

SDGs CHALLENGE 2022

Application Requirements

May 2022

Hyogo Prefecture and Kobe City
(Program Operator: CommunityLink)

SDGs CHALLENGE 2022

1. Program Background

In the 21st century, innovation is dramatically changing not only the marketplace but also everyday life around the world. At the same time, global warming, mass consumption, and economic disparity are increasing threats to the sustainability of human society, forcing us to fundamentally rethink the way we act. In response to these changes in the environment, business activities, which until now have placed the highest priority on economic growth, are now strongly required to focus on the realization of a better society, based on the principle of a more macro perspective represented by the SDGs, as the direction of development and growth in the 202X generation.

In response to these changes in the market environment, Hyogo Prefecture and Kobe City, which are promoting the creation of an ecosystem-based on startups, launched the "SDGs CHALLENGE" startup support program last year in 2021, intending to create a better environment and industry for the next generation.

This program supports startups aiming to solve the world's SDGs issues by providing acceleration programs, mentoring, and networking to support their business development and overseas expansion.

2. Purpose of the Program

The purpose of this program is to support the business development of startups and SMEs seeking to solve global SDG issues and create systems and products that will create global social change.

3. Targeted Startups

We are looking for the following startups or small and medium-sized enterprises that contribute to the SDGs through business development and business growth and aim to explore expansion into the global market :

- Seed-stage startups
- Small and medium-sized enterprises planning or taking on the challenge of a second startup (new business)

4. Program Outline

(1) Accelerators & Business development support

- **Founders Meeting (mutual exchange among business owners)**
During the program (from Jul. 28th to Oct. 28th), all founders or managing directors of selected startups are requested to attend these meetings, which are held every Friday evening. Each company reports on its business goals, progress, and challenges at this meeting. The companies consult, comment, and advise each other.
(*) We encourage you to come to the KOBE office and attend the meeting.
- **Mentoring, Business Matching, and Workshops**
 - Individual interviews with mentors (mentoring)
 - Business matching
 - Workshops by mentors and experts (Pitch training, English presentations, practical advice by lawyers, accountants, VCs, etc.)
- **Mid-term Demo Day and Open Conference**
 - Mid-term Demo Day (early November) to promote your business to government officials, VCs, and corporate strategists
 - Public demonstration day “SDGs Day” (early March) to tell your business to KOBE citizen
- **Support Exploring Expansion into the Global Markt**
 - Providing local information and information on global expansion
 - Networking with the international startup community

(2) Financial support for Exploring Expansion into the Global Markt

(Note: Applicants only, subject to screening)

We will support the necessary expenses for startups that wish to conduct overseas demonstration and research projects.

Applicants who wish to apply for this support should complete Appendix 2 and apply. If there is a potential fit, we will reach out to schedule an interview.

(Up to 10 companies selected).

- We support business activities that fall into one of the following categories. Activities that fall into more than one category are acceptable. Details will be determined in a separate discussion:

- Category-1: Overseas customer and market research, a survey of potential development partners, and demonstration projects (prototype production, etc.)

* maximum 2 million yen per company (tax included))

- Category-2: Exhibition in overseas showcases

* maximum 1 million yen per company (tax included))

- Category-3 : Join surveys organized by the program (building relationships with the overseas startup community, networking with entrepreneurs and innovators)

Please refer to the following outline:

* maximum 500K yen per company (tax included))

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<Survey Tour>

Date: Mid-September, 2022

Planned destinations: Germany, France, Scandinavia

Description: Visits to incubation facilities and start-up centers in significant cities pioneers in SDG-related and social impact business development and exchanges with local entrepreneurs.

Travel period: approximately one week to 10 days

*Please note that we may consider other plans based on the interest of the participating companies.

- The following expenses are eligible for support :
 - Number of travelers: Up to 3 per company
 - Eligible Expenses: *Please see Attachment 3 for details on qualified expenses
 - Airline tickets (including airport fees, fuel surcharges, and other necessary expenses)
 - (Note: Domestic travel expenses for overseas travel are not eligible.
 - Accommodation expenses
 - Exhibit fee
 - Event participation fee
 - Transportation fee (only when exhibiting at an exhibition)
 - Commission fee (to be determined after screening based on the specificity of the application/plan and the method of acceptance inspection/confirmation)

5. Language

The activities of this program, such as meetings and mentoring, are conducted in Japanese.

However, since this program aims to support overseas development, activities and exchanges will be conducted in English.

6. Number of companies to be selected

About 20 companies.

7. Program Fee

Free of Charge.

(NOTE: Travel, accommodation, and other expenses necessary for participation in the program, including a trip to the Kobe venue, are to be borne by the participants.)

