



Invitation for the Participation in
2-week Training in Japan and the Tourism Expo Japan 2018
(September 11 – 28, 2018 - planned)

The SME DNC, within the framework of the Project on Development of Local Production and Promotion of Local Brands Phase 2 in the Republic of Armenia, supported by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), would like to invite the Armenian businesses in the hospitality sector to participate in the training on local tourism promotion in Japan and the Tourism Expo Japan 2018 as an exhibitor at Armenia National Pavilion. Service providers of different thematic focuses, including gastronomic/wine, agritourism, eco-nature tourism, adventure, geo-tourism, history and ethnic tourism, etc. are highly encouraged to apply.

The Project supports raise competitiveness of local Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in national and international markets, utilizing the Armenian One Village One Product (OVOP) methods that contain marketing improvement and quality management techniques and measures, so as to contribute to local economic development.

The training on local tourism promotion of Armenia is part of this Project and offers the following opportunities to the participating businesses:

- To promote Armenia as an attractive tourism destination to the Japanese market at the Tourism Expo Japan (see the last part of this letter for more information on the event), showcasing unique tourism products and services to the Japanese tour agencies and general public, under public-private partnership.
- To visit successful local tourism sites and service providers in Japan to learn from their experiences and practices.
- To receive technical advisory services from the SMEDNC/Project before, during, and after the training to enhance the attractiveness of your products/services and marketing/promotional for the Japanese market.

Participation costs:

The Project will cover (for one person per company):

- **Roundtrip ticket Yerevan-Tokyo-Yerevan,**
- **Accommodation,**
- **Daily allowance in Japan will be provided to each participant by JICA in accordance with the JICA rules,**
- **One raw space of 9sqm for joint Armenian pavilion at Tourism Japan 2018.**

Participants contribution:

- **2,500 to 4,000 US dollars** to cover the costs described in the following section (Minimum Requirement for Entry).

Minimum requirement for entry

- Registered hospitality businesses in Armenia, with minimum 1 (one) year of operation.
- Good command of English (the training course will be carried out in English).
- Readiness to collaborate with the Project through participation in the training. This includes: (i) pre-course workshops and pilot activities; (ii) full participation in the two-week training in Japan; (iii) post-course activities (information sharing seminar, cooperation with the Project monitoring).
- Readiness and capacity to **invest 2,500 to 4,000 US** dollars to be a co-host at the Armenia pavilion at the Japan Tourism Expo 2018. The Project finances the cost of 1 standard booth without decoration, and a publication of new national tourism promotion pamphlet in Japanese. The investment by participating businesses is to cover the cost of potential enlargement of the booths, booth decoration and furniture rent, seminar, and promotional novelty. The investment amount is shown in range for now but will be defined in consultation with the finalists.
- Submission of the set of required information.

Process for application

- 1 Those who agree with the above and are interested in applying should use the following link to prepare and submit the online application **NO LATER THAN NOON April 2**.
<https://goo.gl/forms/lyfYhWPVNzrrdtZr1>
- 2 The online application requires the following:
 - ✓ Company information
 - ✓ Tourism operations
 - ✓ Business affiliates in the Armenian regions (to be attached in Excel file)
 - ✓ Descriptions of Top 3 selling tourism itinerates to the Armenian regions, designed for foreign tourists/visitors (to be attached in Word document)
 - ✓ Training Candidate information
- 3 If deemed necessary, a Q&A session will be held at the SMEDNC office. Send any question regarding the application to expo@smednc.am by **March 23**. Please wait for further notice for the date and time.

Selection Process

The applications will be evaluated by SMEDNC and Japanese experts of the Project who will review the submitted information carefully.

- Short-listed companies/individuals will be contacted within 5 business days after the deadline (by close of business April 6).
- Short-listed companies/individuals will be invited for a short interview in English.

- 4-5 companies will be selected to participate in the training course.
- Final selection will be announced by **April 13**.

Special notes

- ✓ Once selected, the participation cannot be canceled.
- ✓ Selected participants are obliged to follow the full itinerary of the 2-week training.
- ✓ Participants will be requested to sign a letter of acknowledgement and agreement (consent letter) to comply with the rules and conditions placed by the event organizers of the Tourism Expo Japan 2018 and JICA.
- ✓ Any promotion of tour product or tourism attraction in the Republic of Artsakh is prohibited by the event organizers of the Tourism Expo Japan 2018.
- ✓ Short-listed companies/individuals will be required to sign a Letter of Consent of which content refers to these special notes at the time of the interview.

Tourism Expo Japan (September 20 to 23 in Tokyo) is one of the world's largest tourism trade fairs. In 2017, it attracted **over 50,000 tourism industries and 140,000 general visitors** for four days.

The participation in the Expo envisages the following activities:

- National pavilion showcase
 - First 2 days for business only and the remaining 2 days for general public, when potential Japanese travelers come to get inspiration for their next travel planning and enjoy the event.
- B2B meeting and networking
- A national presentation seminar to the Japanese tour agencies

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