



Admantex 2i

Country Mission **TOKYO – NAGOYA** **JAPAN**

March 11 – 15, 2024



**CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR SME
PARTICIPATION TO THE INTERNATIONALISATION MISSION
TO JAPAN**

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1. ABOUT ADMANTEX2i

Industrial digitalization and the green transition are the two pillars of the European Commission for building resilience, as highlighted during the Cluster conference 2020 that builds on top of the new industrial strategy of the European Commission and the EU Green Deal as significant pillars. Furthermore, strengthening digital and green-based SMEs' competitiveness is also a core pillar from the Next Generation EU initiative for recovery.

The primary strategy for this project is bridging the gap between technology producers and users to boost innovation and industrial modernization to catalyze sustainability and circular economy in the textile manufacturing industry.

It will enable the alignment of each cluster strategy with the RIS3 priorities of each region and the uptake of digitalization and advanced production systems as a standard driver for growth via internationalization by exploiting innovation towards sustainability and circular economy. In addition, ADMANTEX2i will provide tools and support to partner's members to be globally competitive for going international.

ADMANTEX2i will also favor the cross-regional value chains involved and foster cross-regional cooperation with specialized eco-systems across Europe, focusing on the industrial smart specialization priorities where all partners are already active. For example, AEI TÈXTILS, CITEVE, and ATEVAL are part of the REGIOTEX platform for textile innovation. In contrast, PRODUTECH, EMC2 and AFIL are members of the S3P-Industry platform within the areas of 3DP and ESM and the participation in the pilot actions under the Vanguard Initiative umbrella.

ADMANTEX2i will continue driving the long-term cooperation strategy among the partners already seeded in CLAMTEX (ESCP4x) and GALACTICA (Innosup-01). The continued fostering of cross-regional and cross-sectoral cooperation among all clusters will provide their members the leverage needed to become globally competitive with digitalization uptake.

1.1 ADMANTEX2i PARTNERS

The ADMANTEX2i partnership is composed by six European clusters: three advanced textile materials clusters (AEI Tèxtils in Catalonia as project coordinator, ATEVAL in Valencia and CITEVE in Portugal) and three advanced manufacturing clusters (PRODUTECH in Portugal, EMC2 in France and AFIL in Italy).

1.2 ADMANTEX2i CONTACT POINTS

Partner	Contact	Email
AEI TÈXTILS	Ariadna DETRELL	aeitextils@admantex2i.eu
ATEVAL	Julia VERCHER	ateval@admantex2i.eu
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PRODUTECH	Carla VAGOS	produtech@admantex2i.eu
EMC2	Fearghus ROCHE	emc2@admantex2i.eu
AFIL	Samuel Nazzareno MONACO	afil@admantex2i.eu

1.3 ADMANTEX2i SUPPORT MECHANISMS

ADMANTEX2i has established a comprehensive approach to facilitate SME participation in the missions organized by the consortium during the implementation phase. Support will consist of 4 major pillars :

- **Pre-mission coaching:** in order to ensure SMEs and participants are fully aligned with the mission, to gather feedback in order to better prepare the mission to participant needs and to facilitate skills and mindset for growth via internationalization. This action will also include the support in drafting model business agreements, providing templates to participating SMEs.
- **Financial support to third parties:** *the object of the present document.*
- **Mission implementation:** SMEs selected and supported will participate in the joint activities of the mission (i.e. welcome, briefing, joint visits, joint networking sessions, debriefing, etc.) in addition to their pre-scheduled individual agendas.

The goal of this support to SMEs is to establish the first contact and start the signature of business agreements.

- **Post mission follow-up and technical assistance:** After the missions, ADMANTEX2i partnership will seek technical feasibility support schemes such as SME Go International, Low Carbon Business Action in the Americas, EREK, IPR helpdesk among others to facilitate the follow up of the meetings held by SMEs and to turn them into viable business agreements and cooperation projects.

