JICA Launches NINJA 2022 Open Call for Tanzanian Startups with Innovative Solutions

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is back with the second edition of the Next Innovation with Japan (NINJA) to support startups in Tanzania



The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is launching the second Next Innovation with Japan (NINJA) competition this 2022 in an effort to continuously support startup companies in Tanzania. Through the initiative, up to two outstanding companies will be selected and awarded further financial and technical support for their business as well as the opportunity to present their businesses to Japanese stakeholders. Interested applicants can submit their entries here by 28th January 2022. This is the second time JICA is organizing the business plan competition following the NINJA project last year which was created in response to COVID - 19.

As part of the NINJA project, JICA Tanzania Office is planning to collaborate with startups that have solutions and have created positive impacts for Tanzanian social issues/challenges through their innovative products, services, and/or business models.

As a next step, JICA Tanzania Office has launched the second competition of NINJA in 2022, in collaboration with Seedspace. The criteria for application are as follows:

1. Have innovative product(s) or service(s) or business model in response or adaptable to social issues/problems in the following sectors:

Sector	Example (not limited)
Agriculture	-The service/solution to improve productivity/quality of agriculture products (crops, fishes, animal products and so on) -The service/solution to support transportation/distribution of agriculture products -The service/solution to support nutrition improvement -The service/solution to lessen the effect of climate change. (Mostly in relation to quality seeds and irrigation technologies, and new agriculture methods). -The service to develop/improve Income Generation Activity for empowerment of farmers groups. (e.g. food processing, marketing of agri-products/dairy products, livestock/fish raising, fish, beekeeping, forestry produce, and so on.)
Industrial Development	-The service/solution to improve productivity/quality/safety of companies (e.g. monitoring system, devices using IoT/3D printers), support for remote workers, efficient management/operation of online events.
Infrastructure (Transportation)	-The service/solution to improve/maintain the level of infrastructure in Tanzania. (e.g. Real-time traffic situation monitoring system, Automatic fare collection system (Automatic ticketing system), Transport as a service technology)
Infrastructure (Energy)	-The service/solution to improve/maintain the level of infrastructure in Tanzania. (e.g. Smart meter (Net metering) system, Mini-grid system, Clean cooking equipment, Renewable energy)
Health/Medical	-The service/solution to improve medical level of Tanzania (e.g. online healthcare support to customers and/or among referral systems, disease-testing solutions, medical data sharing and privacy protection solutions, emergency transportation solutions (i.e. Ambulance tracking systems), distribution of drugs, vaccines and medical equipment, IoT/3D printers in the medical field, Early Warning Systems of a certain disease)
Water	-The service/solution to distribute clean water / To support water resources management/development
Others (Inter Sectors)	-The business model which provides positive impacts for unemployment. -The service/solution to support financial issues/challenges (Contactless transactions/payment, lending/insurance services to MSMEs and individuals)

2. Have their head office or a branch in Tanzania.
3. Be a profit/non-profit organization registered as an independent legal entity. Proposals from individuals will not be considered.
4. Have a very strong management team of at least 2 people.

Selected startups will be receiving financial support of up to USD 8,500 per company and technical support for their startups as well as opportunities to introduce their business to Japanese stakeholders (e.g. JICA stakeholders, Japanese companies, Japanese investors, etc)

QUOTE FROM THE PARTNER

For more information about NINJA, you may visit our website here: LINK.

■ About JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency)

An incorporated administrative agency in charge of administering Japan's ODA (Official Development Assistance). It is one of the world's largest bilateral aid agency supporting socio economic development in developing countries in different regions of the world. In Tanzania, JICA has been a long partner of Tanzania for more than 50 years in many sectors since 1962. JICA's support to Tanzania primarily focuses on 1) Nurturing driving forces of economic growth, 2) Infrastructure development conducive to economic and social development, and 3) Improvement of Governance and Public Service Delivery.

■ About Seedstars

"They tried to bury us, they didn't know we were seeds." - Mexican proverb

Seedstars is a Swiss-based private company with a mission to impact people's lives in emerging markets through technology and entrepreneurship. The group's activities cover over 90 emerging ecosystems through a variety of initiatives such as the FTxSDG Challenge, previously known as the Seedstars World Competition, which is the largest entrepreneurship competition in emerging markets; Seedstars Programs that are designed to support entrepreneurs in varying stages of growth via training, education, mentoring, and access to resources; Seedstars 01, a talent incubator providing digital skills and startup-based immersive education for the next generation of change makers; Seedspace, physical coworking spaces and hubs located in 15 countries; and Seedstars International, a global venture capital fund for seed-stage startups. For more information, visit www.seedstars.com.

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