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JETRO partners with UC Berkeley SkyDeck and Leading Japanese Universities to Accelerate Global Innovation

Nov 17, 2023

The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of California, Berkeley on Wednesday, November 15th to jointly promote cooperation between the two parties in order to facilitate the acceleration of innovation in Japan.

【Purpose of the MoU】

JETRO San Francisco and Berkeley SkyDeck – UC Berkeley's official startup accelerator – have partnered together for the past three years to support Japanese startup growth and global expansion. The MoU serves as the next step for JETRO and Berkeley SkyDeck to build a more advanced startup ecosystem in Japan.

The MoU lists six leading Japanese national universities that have elected to participate in this program, and who will formally collaborate and cooperate with Berkeley SkyDeck in the future. The universities are Kyoto University, Nagoya University, Osaka University, Tohoku University, the Tokyo Institute of Technology, and the University of Tokyo, all of which are considered some of the best universities in Japan and around the world.

This agreement will grant JETRO and the participating Japanese universities access to UC Berkeley's expertise in training future entrepreneurs and encouraging innovation on a major research university campus. This will play a significant role in cultivating more Japanese university spin-offs, growing Japan's Deep Tech sector, and expanding Japanese startup ecosystems.

【Contents of the MoU】

1. JETRO San Francisco will support the launch of Berkeley SkyDeck's startup support program in Japan.
2. Berkeley SkyDeck will implement programs in collaboration with JETRO San Francisco to contribute to the formation of a startup ecosystem in Japan.
3. Berkeley SkyDeck will cooperate in programs conducted by JETRO San Francisco and the leading Japanese universities listed.



Photograph of MoU signing ceremony



Photograph of JETRO President Susumu Kataoka & Berkeley SkyDeck Executive Director Caroline Winnett

【About Berkeley SkyDeck】

Berkeley SkyDeck is UC Berkeley's official startup accelerator, which originally specialized in supporting the expansion of UC Berkeley student or alumni founded startups. UC Berkeley is one of the top two highest startup-producing universities in the world, and the number one startup-producing public university. Berkeley SkyDeck now also conducts acceleration programs with foreign affiliates to help support startups and entrepreneurs from around the world, further solidifying its status as a global hub for innovation and entrepreneurship. Berkeley SkyDeck has an impressive slate of 500 advisors, including professors, serial entrepreneurs, VCs, finance and engineering professionals, and other industry experts. Total fundraising by Berkeley SkyDeck startup alumni has exceeded \$1.8 billion, and nearly 20 startups have exited by going public or by acquisition.

Learn more about Berkeley SkyDeck: <https://skydeck.berkeley.edu/>

【Relationship between JETRO and Berkeley SkyDeck】

With the cooperation of the Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), JETRO has been collaborating with Berkeley Skydeck on the Global Startup Acceleration Program* since 2021. The program provides support to startups in the deep tech field and to startups from Japanese universities. In total, 61 companies have enrolled in this program, including 29 companies participating in 2023.



Learn more about JETRO's acceleration programs, including GSAP:
<https://www.jetro.go.jp/en/startup/acceleration/>

For inquiries regarding JETRO's acceleration programs, please submit [this form](#).

*Name changed from "Startup Acceleration Program" to "Global Startup Acceleration Program" in 2023

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