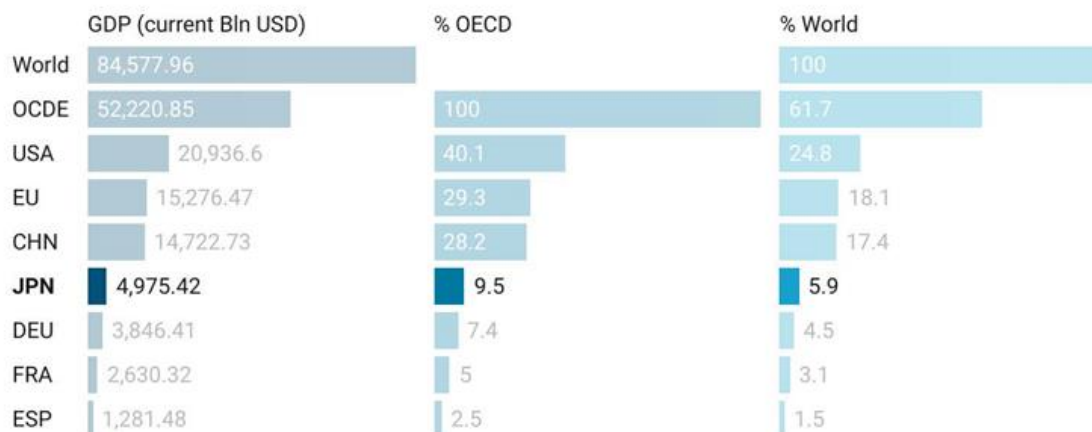
2. JAPAN COUNTRY MISSION

2.1. JAPAN MARKET OVERVIEW

2.1.1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Japan is one of the five world economic leaders, the third-largest economy in 2020. Despite their modest growth rates in recent years, their unemployment rates remain low, with population ageing as one of its main challenges.

Japan sits at the fourth position in the world trade rankings in both imports and exports, and although its main trading partners remain China, Japan, the USA, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong and Thailand, in recent years, its trade exchange and agreements with the EU are increasing.



Current GDP of Japan and leading economies (Source: World Development Indicators database (The World Bank 2021))

2.1.2. MARKET OUTLOOK

In Japan, the primary sector accounts for 1.1% of GDP and employs 3.4% of the workforce.

The country has few natural resources and relies heavily on imports to meet its raw material and energy needs. One of its greatest assets is fishing, making the country one of the world's largest producers of fish products. With only 11% of the area suitable for cultivation, agriculture is highly subsidised and protected, mainly dedicated to tea and rice.

The secondary sector accounted for 28.7% of GDP and 24.1% of the workforce. The industrial sector is diversified and internationalised, ranging from bare steel and paper

products to high-tech manufactured goods. The so-called "keiretsu" dominate Japan's industrial landscape. These companies have mutual shareholdings, interlocking boards of directors, and develop joint businesses in long-term commercial relationships. Among the most prominent groups are some such as Mitsubishi, Mitsui, Sumitomo and Marubeni.

Japan is a highly innovative country where 6% of GDP is invested in R+D+i.

Japan is a leader in automobile, robotics, biotechnology, nanotechnology and renewable energy sector. There is a substantial investment in R&D regarding manufacturing components and materials for high-tech sectors (electronics, automotive, aerospace, medicine, etc.).

The tertiary sector of the economy contributed 70.2% of GDP and employed 72.6% of the workforce. Financial services (banking and insurance), retailing, telecommunications and transportation stand out. Likewise, there has been a strong dynamism in tourism in recent years.

2.1.3. MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Currently, several opportunities are unlocking to build new economic relations due to the new approach by Japanese authorities and the agreements already signed with Europe in recent years and Japan's agreement to international standardisation agreements or patents and trademarks.

The entry into force of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (JEEPA) in 2019 represents an important milestone in trade and investment relations between EU and Japan that is the EU's second-biggest trading partner in Asia after China. The bilateral trade between Japan and the EU accounts for 9.2% exports to the EU while imports account for 11.4%.

In recent years Japan has been trying to open up, to generate new ties and agreements with other economies. It starts with the economies and industries of countries with interests, such as the countries that manufacture vehicles and institutions in the technological, normalisation and economic fields. This twist in its traditionally closed philosophy is because the change to society 5.0 will only be possible by creating alliances and learning from other countries. In recent years, in addition to its strong link to the USA economy since World War II and its neighbours, Japan has begun to reach

other types of agreements and relations with Europe concerning standardisation with Germany and textile innovation clusters with France.

Knowledge linked to both advanced manufacturing and technical and technological textiles from Europe and Japan can be complementary, and therefore collaboration between the two economies can strengthen both parties. The Japanese market is demanding, but today no more complex than any developed economy. In Europe, companies in these sectors have also been trained and have exciting and differential proposals that can be attractive to the Japanese.

Automotive

Japan is among the largest and most technologically advanced producers of vehicles (the world's third-largest domestic automobile car production), industrial robots (global share of approximately 60%), and machine tools (third in the world with a 16,8% market share).

The automotive sector is one of the three main pillars of its economy, and it is meant to continue to be, but as its the evolution goes through decarbonisation, implying fuels and all kinds of materials used in manufacturing seek to improve collaboration with their business partners to continue at the forefront of the sector.

