



CALL FOR PRE-DEPARTURE BRIEFING EXPERT

WORLD CLASS MANUFACTURING TRAINING PROGRAMME 2026

Purpose of the Call: Call for an Expert on Japanese Industrial Culture and EU–Japan Cross-Cultural Relations

Organisation: EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation

Event: Online Pre-Departure Briefing (PDB)

Date: 20 January 2025

Starting Time of the event: 9:00 am CET/ 5:00 pm JST

Platform: Zoom

Duration: 120 minutes → (Expert Session: 45 minutes included)

Audience: Approximately 25

Participants Profile: Selected candidates for the World Class Manufacturing Training Programme (WCM), mostly Lean decision-makers, CEOs, and employees with an industrial engineering background.

About the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation:

The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation was established in 1987 as a pivotal organisation for fostering industrial collaboration between the EU and Japan. It remains the sole joint venture between the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship, and SMEs (DG GROWTH) and Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. This partnership is further reinforced by the effective collaboration between its two offices: one situated in Brussels, Belgium, and the other in Tokyo, Japan. Both offices concentrate on organising and overseeing annual business missions and programmes to Japan, as well as promoting industrial and trade cooperation and facilitating the exchange of experiences and expertise between the EU and Japan.

About the World Class Manufacturing mission (WCM):

The 5-day World Class Manufacturing (WCM) mission was established in 1992. The training course consists of lectures, workshops, and visits to some of the world's most advanced Japanese factories, enabling participants to gain a deeper understanding of the real "GEMBA" (production site). The EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation (in collaboration with external Japanese experts and Institutes) offers participants the chance to talk directly with Japanese production Senior managers and observe the effective implementation of manufacturing methods indoors. Selected candidates will gain a detailed understanding of Japanese approaches to developing and implementing WCM methods, as well as adapting those Kaizen tools to enhance their companies' lean journeys and competitiveness.

Context of the Call:

As part of the 55th edition of its annual "WCM" mission, taking place from February 16 to February 20, 2026, the EU-Japan Centre for Industrial Cooperation will host a Pre-Departure Briefing (PDB) on **Tuesday, January 20, at 9:00 AM CET**. To ensure that the WCM participants benefit fully from this briefing, the Centre is seeking an expert with an academic or professional background in lean and intercultural management, particularly in the context of EU-Japan relations.

Requirements:

The selected expert will be invited to give a 45-minute online presentation, including the following aspects:

1. **Japanese industrial culture:** organisational behaviour, leadership, and workplace dynamics.
2. **Kaizen:** History & Philosophy.
3. **Intercultural challenges in the EU-Japan context.**

Service costs:

- Max €600 (VAT included), depending on experience and preparation effort
- Payment will be made from the EU-Japan Centre (Brussels)
- No travel costs will be incurred as this is an online session(*)

(*)The webinar will be held privately and moderated by staff from the EU-Japan Centre. While no recording of the session will be made publicly available, a copy will be provided to the participants.

Deadline for Applications: 4 December 2025

Application Process:

If you have the necessary expertise and would like to contribute to this webinar on the specified date, please contact d.lula@eu-japan.eu.

In your email, please include the following:

1. A detailed resume that highlights your experience and qualifications (maximum of 1 page).
2. A motivation letter explaining your interest in participating (maximum of 1 page).
3. A “ready-to-use” PowerPoint presentation for the occasion.
4. Your expected fee.

All applicants shall declare promptly any potential conflicts of interest¹and agree to sign a related declaration if required to do so.

The successful candidate will be contacted on Thursday 4 December, 2025.

¹A conflict of interests arises when reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest or circumstances may affect the impartial and objective nature of a process or duty.