advanced entrepreneurship and innovation education, or have experience as startup founders and/or venture capital investors;
- Demonstrate strong knowledge of Product-Market Fit (PMF), networking, and startup growth strategies, together with substantial mentoring experience;
- Be capable of connecting Selected Participants with relevant professional networks appropriate to each participant's development stage and needs; and
- Possess foundational knowledge of intellectual property, regulatory compliance, and market analysis.

3.4 Phase 3 – Overseas Immersion Program**Period:**

Two (2) weeks between February and March 2027

Participants:

One (1) to five (5) selected participants

Program Contents:

- Immersive training, including lectures, discussions, workshops, mentor meetings, and Customer Discovery activities;
- Networking opportunities with local students, investors, startups, and other ecosystem stakeholders;
- Round-trip ground transportation between the airport and accommodation for the Selected Participants;
- Accommodation arrangements and participant support at or near the program venue; and

- One (1) to two (2) post-program follow-up mentoring sessions for each Selected Participant.
- A Demo Day (see below);

Demo Day

Demo Day shall be held on the final day of Phase 3. The Contractor's proposal shall address the following elements of the Demo Day:

- Expected number of attendees;
- Invited judges;
- Expected number of local student attendees;
- Venture capital representatives;
- Whether attendance will be invitation-only or open to the public;

All pitches delivered during Demo Day shall be recorded and submitted to JETRO.

4. Program Implementation Details

4.1 Locations

Phase 0 – Online

Phase 1 – Kansai Region (Primarily in-person at a venue arranged by JETRO, with online options as needed)

Phase 2 – Online

Phase 3 – California, United States

4.2 Language

English shall be the primary language of instruction and communication throughout the Program.

4.3 Final Report

The Contractor shall submit a final report until this contract ends. The final report shall include:

- Program schedules and summaries for each phase;
- Participant feedback and testimonials;
- Follow-up activities and outcomes;
- Expected achievements and future prospects for participants; and
- Recommendations for future program implementation.

5. Timeline

The following timeline is tentative and subject to adjustment by mutual consultation between JETRO and the Contractor.

Phase	Period
Phase 0 – Recruitment and Selection	Prior to Phase 1 (approximately two (2) weeks to one (1) month)
Phase 1 – Domestic Program	October – December 2026
Phase 2 – Mentoring	December 2026 – February 2027
Phase 3 – Overseas Immersion Program	Two weeks between February and March 2027
Contract End	March 19, 2027

6. Budget and payment Terms

Maximum US\$ 337,083.33

The amount of the final payment will vary between the Minimum Payment and Maximum

Payment based on the attachment 3 Price List.

JETRO shall make payment for services provided by the Contractor in two (2) installments:

- First Payment: fifty percent (50%) of the contract ceiling amount, payable upon execution of the contract.
- Final Payment: the remaining balance of the final contract amount after deducting the first payment, payable upon completion of the Program and JETRO's receipt of the Contractor's final report.

All payments shall be made by wire transfer to the bank account designated in writing by the Contractor.

7. Requirements for the Contractor

- The Contractor must possess the organizational capacity, resources, and expertise necessary to effectively manage and implement the Program, together with reliable networks relevant to entrepreneurship education and startup development.
- The Contractor must have substantial and demonstrable experience delivering similar programs in the United States, particularly within Silicon Valley.
- The Contractor must be able to respond flexibly to JETRO's requests and provide

appropriate reporting, communication, consultation, and data necessary for program evaluation.

- The Contractor must possess the knowledge, systems, tools, and organizational framework necessary to appropriately manage confidential and personal information.
- The Contractor must comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and relevant state-level unfair competition laws and regulations.

8. Reporting and Communication

The Contractor shall communicate the progress of Program execution to JETRO in a timely manner and shall, at a minimum, adhere to the following:

- Regular progress meetings and updates with JETRO;
- Written reports for each phase and deliverable;
- Immediate escalation of risks or delays; and
- Submission of the final report in JETRO's designated format.

8.1 Confidentiality

The Contractor shall comply with JETRO's confidentiality requirements and shall protect all confidential, sensitive, and personal information received from Program applicants, Participants, Selected Participants, mentors, and other stakeholders.

8.2 Additional Conditions

JETRO retains final approval authority over the Program, and any major changes to the Program schedule, content, or budget require JETRO's prior approval.

9. Contract Period

The contract period shall commence upon contract execution and continue through March 19, 2027.

About JETRO

JETRO is a government-related organization dedicated to promoting trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Established in 1958 to support Japanese exports, JETRO now focuses on attracting foreign direct investment into Japan and supporting Japanese startups and scaleups in their global expansion.