Aerospace

The international civil aircraft market is a growing market expected to increase by approximately 5% annually.

- By integrating advanced technologies with high-grade materials and components, the aerospace industry utilizes a wide range of supporting industries, and its technology also spreads to other sectors, thus benefiting the whole economy.
- Through high-speed transportation, disaster prevention, and other similar activities, this industry contributes to improving Japan's daily lives.
- As one of the essential defence components, the aerospace industry is directly linked to national security.

Advanced Manufacturing

The advanced manufacturing industry is closely related to the Japanese concept of "Society 5.0", a human-centred society that balances economic advances with the resolution of social problems by a system integrating cyberspace and physical space.

Japan spends the most significant percentage of its GDP on R&D. It has vital manufacturing sectors (vehicle, information technology, electronics, robots, and satellites), where industry partnerships are more prevalent than academic ones. Japanese vision is to integrate Advanced Manufacturing (SM, IM, IoT, ...) throughout the value chains of every industry. In this scope, there are plenty of opportunities when offering solutions that can improve their main sectors and all their industries.

Advanced technological textiles

Japan is a leader in manufacturing advanced technological textiles, especially carbon fibre, and still has many SMEs that need to adapt to the new reality.

Therefore, the Japanese government is developing programs to promote the modernisation and reconversion of this industry. The applications of technological fabrics to the automotive industry and now to the aerospace industry are focused on using light, less polluting fabrics, eliminating migrations during the production process and, in the use of waste, targeting 100% recycling of materials to achieve its circular economy and decarbonisation linked objectives. Other efforts in textiles focus on developments with composites, nanocomposites and carbon fibres, mainly concentrated on the application in the automotive and aerospace sectors.

2.1.4. INNOVATIVE COMPANIES

The Toray Group specialised in textiles, fibres and carbon filter composites, among other products declared will help to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions and help to realise a carbon-neutral world by 2050 by expanding the Green Innovation businesses that have long been a Toray focus, including renewable energy, hydrogen, and materials for electrification, and by developing products that help with greenhouse gas absorption, such as CO₂ separation membranes.

JAMCO specialising in interiors and flighting seats, became one of the major partners when the seat supplier for Airbus failed with technical problems and was requested to resolve them some years ago. As a result, in 2021, the new Venture Pristine clean solution for the aircraft interior was launched.

Teijin has over 30 years of pioneering expertise in the manufacture of carbon fibre. Committed to quality, innovation, and customer-oriented service and technology has driven into a leading position in the world carbon fibre market. Furthermore, product developments like Carbon Fibre are an incredibly versatile material, with a wide range of applications, including satellite, Launch Vehicle, aircraft, car parts, and several sports goods.

2.1.5. OTHER INFORMATION

Business size can be the most crucial problem; consequently, cooperation between groups or institutions of European companies with Japanese entities of the same level may be advisable to establish business relationships. To provide that cooperation, there are entities and support channels from both the EU through the "EU JAPAN CENTRE" and Japan's JETRO.

Japanese business culture is not as difficult to read as most companies believe. Tolerance, honesty, respect for their corporate customs and a long-term commitment to business success are the main components of success in Japan. However, some aspects of Japan's commercial culture, especially the long-term relationships resulting from the Japanese traditionalist sense of loyalty to reliable partners, can be advantageous for foreign companies.

As a result, Japan is a stable, sophisticated and advanced market for business: commitments are honored, things happen on time, and Intellectual property (IP) is well protected. Japanese are demanding and incredibly thorough when evaluating quality, design, and customer service. They appreciate product information, customer support, delivery, and marketing as essential factors for assessing the product's quality and choosing the product that better suits their requirements. Choosing a reputable distributor can simplify market entry, give credibility before local players, and provide proper distribution of your product.

2.2 JAPAN MISSION ACTIVITIES

2.2.1. MISSION PROFILE

The ADMANTEX2i Japan mission will take place from March 11th until March 15th, 2024.

The specific objectives of this mission to Japan are to identify potential **business and technological partnerships** for the travelling European companies, while more generally exploring this important global market and its **diverse opportunities**. The ADMANTEX2i consortium is working hand-in-hand with Japanese clusters and business associations in order to detect the most interesting opportunities and business contacts for the European companies, and each delegate will be provided with a **personalised agenda** before the mission which has been tailored to their interests and needs.

