

PRESS RELEASE

TOP BUSINESS PLANS CELEBRATED AT JMEC

A panel of judges recognized winning teams at 24th annual competition

TOKYO, June 8, 2018—Japan Market Expansion Competition (JMEC) has announced the winners for the JMEC 24 program at a gala awards ceremony.

JMEC Executive Committee Chairman Tom Whitson said: “JMEC 24 brought together 61 highly motivated participants from around the world who overcame language barriers and other challenges to cooperate in small teams to analyze market opportunities for JMEC project clients. They developed realistic business plans to crack the Japanese market—and their commitment and energy made them fun to work with.

“They've given up a lot in the last seven months. They've given up social life, family, friends, and sleep. But I hope that they would all say that the learning experience and camaraderie has been worth the effort and sacrifice.”

Thirteen project clients—including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), entrepreneurs, and global companies—commissioned custom business plans from JMEC, for a very reasonable price. Some of the most successful foreign business leaders in Japan then trained, mentored, and advised participants to develop and present the plans to three senior JMEC judges.

More than 200 guests—including senior executives and other leaders from embassies and foreign chambers of commerce in Japan—attended the JMEC Awards Ceremony and party at Tokyo American Club on June 6.

The Top Three

JMEC judge Rike Wootten said: “This year the plans were quite diverse, and the team members working on the plans often had no idea about the industry they needed to become experts in. When we read the final plans and saw the presentations, we were amazed at how well they did.

Team 5 won first prize with their business plan for a French high-tech company. Whitson stated: “The feedback we've gotten from this client has been very positive, and we may be able to report interesting things in the future from them.” Matthew Kish, one of the members of the team, said: “For me, JMEC was a great way to benchmark my business skills against other people who are working at really good companies in Tokyo and see how I compare and fit in. It was a great learning experience.”

Team 2 won second prize with a market entry plan for the project client CGI K.K., a Japan-based company that supports quality management systems for clinical laboratories. They were one of three teams that were supported by the ACCJ. About their JMEC team, CGI K.K. CEO Mark A. Colby said: “Over the

several meetings that we had, it was amazing how the team developed. None of them knew anything about our business or the sector that we're in. And it was incredible to see them become subject matter experts in the diagnostic area." Team member Wei Li said: "This has been a precious experience. It was a great opportunity to develop teamwork—we really had to learn how to rely on each other."

Team 13 won third prize with a business plan for Royal DSM, a global science-based company active in health, nutrition and materials. One team member had to miss the presentation because she was about to give birth! About half of all JMEC participants are women, but this was a notable first. Team member Nagisa Nakamura said: "I'm really surprised that we got this prize, because we were the smallest JMEC 24 team. Sometimes we had conflicts, and difficulties, but now that we've made it and we won the prize, I'm really relieved." Verna Holder, an actuary and the consultant for Team 13, said: "To be part of the process, to mentor teams, to share experiences (both work and personal) and to engage with the team has been a rewarding and intellectually stimulating experience."

Outstanding presentations

Wootten—who has spent most of his 30 years in Japan in international finance—said it was a very close contest with just a 6% range between the top three teams' scores. He added that the oral presentations were what made the top teams stand out: "The quality of the oral presentations was fabulous, and this was really the deciding factor in the winners."

JMEC prizes

First-place winners won Finnair flight tickets to Europe and one-year memberships and event vouchers to the ACCJ; second place winners won Hewlett Packard Elitebook Folio G1s tablets and one-year memberships to the ACCJ; and third-place winners won stylish BREE satchels and tickets to one of the ACCJ's "nomunication" networking events.

About JMEC

Founded in 1993 by the Australian and New Zealand Chamber of Commerce in Japan, JMEC is a non-profit business planning skills-development training program supported by 18 foreign chambers of commerce in Japan. Over the past 24 years, JMEC has trained more than 1,200 young business professionals, many of whom have gone on to rise in their companies or start their own businesses.

Built around a business plan competition, JMEC provides classroom training followed by hands-on experience for up-and-coming managers living and working in Japan. To date, JMEC has provided 240 high-quality business plans to help companies entering or expanding in the Japanese market.

JMEC is internationally accredited by Pearson PLC—the world's largest learning company—as a Pearson Assured certified organization. Pearson

Assured is an independent certification and international quality benchmark for organizations that design and deliver their own learning programs.

JMEC 25

The JMEC 25 program starts in August 2018 with information sessions for potential participants, attended by JMEC alumni and staff. Program lectures start November 10, 2018.

JMEC: www.jmec.gr.jp

Media enquiries:

Simon Farrell

Custom Media

03-4540-7730

simon@custom-media.com

General enquiries:

Trond Varlid

JMEC Program Director

080-4368-2025

info@jmec.gr.jp

[Team photos follow on the next pages below.]



Team 5: 1st Prize Winners

Project Client: Cortus

From left:

Yuki Komine (Finnair), Matthew Kish, Midori Sato, Brian Burns (team consultant), Lazaro Vazquez, Yutaro Nishibori, Yoshitaka Sugihara (ACCJ)
Absent: Fong Nei Chan, Fabrizio Mura (team mentor).

Photo by Antony Tran - PhotoLIFE.14 - www.photolife14.com



Team 2: 2nd Prize Winners

Project Client: CGI K.K.

From left: Ernie Olsen, Sean Crossover (CGI), Mark Colby (CGI CEO), Wei Li, Minako Okumura, Kumi Matsunobu, King Chang, Yoshiko Oda, Yoshitaka Sugihara (ACCJ), Hidenori Kuraishi (HP Enterprise)

Photo by Antony Tran - PhotoLIFE.14 - www.photolife14.com



Team 13: 3rd Prize Winners

Project Client: Royal DSM

From left: Mitsuhiro Honda (team mentor), Wolfgang Bierer (Endeavor), Nagisa Nakamura, Verna Holder (team consultant), Yoshitaka Sugihara (ACCJ)

Absent: Bastian Lidzba, Kaoru Kubota

Photo by Antony Tran - PhotoLIFE.14 - www.photolife14.com