

Request for Proposal

KIC DC Pitch Program

**Korea Innovation Center (KIC)
Washington D.C.**



Korea Innovation Center
Washington DC

April 6th, 2026

Released by KIC Washington D.C.

Section 1: Letter of Invitation

April 6th, 2026

Dear Sirs/Madams,

1.1. The Korea Innovation Center Washington, D.C. ("KIC"), is soliciting proposals from professional pitch training and coaching service providers ("Service Provider") possessing demonstrated knowledge and expertise in delivering U.S. market pitch preparation, investor communication, and presentation skills training for technology startup founders.

1.2. KIC is one of the Republic of Korea government agencies operating under the Ministry of Science and ICT, dedicated to promoting global market penetration and investment through its international KIC branch network. KIC provides a unique bridge between Korean innovation and U.S. market opportunities, supporting startups across diverse technology sectors.

1.3. Objective: This Request for Proposal (RFP) solicits proposals for the KIC DC Pitch Training Program 2026 ("Program"). The selected provider will deliver strategic coaching to Korean tech startups("Startups"), fostering the presentation excellence and narrative depth required for U.S. market success. Refer to **Section 5** for the detailed Scope of Services.

1.4. This RFP encompasses the following sections:

- Section 1 – Letter of Invitation
- Section 2 – Information for Accelerator
- Section 3 – Accelerator Qualification
- Section 4 – Program Plan
- Section 5 – Scope of Services
- Section 6 – Selection Criteria

1.5. Upon receipt of this RFP, please formally notify us of your intent to submit a proposal in response to this solicitation, **no later than April 12th, 2026**, via email to the designated contact person at KIC listed below. KIC DC will only accept Proposals if the Accelerator has indicated its intent to respond through the designated email channel.

ATTN: Hyungjin Yun

Email: hjyun@kicdc.org

Phone: (617) 543-0970

Yours sincerely,



Chang Hee Kim

President of KIC Washington, D.C.

Section 2. Information to Accelerator

2.1. General Information

2.1.1. KIC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without obligation to explain its decision. KIC is not bound to accept the lowest-priced proposal and reserves the right to negotiate with any or all respondents.

2.1.2. This RFP does not commit KIC to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of proposals, or procure or contract for services. All proposals become the property of KIC and will not be returned.

2.2. Program Overview

2.2.1. **Objective:** The Program aims to equip Korean technology startups with the skills and confidence to deliver compelling, investor-ready pitches in the U.S. market. The selected Service Provider will design and deliver a comprehensive pitch training curriculum covering pitch fundamentals, storytelling, cross-cultural communication, investor psychology, visual design, structured practice sessions via breakout rooms, and culminating pitch competitions with external judging panels.

The Program consists of two tracks:

Track 1: Approximately 40 startups; 5-week curriculum with weekly group sessions, optional office hours, and a pitch competition approximately 5 weeks after the instructional phase.

Track 2: Approximately 20 startups; 5-week curriculum with weekly group sessions, optional office hours, and a pitch competition approximately 5 weeks after the instructional phase.

2.2.2. Duration

Track 1: May 18 – approximately August 31, 2026

Track 2: June 16 – approximately September 30, 2026

Note: Track 2 start date is subject to minor adjustment.

2.2.3. Detailed program activities and deliverables are described in Sections 4 and 5.

2.2.4. Selection Process

The selection will follow a two-phase process: (1) written proposal evaluation, and (2) interview with shortlisted candidates. KIC reserves the right to conduct interviews at its discretion.

2.2.5. **Award Schedule** The submission and subsequent award of this project shall follow the timetable outlined below. KIC reserves the right to amend this schedule and procedure as necessary.

Item	Date
RFP Release	April 6, 2026
RFP Submission Deadline	April 12, 2026
Evaluation and Selection (Announcement)	April 13–17, 2026
Negotiation and Contract Signing	April 20–24, 2026

The aforementioned dates are subject to revision.

2.2.6. Budget

The maximum combined budget for both tracks is \$23,000, allocated as follows:

Track	Maximum Budget
Track 1 (~40 startups)	\$12,000
Track 2 (~20 startups)	\$11,000
Combined Total	\$23,000

2.3. Response Submission and Deadline

Proposals must be submitted electronically in a single document. File naming convention: companyname_RFP_firstinitial_lastname.doc

Deadline: April 12, 2026

Submit to: hjyun@kicdc.org

Subject Line: “[KIC] Proposal: [Service Provider Name]”

Disclaimer: KIC may modify, suspend, or cancel this RFP anytime. Submitting a proposal means accepting these terms. KIC is not liable for proposal preparation/submission costs or damages.