In particular, the mission will include 3 days participation at a world leading trade fair and business convention, the [Smart Manufacturing Summit](#), which will be held at the Aichi Sky Expo from the 13th to the 15th of March. Dedicated to Japanese and European Innovations for Industry 5.0, the summit will be organised into technological pavilions of particular interest to the ADMANTEX2i consortium: Automation & Mechatronics; Advanced Technologies & Materials; Digital Ecosystems; New Energies; Sustainable Manufacturing and Smart Mobilities. In parallel **B2B meetings** will be organised over the 3 days in order to increase the visibility of the European delegation and identify business opportunities.

The event will facilitate access for the European delegation to meet with industrial manufacturers and government representatives in order to finalise technological projects to create partnerships or set up operations in Japan.

In addition, **industrial visits** will also be organised to some of Japan's leading companies and innovative SMEs in the fields of **advanced manufacturing** and **textiles** to look at best practices in terms of digitalisation and sustainability. These **industrial visits** will be aligned with the core sectors defined in the ADMANTEX2i Joint Internationalisation Strategy: Advanced manufacturing; Advanced textiles; Aerospace and Automotive sectors. In addition to the programme of B2B meetings and industrial visits, structured **networking activities** will also be carried out **among the European**

delegation in order to boost opportunities for business and innovation partnerships on a European level.

The participating delegation will be composed of **SMEs** and Research and technical organisations (RTOs) from France, Italy, Portugal and Spain, as well as the cluster managers from ADMANTEX2i partners, and will number between 18 – 26 participants.

2.2.2. PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

The mission programme will take in two cities, Tokyo and Nagoya. After arrival in Tokyo, the delegation will spend two days with business associations and their member companies for B2B meetings in order to meet key players in the Japanese Advanced Manufacturing and Textiles sectors. Industrial visits will also be organised in order to identify best-practices in terms of digital and sustainable manufacturing.

On Tuesday evening the group will travel to Nagoya for the Smart Manufacturing Summit at the Aichi Sky Expo, where activities will be organised from Wednesday 13th to Friday 15th of March. Find more information about the Smart Manufacturing Summit: <https://sms-gi.com/english/about/>

The agenda is under development and will be finalized in the months leading up to the event, with the final programme to be confirmed to participants 4 weeks in advance of departure, including the individualised agendas for each participating SMEs and RTOs, tailored to their needs, and based on the discussions with their ADMANTEX2i contact point.

2.2.3. LOGISTICS

Local ADMANTEX2i contact points will provide their participating companies with the necessary logistical information in advance of the mission, notably:

- Suggested flights
- Suggested hotels

Delegates are responsible for their own reservations and based on their own personal and/or corporate criteria may choose to travel or lodge separately from the delegation if they so wish.

3. CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

This Call for Expressions of Interest (Eols) has been launched in order to engage SMEs and RTOs in the participation in the mission to Japan which will take place from 11/03 to 15/03, 2024.

This Call for Eols will distribute the financial support to AFIL cluster members needed to attend the ADMANTEX2i mission to Japan.

This Call for Expressions of Interest is published on the project website and is regulated by the Call for Expressions of Interest Guidelines available on the project website www.admantex2i.eu/financial-support.

This Call for Expressions of Interest is public and communicated through the project website, European Cluster Collaboration Platform and social media.

Key facts about the current Call for Eols:

Call publication Date: 13/09/2023, 09:00 CET

Submission deadline: 31/10/2023, 18:00 CET

Submission by email to: afil@admantex2i.eu and samuel.monaco@afil.it

Eol Evaluation period: 2nd to 8th November 2023

Eol Ranking: 9th November 2023

Total call budget: €3000

Financial support will cover the following expenses:

- International travel
- Hotel/accommodation

3.1. AVAILABLE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Each ADMANTEX2i cluster has allocated a total of 3.000€ of financial support to third parties that will be distributed using cascade funding under this open Call for Expressions of Interest jointly launched by each of the clusters.

The maximum amount of financial support available through this call for each selected third party is 1.500€.

Selected companies will sign a sub-grant agreement with AFIL, specifying the terms and conditions of the financial support and the engagements of both parties.

It is expected that at least 12 entities will benefit from financial support for this mission, representing at least 2 entities receiving support per cluster.

3.2. ELIGIBLE COSTS

Eligible financial support will cover flight ticket and hotel invoice costs incurred when participating in an international mission organized by ADMANTEX2i. The maximum financial contribution of ADMANTEX2i to the third party participating in the international mission shall be 1.500€ (One thousand, five hundred Euros) in the form of a lump sum.

The actual financial contribution of ADMANTEX2i shall be calculated in accordance with the provisions of the sub grant agreement and will cover 100% of real and justifiable travel and accommodation costs up to the limit of 1.500€, exceeding which the remainder is co-financed by the third party beneficiary.

