

ESG TECH BATTLE 2023

powered by NEDO

Application Guidelines

(1) Overview

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of R&D oriented startups that have grown significantly by leveraging their unique technologies. However, R&D often requires a large amount of funding and human resources, and these startups and researchers require a variety of support.

Therefore, ESG TECH BATTLE, a ESG focused pitch contest, will be held for R&D startups and researchers, and the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO) and the private sector innovation community (CIC Tokyo) will collaborate to provide various types of support (including awards and cash prize) to promising startups and researchers, thereby accelerating the creation of role models.

NEDO is inviting applications from R&D oriented startups and researchers who have a business plan to utilize regional technology seeds or solve social issues in the energy and environmental fields and other areas by utilizing specific technology seeds. The grand prize winner will receive a cash prize of 1 million JPY and a one-year business growth support by CIC Tokyo and the right to use CIC Tokyo as a supplementary prize.

In addition, we have established three pitch slots; regional slots (Hokkaido & Tohoku, Kanto, Hokuriku & Chubu, Kansai, Chugoku & Shikoku, Kyushu & Okinawa, and Overseas), UNDER 35 slots (startup executives/founders and young researchers under 35 years old), and diversity slots (emphasis on diversity in management and representatives) to accept applications from outstanding startups, researchers, etc.

(2) Eligibility

- Stage: Pre-seed / seed stage R&D oriented startup companies, and researchers and entrepreneurs who are interested in business utilizing their research outcomes.
- Target area: Business plans that utilize technology seeds from local areas or plans that have the potential to solve social issues, including those in the energy and environmental fields.
- Target countries: All over the world. Not limited to startups and researchers located in Japan.

- Pitch contest: Must be able to join and speak at the pitch event to be held on Wednesday, March 8th, 2023, afternoon JST. (In principle, participants should attend the pitch contest on-site (Tokyo, Japan), but online participation is also acceptable if you are participating from overseas or have special circumstances.)
- Compliance: Companies must be in compliance and not belong to or associated with any antisocial organizations.
- Others: Applicants to the “ESG TECH BATTLE 2022 powered by NEDO” held last year are also eligible to apply this time, but will be excluded from the selection process if the secretariat determines that they are applying under the same theme.

(3) Prizes

① Awards

The following prizes will be awarded to the applicants that achieve excellent results.

- Grand Prize (1 company/individual)

Awarded to the company/individual who receives the most outstanding evaluation by a selection committee of experts.

- Excellence Awards (2 companies/individuals)

Awarded to the second and third most outstanding entry after the Grand Prize by a selection committee of experts.

- Special Awards: METI Industrial Science and Technology Policy and Environment Bureau Director-General's Award, NEDO Award, CIC Tokyo Chairman's Award (about 3 companies/individuals)

This award is given to the winner who has received the wonderful evaluation by a selection committee of experts.

② Cash prize

The winner of the Grand Prize will receive a cash prize of 1 million JPY.

③ Business Growth Support

Startups/Individuals that win the Grand Prize and Excellence Award will be able to receive support for growth of their business from CIC Tokyo until the end of March 2024, depending on the situation and needs of the company/individuals awarded. For example, the following support is expected:

- Pitch opportunities

- Matching with business companies and investors
- Holding seminars and study sessions on intellectual property, legal affairs, fundraising, etc.
- Mentoring by senior entrepreneurs, investors, startup supporters, and professionals
- Support for developing overseas connections

④ Right to use CIC Tokyo space

The winners of the Grand Prize, Excellence Award, and Special Award will be granted access to the Energy & Environment Innovation Community Room at CIC Tokyo until the end of March 2024.

(4) Screening criteria

The selection committee, consisting of experts, will select the most highly rated business/projects from among the applications received, taking into account the following evaluation items in a comprehensive manner.

Evaluation items	Evaluation details
① Growth potential	Can the business be expected to grow and continue? etc.
② Technological capability and innovativeness	Does the company possess unique and highly feasible technology originating from the region? Does the business plan have a high degree of novelty? Does it have a competitive advantage? etc.
③ Team	Is there an attractive team (ability, background, resource procurement, diversity)? etc.
④ Market attractiveness	Is there a need for the business and is there a large business opportunity? Is it an attractive market? etc.
⑤ Challenging nature	Is there enthusiasm and determination for the new business? etc.
⑥ Social issues	Is the company addressing social issues such as energy and the environment? etc.

(5) Screening

① Document screening

Each application will be screened by the secretariat based on the above screening criteria based on the information they provided including a pitch deck, and about 10-15 applicants (Finalists) will be selected to proceed to the pitch contest.

② Pitch contest

On Wednesday, March 8th, 2023, afternoon JST (Time will be announced soon), the pitch event will be held at CIC Tokyo in Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo, and judging will be conducted by a selection committee, consisting of experts. Those who will take the stage will be judged on their 3-5 minute pitches (depending on the number of applicants on stage), followed by a short Q & A session.

(6) Schedule

① Application period

Tuesday, December 20th, 2022 - Tuesday, January 31st, 2023, 5 pm JST

② Document screening

Wednesday, February 1st, 2023 - mid February, 2023

③ Pitch Event

Afternoon, Wednesday, March 8th, 2023

(7) How to apply

Please Fill in the required information and submit the relevant documents via Google form.

Application form: <https://forms.gle/NVPMFR27mi9zhz6o7>

○If you are unable to submit your pitch materials via Google Form, please submit them via email (env-startups@cic.com).

○Pitch materials: 1) Outline of the business, 2) Social issues to be addressed, 3) Market, 4) Services and technologies, 5) Team, 6) Business plan, etc. should be included (PPTX format slides or a PDF version for the other formats is acceptable. Number of slides is limited to 20

pages. If the number of pages exceeds this limit, please attach it after the main text as an appendix or reference. There is no limit on the number of pages for appendix or reference. However, if the file size exceeds 15MB, please send it to env-startups@cic.com and confirm receipt by replying to the secretariat.

※This document will also be used for the document screening, and the review will be conducted based on the contents of the document, so please note that even if the secretariat cannot read the contents of the above items from the document, it will not be subject to review.

※Please do not include confidential information in the materials.

<Please note the following points>

1. No fee will be charged for application.
2. Please note that applications with incomplete information may not be reviewed.
3. The secretariat may contact applicants to confirm the contents of their application or to request additional materials.
4. Notification of the results of the document screening will be carried out via email.
5. Please note that submitted application documents will not be returned.
6. We will not be able to respond to any inquiries regarding the status or details of the screening process, or any objections to the screening results.
7. Award-winning companies/individuals will have their activities publicized in various media such as newspapers, magazines, and the Internet. We may also ask for the cooperation of the press in covering the event.
8. The contents of the events in (6) ③above are subject to change without notice.
9. The application or granting of this award may be canceled in the event of any act or false statement that may undermine the purpose of this award, failure to provide the necessary cooperation in the screening process, or violation of laws and regulations or other socially acceptable reasons that make it inappropriate to name this award winner.

(8) Contact for inquiries

For inquiries regarding application procedures, application guidelines, and other matters, please contact below.

CIC Tokyo Contact: Masaru, Lisa

Email: env-startups@cic.com