Section 3. Accelerator Qualification

Prospective Service Providers should demonstrate the following qualifications:

3.1. Proven expertise in pitch training, presentation coaching, and investor-readiness programs for early-stage technology startups in the U.S. market, with demonstrable methodologies in storytelling, pitch content development, and cross-cultural business communication.

3.2. Demonstrated track record of delivering structured pitch programs with measurable outcomes, including evidence of participant improvement in pitch quality, investor engagement, or fundraising readiness.

3.3. Capacity to facilitate interactive learning environments for cohorts of varying sizes (up to 40 participants), including management of breakout room sessions, peer feedback structures, and small-group coaching.

3.4. Established network of qualified facilitators, coaches, and industry professionals capable of serving as judges, guest speakers, and mentors. The Service Provider must demonstrate the ability to recruit and coordinate external judges for pitch competitions at no additional cost to KIC DC.

3.5. Familiarity with the unique challenges faced by Korean technology startups entering the U.S. market, including cultural and linguistic considerations in investor communications. Experience working with international or Korean startup cohorts is strongly preferred.

3.6. Minority-owned, woman-owned, veteran-owned, disability-owned, or disadvantaged business enterprises are encouraged to apply and may receive favorable consideration in the evaluation process, provided all other qualification criteria are met.

Section 4. Program Plan

4.1. Program Period

Track 1: May 18 – approximately August 31, 2026

Track 2: June 16 – approximately September 30, 2026

Note: Track 2 start date is subject to minor adjustment. Track 2 pitch competition is scheduled approximately 5 weeks after the final instructional session.

4.2. Participants

Track 1: Approximately 40 Korean technology startups

Track 2: Approximately 20 Korean technology startups

4.3. Format of Delivery

Both tracks follow a condensed 5-week instructional format with supplementary office hours. Sessions will be conducted online. Practice sessions and pitch competitions will utilize breakout rooms to ensure personalized feedback and meaningful participation.

4.3.1. Instructional Sessions – Track 1

Schedule: Every Monday, 90 minutes per session (Weeks 1–4); extended session for Week 5 (Pitch Competition)

Week	Session Content
Week 1	<p>Pitch Fundamentals & Storytelling for U.S. Investment</p> <p>Purpose of the pitch, pitch content checklist, live vs. email pitching, and essential dos and don'ts. Cover the elements of 1-min vs. 5-min vs. 10-min pitches, with a primary focus on crafting a compelling 1-minute pitch. Strong emphasis on storytelling techniques and narrative structure.</p> <p>Cross-Cultural Communication Fluency</p> <p>Korean vs. U.S. business culture transition, communication styles (verbal and nonverbal), and pronunciation coaching.</p>
Week 2	<p>Practice Session – 1-Minute Pitch (Breakout Rooms)</p> <p>Participants split into breakout rooms (5–10 companies per room) with assigned facilitators. Each team delivers a 1-minute pitch with 4 minutes of structured feedback. Iterative practice rounds within the session.</p>
Week 3	<p>Advanced Pitching (5-Minute & 10-Minute Formats); Structure, pacing, and content depth.</p> <p>Investor Psychology: How U.S. investors evaluate opportunities; tools for researching and tailoring pitches to target audiences.</p>
Week 4	<p>Pitch Analysis: Effective vs. ineffective pitch examples with coaching points.</p> <p>Visual Design for Pitching: Layout, typography, color, imagery using Canva, PowerPoint, and other tools.</p>
Week 5	<p>5-Minute Pitch Competition via Breakout Rooms.</p> <p>8 breakout rooms, 5 startups per room, 2–3 judges per room (~24 external judges).</p>

4.3.2. Instructional Sessions – Track 2

Schedule: Every Tuesday, 90 minutes per session (Weeks 1–4); Pitch Competition ~5 weeks post-instruction

Week	Session Content
Week 1	Pitch Fundamentals & Storytelling for U.S. Investment (same curriculum framework as Tech Launch Week 1).
Week 2	Practice Session – 1-Minute Pitch (Breakout Rooms): Same breakout room format with facilitator-led feedback.
Week 3	Advanced Pitching (5-Minute & 10-Minute Formats) and Investor Psychology (same curriculum framework as Tech Launch Week 3).
Week 4	Practice Session – 5-Minute Pitch (Breakout Rooms): 5-min pitch + 5-min Q&A + 5-min coaching per company. Additional facilitators/coaches to provide individualized feedback.
Week 5	5-Minute Pitch Competition via Breakout Rooms. 4 breakout rooms, 5 startups per room, 2–3 judges per room (~8–12 external judges).