Over the course of the ADMANTEX2i project, FSTP is capped at 3.000€ per eligible organization, with a mission cap of 1.500€ per eligible organization, therefore each eligible organization may participate in up to 2 missions receiving financial support.

3.3 PAYMENT CONDITIONS

In general, payment of financial support will be made within 30 days of the mission taking place and/or the completion of the justification, whichever is later. Payments will be made as per sub grant agreement signed by beneficiaries, supported by justification of costs incurred including flight ticket and hotel invoice.

Beneficiaries are expected to sign the attendance list of the mission and participate in pre-event and post-event sessions.

Recipients of financial support must ensure that the European Commission, the Agency, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) and the European Anti-Fraud Office can exercise their rights carry out checks reviews or audits.

4. APPLICATION

4.1 WHO CAN APPLY ?

This Call for Expressions of Interest is aimed at SMEs and other key stakeholders in the innovation chain, that are active members of the ADMANTEX2i clusters launching the Eol call. Specifically, the entities targeted by the Call for Expressions of Interest include:

- SMEs, according to the [EU definition](#)
- Research and technical organizations (RTO), including
 - Technical/competence centers
 - Applied research institutes
 - Technology transfer offices

4.2 HOW TO APPLY ?

Applicants must submit their application (the so called “Expression of Interest” – Eol in short) by completing the short Annex 1 available at the following link www.admantex2i.eu/financial-support, and sending it to afil@admantex2i.eu and samuel.monaco@afil.it before the **31/10/2023, 18:00 CET**.

For all necessary questions and support in replying to the Call for Expressions of Interest, please reach out to your ADMANTEX2i contact point.

4.3. EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be examined and ranked according to the following criteria :

- Complete application received before the close of the Call for Expressions of Interest
- Applicant is a member of AFIL
- Applicant active in the advanced manufacturing

- Development strategy in line with ADMANTEX2i objectives
- Articulated technological offer for target market
- Priority will be given to SMEs

After the close of the call – and no later than 09/11/2023 – successful applicants will be notified of their selection for the financial support, the conditions of said support and proceed to signature Sub Grant Agreement.

The following tool will be used to weight the different evaluation criteria and rank the received applications:

	Evaluation criteria	Max. Score
1	Complete application received before close of the Call for Expressions of Interest Submission time ranking with 3 points decrements	20
2	Applicant is a member of AFIL	20
3	Applicant active in the advanced manufacturing	10
4	Development strategy in line with ADMANTEX2i objectives	20
5	Articulated technological offer for target market	20
6	Priority for SMEs (+10pts)	10
	Total score	0-100

In the event of two or more applications receiving the same evaluation score, applications will be differentiated according to the following criteria and applied in the following order:

1. Preference will be given to companies who have not previously benefitted from financial support in the framework of the ADMANTEX2i project
2. Preference will be given to companies who declare an interest to participate in more than one international mission (even without financial support)
3. Where appropriate, preference will be given to companies with no previous export experience in the target countries of the ADMANTEX2i project

The initial evaluation will be carried out by AFIL before validation by the ADMANTEX2i Steering Committee.

5. DATA PROTECTION

The General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679/EU) guarantees that the processing of data is carried out in compliance with the fundamental rights and freedoms, as well as the dignity of the data subject with particular reference to confidentiality, personal identity.

ADMANTEX2i consortium protects the information collected; the information is intended for the exclusive use of the ADMANTEX2i project.

Contacts and details of companies participating in international delegations may be shared with parties of 3rd countries outside EU for the organisation of missions to USA, Japan and Canada, by applying, participants confirm consent.

6. DISCLAIMER

This Call for Expressions of Interest is part of the project ADMANTEX2i which has received funding from the European Union's COSME programme under grant agreement No. 101035895.

The content of this Call for Expressions of Interest represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA) or any other body of the European Union. The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains.

Mistakes or inconsistencies: The ADMANTEX2i consortium is not responsible for any mistakes or misinterpretations that this text may cause. In the case of inconsistencies, the ADMANTEX2i Consortium will determine the steps to be taken, in cooperation with the applicant concerned.

Consequential damages: In no event shall either party be liable to the other or any of its affiliates for any consequential, incidental, indirect, special, punitive or exemplary damages (including, without limitation, lost profits, business or goodwill) suffered or incurred by such other party or its affiliates in connection with this voucher scheme, even if advised of the possibility of such damages.

Direct Damages: ADMANTEX2i's liability for direct damages will be limited to the amount of the financial contribution awarded to the applicant pending of payment.