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Applications Begin for “Open Network Lab Seed Accelerator Program 29th Batch,” Digital Garage’s Startup Nurturing and Investment Program Program Supporting Business Growth in Japan, With the New “GLOBAL Track” to Grow Businesses Striving for Global Expansion

- Open Network Lab (Onlab) that Digital Garage, Inc. (DG) is operating began taking applications on June 25 from startups who want to participate in “Open Network Lab Seed Accelerator Program 29th Batch,” a program supporting entrepreneurs on the global stage.



Seed Accelerator Program 29th Batch

JAPAN Track for growth in Japan, GLOBAL Track for challenges into the world

JAPAN Track

This track is designed for startups aiming to expand their services in Japan and achieve growth. Onlab's 15 years of expertise in supporting startups will help startups achieve the fastest possible business growth.

GLOBAL Track

This track is designed for startups that expand their business globally from Day 1, such as in San Francisco and London. We support local product-market fit (PMF) and business growth by conducting activities in target markets overseas.

Application Open : 2024/6/25 - 2024/7/19
Program period : September to December, 2024

▽ Open Network Lab Seed Accelerator Program 29th Batch application website

<https://onlab.jp/en/programs/onlab/>

■Features of the 29th Batch/enhanced global support

In the 29th Batch, the program includes two tracks to better support startup growth. The “JAPAN Track” leverages Onlab’s past expertise to support startups aiming for rapid growth in the Japanese market, while the “GLOBAL Track” aids startups seeking to expand into the U.S. and other international markets beyond Japan. The “GLOBAL Track” provides enhanced support for business growth and local product-market fit through international activities outside of Japan, including “[DG717](#),” DG’s incubation center in San Francisco. DG also helps entrepreneurs aiming for the global stage by continually sharing expertise required by startups and providing opportunities for communication via its startup ecosystem of entrepreneurs and investors, which DG has built over many years.

■About Onlab

Onlab began in 2010 as a pioneer of the seed accelerator program in Japan. Since then, it has selected and developed teams with good technological skills and promising business plans from Japan, the United States, and other countries. Participating startups have received proactive support to grow their businesses, including mentoring, technical support, funding, and office spaces via the DG Group’s network of experienced entrepreneurs and investors.

The program has turned out more than 150 graduates over the past 15 years, including unicorn companies and

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startups that have made initial public offerings (IPOs). These include well-known Japanese startups like “[giftee](#),” which lets users easily send gifts online; “[WHILL](#),” which develops next-generation personal mobility products; and “[SmarTHR](#),” which offers cloud-based human resource management software. Some startups are active on the global stage, such as “[Fond Technologies](#)” (previously AnyPerk), which provides an employee reward SaaS platform in the United States and whose CEO was the first Japanese entrepreneur chosen for “Y Combinator.”

■ Comments about Onlab’s enhanced global support

<Kaoru Hayashi, Representative Director, President Executive Officer and Group CEO of Digital Garage, Inc.>

Open Network Lab was Japan’s first accelerator program which was launched 15 years ago with the goal of building a startup ecosystem like Silicon Valley. Today, startups play a central role in national strategies, and Digital Garage contributes to the next-generation internet community across the globe by cultivating startups that can be active on the global stage.

<Joi Ito, Director, Senior Managing Executive Officer, Chief Architect and Co-Founder of Digital Garage, Inc.>

Today, San Francisco and Silicon Valley are the world’s hubs for generative AI, and they have begun creating new value after the pandemic. At Onlab, we are strengthening the collaboration between Japan and San Francisco to support entrepreneurs changing the world with cutting-edge technology, thereby creating a better future for technology.

■ Related websites

Onlab website <https://onlab.jp/en/>

<Related programs and activities>

Open Network Lab HOKKAIDO <https://onlab.jp/en/programs/hokkaido/>

onlab web3 <https://onlab.jp/en/web3/>

Onlab ESG <https://onlab.jp/en/esg/>

Onlab Journal <https://onlab.jp/journal/>

Newsletter <https://onlab.jp/en/#subscribe>

■ Onlab Seed Accelerator Program 29th Batch application outline

Application period:

June 25 (Tuesday) – noon on July 19 (Friday), 2024

Eligible applicants:

Any nationality, age, or gender may apply

- JAPAN Track: Entrepreneurs and companies that want to achieve rapid business growth in Japan
- GLOBAL Track: Entrepreneurs and companies that want to scale their business globally from day one

Support provided:

JAPAN Track

- Equity investment for activity funding, based on the company’s situation and track record
- Support for business growth (mentoring and expert sessions on business, management, and financial affairs)
- Growth support utilizing the DG Group’s assets (Fintech, marketing, media, etc.)
- Incubation office space (Shibuya/Daikanyama, Tokyo)

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- Equity investment for activity funding, based on the company's situation and track record
- Support for business growth (mentoring and expert sessions on business, management, and financial affairs)
- Minimum viable product development/product-market fit support in overseas countries
- Mentoring and funding support from overseas venture capital firms
- Assistance with visa and other application procedures in the United States
- Incubation office space (San Francisco and Shibuya/Daikanyama, Tokyo)

Requirements:

- Can sell a portion of shares to the DG Group for funding (if no corporation is founded, this applies after becoming a corporation)
- Can participate in events, etc. during the program period

Theme:

Industry Agnostic: Any disruptive ideas made possible by the internet (main fields: FinTech, Commerce, Travel, Smart City, Climate Tech, Vertical SaaS, Technology)

Schedule:

- Application period: June 25 (Tuesday) – noon on July 19 (Friday), 2024
- Selection period: July – late August 2024
- Program: September – December 2024
- Demo Day*: December 17 (Tuesday), 2024 (TBD)

* Demo Day: Event for pitches to Japanese and foreign investors and companies. Serves as an opportunity for funding, joint research, and collaboration.

Application page/social media:

- Website: <https://onlab.jp/en/programs/onlab/>
- X (formerly Twitter): https://x.com/OpenNetwork_Lab
- Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/OpenNetworkLab/>

▽ Inquiries about applying

info@onlab.jp (Onlab team)

■About Digital Garage, Inc

N a m e : Digital Garage, Inc. (<https://www.garage.co.jp/en/>)

Representative: Kaoru Hayashi, Representative Director, President Executive Officer and Group CEO

Head office address: DG Bldg., 3-5-7 Ebisu Minami, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo

Shibuya PARCO DG Bldg., 15-1 Udagawa-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo

Date founded: August 1995

Representative: Representative Director, President Executive Officer and Group CEO Kaoru Hayashi

B u s i n e s s : Digital Garage's corporate purpose is "Designing 'New Context' for a sustainable society with technology." Digital Garage operates a payment business that provides one of the largest comprehensive payment platforms in Japan. In addition, DG has a marketing business that provides one-stop solutions in the digital and real world, and a startup investment and development business that reaches out to promising startups and technologies in Japan and overseas.