8. Venue

KIGYO Plaza HYOGO & UNOPS S3i Innovation Centre Japan

Address:

SMBC KOBE headquarter building 2F,

Naniwa-cho 56, Chuou-ku, Kobe, Hyogo Prefecture

9. Program Schedule

July 28th, 2022 (Thursday) - March 31st, 2023 (Friday)

- **Acceleration Period : July 28th - October 28th, 2022**
 - **Boot-Camp : July 28th - 30th, 2022**
 - **Founders' Meeting : Every Friday from Aug.5th to Oct.28th, 2022**
 - **Mid-Term Demo Day : Beginning of November, 2022**

Remark :

* The founder (CEO) or managing director must participate in the above activities.

* In addition to the above, we provide business development support (mentoring & business matching) and overseas expansion to individual companies.

* We may hold additional workshops as needed.

- **Additional Support Period : November, 2022 - March, 2023**
 - **Founders' Meeting : once every per 3 weeks**

Remark :

* The founder (CEO) or managing director must participate in the above activities.

* In addition to the above, we provide business development support (mentoring & business matching) and overseas expansion to individual companies.

- **Public demonstration day “SDGs Day” (early March)**

Remark :

* The founder (CEO) or managing director must participate in the above activities.

- **Financial Support for Demonstration and Research Projects for Overseas Operations**
(After approval of the plan, until January 31, 2023 (Tuesday))

10.How to apply & Application Period

Applications opened on May 17th, 2022. The deadline to apply is June 19th, 2022. If you want to apply, please submit your application online **as soon as possible**.

<https://sdgs-challenge.jp/>

* Regarding required information to apply, please refer to the Annex-1.

The SDGs CHALLENGE 2022 team reviews all applications carefully. If there is a potential fit, we will reach out to schedule an interview.

11.Qualifications

The SDGs CHALLENGE 2022 team reviews all applications carefully. If there is a potential fit, we will contact you via e-mail to schedule an interview. We will be inviting teams to talk to us on a rolling basis.

Applicants who wish to conduct overseas demonstration/research projects are required to submit a separate detailed project plan (please refer to the Annex-2). We will schedule an interview after screening it.

We will qualify all applications by the following guideline:

1. That have already started to develop and market a concrete business (R&D) (not at the level of an idea)
2. That has a clear target issue, customer, business goal or vision, and an activity policy that matches the application's theme based on the SDGs.
3. Whose business activities are expected to impact the regional economy of Hyogo/Kobe positively and can serve as a catalyst for change in the market as a whole.
4. The founder or managing director must be able to participate in the program on their initiative.
5. Participation in programs that require on-site participation (boot camps, interim debriefing sessions, and "SDGsDay," a public demonstration day).
6. Willingness to actively participate in and contribute to the startup community in Hyogo and Kobe, including the SDGsCHALLENGE

12. Notification of Acceptance

We will respond with a decision before launching the Program in July 2022.

All selected teams will be announced on our web site: <https://sdgs-challenge.jp/>

13. Requests for cooperation in surveys and follow-up

We will ask all applicants to cooperate in surveys and hearings to improve our SDGs CHALLENGE program.

14. Other Notes

- A. We will implement this program at KIGYO Plaza Hyogo and UNOPS S3i Innovation Centre Japan. When you join the program and use our facilities, please comply with the facilities' terms and conditions of use. The proposer has intellectual property rights to the business plan and other information.
- B. However, the proposer is responsible for taking measures to legally protect information such as patents, utility models, trade secrets, and know-how and is requested to submit proposals to the extent that it is acceptable to make them public.

- C. The contents of the submitted documents, including personal information, will be shared with Hyogo Prefecture, Kobe City, UNOPS S3i Innovation Centre Japan, and the contracted operators, Community Link NPO and Yamashita Project, Inc. The information will also be shared and used to the extent necessary for this program's cooperating and sponsoring organizations.
- D. The submitted personal information will not be used for any other purpose or provided to any third party, except for related parties unless otherwise stipulated by law or agreed to by the applicant.
- E. Suppose we find any misrepresentation or failure to meet the requirements after the qualified or launched program. In that case, the applicant will be disqualified or asked to withdraw from the program during the program.

15.Contact

If you have any questions, please contact to the contracted operators, Community Link NPO (Nakanishi or Tatsumi) via e-mail : sdgs-challenge@communitylink.jp

LEGAL DISCLAIMER

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Annex-1

Application Form / List of Entry Items

1. Please select one of the 17 SDG targets that your business is most primarily targeting
2. Corporate or organization name
3. Location of your office (headquarters)
4. Date of establishment
5. Capital
6. Name of representative
7. Title of Representative
8. Representative's e-mail address
9. Contact telephone number
10. Do you wish to receive financial support for demonstration/research projects for overseas expansion? Yes or No
If "Yes," please select the category below :
(Activities that fall into more than one category are acceptable)
 - Category-1: Overseas customer and market research, a survey of potential development partners, and demonstration projects (prototype production, etc.)
* maximum 2 million yen per company (tax included))
 - Category-2: Exhibition in overseas showcases
* maximum 1 million yen per company (tax included))
 - Category-3 : Join surveys organized by the program (building relationships with the overseas startup community, networking with entrepreneurs and innovators)
Please refer to the following outline:
* maximum 500K yen per company (tax included))

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<Survey Tour>

- Date: Mid-September, 2022
- Planned destinations: Germany, France, Scandinavia
- Description: Visits to incubation facilities and start-up centers in significant cities pioneers in SDG-related and social impact business development and exchanges with local entrepreneurs.
- Travel period: approximately one week to 10 days
- *Please note that we may consider other plans based on the interest of the participating companies.