4.3.3. Office Hours and Supplementary Support

The Service Provider shall offer optional group office hours during the instructional period and in the interval between final instructional sessions and pitch competitions:

Frequency: Weekly, 1–2 hours per session

Format: Online group sessions, recorded and shared with all participants

Purpose: Hands-on coaching, pitch deck refinement, peer feedback, and Q&A

Guest Speakers: Investors or industry professionals for open Q&A at no additional cost

Asynchronous Support: Text/email-based support via KIC DC's preferred platform (e.g., Slack or LMS)

4.3.4. Peer Group Structure

Participants shall be organized into consistent peer groups (4–8 companies) curated by industry, stage, and skill level to maximize peer learning and mutual support throughout the program.

4.3.5. Participant Surveys

The Service Provider shall administer intake, midpoint, and post-program surveys to capture self-assessed confidence levels and program expectations. Survey data shall be included in the final Program Report.

4.4. Program KPIs

#	Objective	Description
1	Pitch Quality Improvement	Measurable improvement from baseline to final competition via judge scoring rubrics and self-assessments.

2	Participant Engagement	Minimum 80% attendance rate; active participation in breakout rooms and office hours.
3	Competition Completion	100% of active participants deliver a 5-minute pitch at the final competition.
4	Deliverable Timeliness	All reports submitted within 2 weeks of each track's pitch competition.
5	Participant Satisfaction	Average satisfaction rating of 4.0/5.0 or above on post-program surveys.
6	Judge/Facilitator Recruitment	All required external judges and facilitators recruited at no additional cost to KIC DC.

Section 5. Scope of Services

The selected Service Provider shall deliver the following:

5.1. Design and deliver the complete pitch training curriculum for both tracks as specified in Section 4.3, including all instructional sessions (5 per track), practice sessions utilizing breakout rooms, and pitch competitions with external judging panels. Sessions shall be recorded and distributed to KIC DC and participants.

5.2. Recruit, coordinate, and manage all facilitators, coaches, and external judges required for breakout room sessions and pitch competitions.

5.3. Organize and facilitate weekly optional office hours (1–2 hours) for both tracks, including coordination of guest speakers/investors for Q&A segments. Sessions shall be recorded and distributed to KIC DC and participants.

5.4. Establish and manage peer groups (4–8 companies each) for both tracks, curated by industry, stage, and skill level.

5.5. Provide asynchronous coaching and support via KIC DC's preferred communication platform throughout the program duration.

5.6. Design and administer standardized pitch competition rubrics, scoring tools, and category winner selection processes for both competitions.

5.7. Administer participant surveys at intake and post-program stages.

5.8. Submit a consolidated Program Report for each track within two (2) weeks of the respective pitch competition, including:

(a) Program Operations Summary: session-by-session observations, challenges, and recommendations.

(b) Pitch Competition Evaluation Results: individual quantitative scoring (content clarity, delivery, visual design, Q&A handling, overall impression) and qualitative feedback from each judge with specific strengths, areas for improvement, and recommendations.

(c) Survey analysis data from intake and post-program surveys.

5.9. Provide all program materials, session recordings, presentation templates, and supplementary resources to KIC DC. Materials shall remain accessible for a minimum of 6 months post-program.

5.10. Submit a final invoice with supporting documentation of all services rendered.

Payment Structure

Installment	Condition	Amount
1st Payment	Upon contract execution	50% of total contract value per track
2nd Payment	Upon completion of all activities AND receipt and acceptance of Program Report	Remaining 50% per track

Section 6. Selection Criteria

The successful proposal will be determined at the sole discretion of the KIC. KIC may utilize the following considerations in its selection process, with each category assigned a differential weighting:

6.1. Commitment and Track Record (25%)

- Proven methodology in storytelling, pitch content development, and cross-cultural communication coaching; evidence of successful outcomes with startup cohorts; direct support for investor-readiness preparation.

6.2. Capabilities and Approach (30%)

- Quality and coherence of proposed curriculum; capacity to manage large cohorts via breakout rooms; ability to recruit external judges and facilitators at no cost; innovative approaches to maximizing engagement in condensed formats.

6.3. Experienced Professional Staff (20%)

- Qualifications of lead instructors, facilitators, and coaches; facilitator-to-participant ratio; demonstrated expertise in startup ecosystems and investor relations.

6.4. Competitive Fee Structure (25%)

- Ability to propose a competitive and justifiable fee structure that adheres to the budget constraints detailed in **Section 2.2.6. Budget** above.
- A majority of the Accelerator's proposed budget must be allocated toward services rendered for and direct support provided to the participating teams.

###