* Applicants who wish to apply for this support should complete Appendix-2 and apply. If there is a potential fit, we will reach out to schedule an interview.

11. Outline the issue(s) you wish to resolve (200 words or less regarding the target customer(s) and the nature of the problem (s))
12. Countries/regions where you are interested in overseas development
13. Outline the business you are developing or deploying (200 words or less describing the specific method and effect of solving the issue and its impact on society)
14. URL of the prototype or product
15. Current status of the applied your business (within 200 characters)
(Development and prototyping in progress, PMF (Product Market Fit(*)) trials, sales, deployment in progress, etc.)
* It means you have confirmed the product or service fits within a specific market or the existence of customers and their needs.
16. Details of the applied your business (about 2 A4 pages)
Please describe the current business phase as concretely as possible, such as under designing, development/trial production, sales development, etc. (number of customers, sales amount, forecast, etc.)
17. In particular, if you are in the process of prototyping or conducting test sales/demonstration experiments, please explain based on data such as verification results.
18. Business model (revenue model)

19. Please describe any similar products or similar/competing/referenced services. Please provide the names and URLs of competitors.
20. Please tell us your expectation from participating in this program?
How many people do you wish to use our program facility (co-working space)?
21. Please let us know any additional requests or queries.

(Annex-2)

Research & Trial Plan in the overseas market

Applicants who wish to conduct overseas demonstration and research projects must fill out the following items on the Google Form. We will review the document and schedule an interview.

Applicants will be required to submit the detailed implementation plan and itinerary before launch.

After completing the project, you have to submit the implementation result report.

1. Company Name/Representative
2. Organization
3. Number of people planned to travel and their roles
4. Target country/region
5. Reason and strategy for global expansion and selecting the target country/region (about 200 words)
6. Issues in the target country/region to be solved through your business deployment (about 200 words)
7. Purpose and outline of the demonstration project (or research project/exhibition) (about 200 words)
8. Details of the new demonstration project (or research project/exhibition) to be attempted (about 1 A4 sheet)
9. Expected results from the implementation of the project
10. Period of implementation
11. Details of Estimated Expenses

(Attachment 3)

Expenses for overseas demonstration and research projects eligible for support

1. Eligible Expenses

Expenses incurred from the date of adoption of the overseas demonstration/research project plan to January 31, 2023 (Tuesday), including the following

- Airline tickets (including airport fees, fuel surcharges, and other necessary expenses)
Note: Domestic travel expenses for overseas travel are not covered.
- Accommodation expenses
- Exhibit fees
- Event participation fee
- Transportation fee (only when exhibiting at an exhibition)
- Commission fee (to be determined after screening based on the specificity of the application/plan and the method of acceptance inspection/confirmation)

2. Ineligible Expenses

- Personnel expenses for employees of participating companies (including in-house engineers, subsidiaries, etc.)
- Outsourcing expenses for service development
- Domestic travel expenses (including domestic travel for overseas travel and travel to the venue in Kobe)
- Local transportation expenses
- Equipment purchase expenses (equipment, etc. that will become company assets, including data, etc.) Including data, etc.)*Fixtures should be 100,000 yen (excluding tax).

3. Period of eligibility

From the date of adoption to Tuesday, January 31, 2023
(the period during which expenses are incurred)

4. Eligible countries

Worldwide, multiple countries are acceptable.

If you travel to a country with an Overseas Danger Information Level or Overseas Infectious Disease Risk Information Level 2 or higher based on the "Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Overseas Safety Website" involved, please use

your judgment and take necessary safety measures.

5. method of reimbursement and documents required for reimbursement

- Refund will be made by advance payment (submit an invoice with the necessary documents for the refund to NPO Community Link).
- As soon as it is confirmed that the documents are complete, the funds will be transferred to the corporate account.
- Documents required for reimbursement
- Documents that show that you used an aircraft (boarding pass stub, boarding pass certificate, etc.)

If a credit card was used

- Credit card statement and documents showing bank account debit (passbook statement, etc.)
- In case of bank transfer, submit the invoice and bank statement.
- In case of cash, submit original receipts.
- In the case of local currency, convert into Japanese yen by the rules specified by Hyogo Prefecture.