

# Asian Productivity Organization

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## PROJECT NOTIFICATION

24 June 2011

1. **Project Code:** 11-IN-96-GE-WSP-B
2. **Project Title:** Workshop on Innovation and Competitiveness in SMEs
3. **Duration:** 6–9 September 2011, 4 days
4. **Venue:** Seoul, Republic of Korea
5. **Implementing Organization:** Korea Productivity Center  
  
Address: 57-1 Sajik-ro, Jongno-gu  
Seoul 110-751, Republic of Korea  
Telephone: (82) 2-724-1180  
Facsimile: (82) 2-737-9140
6. **Number of Overseas Participants:** Up to 18 qualified participants from Bangladesh, Republic of China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, IR Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. However, other member countries with special interest in the subject are also encouraged to apply.
7. **Number of Local Participants:** Up to six qualified participants
8. **Closing Date for Nominations:** 12 August 2011  
  
All nominations along with the **completed biodata** form and medical certificate of the nominees should reach the APO Secretariat by the above date. Selection of participants will be completed immediately after this date. Member countries are requested to inform the APO Secretariat as soon as possible if they decide not to nominate anyone for the project.
9. **Objective:** To increase the level of competitiveness and innovation of the SME sector as a basis for sustainable, balanced development and to improve the conditions for generating added value in SMEs' services and products.

## 10. Background

SMEs play a vital role in the development of national economies, not only by providing new sources of employment and replacing declining traditional industries but also as a source of innovation, creativity, and international competitiveness. Innovation plays a fundamental role in the success of many SMEs. It is about more than just bringing new, improved products and services to market. It is about finding new ways to increase the efficiency of business and, most importantly, profitability, to stay competitive.

Nowadays, the increasing technological complexity required for producing new products, short product life cycles, and unceasing competition have forced SMEs to move beyond the change philosophy of continuous improvement to more innovative, radical ideas that will enhance their competitiveness. In addition, fluctuating customer needs and increasing competitive pressure are the main reasons why innovative power is becoming one of the strongest deciding factors in the commercial success or failure of an SME or any business. SMEs often confront barriers to innovation, e.g., resource constraints, which hinder their capacity to invent and commercialize new products, services, or processes.

The APO is organizing this workshop especially for SMEs to share and grasp new ideas for promoting and creating innovation in their products, services, processes, and policies. It is also a platform for SMEs to share views and concerns on issues related to innovation so that they can enhance their competitiveness in the market.

## 11. Tentative Scope and Methodology

### Scope

- a) Innovative strategies for SME development
  - Approaches to business innovation
  - Leadership in innovation
  - Risks and rewards in innovation;
- b) Best practices and initiatives by SMEs to promote innovation
  - Site visits;
- c) Nurturing an innovative, creative culture in SMEs;
- d) Case study on successful innovations; and
- e) New technology transfer and partnerships among SMEs for enhanced competitiveness.

### Methodology

Interactive presentations, discussions of case studies, country paper presentations, observational study visits, and preparation of action plans.

## 12. Requirements of Candidates

- (a) Age: Preferably between 35 and 55 years.
- (b) Education: Preferably university degree or equivalent qualifications.
- (c) Present Position: Owners or top managers of SMEs in charge of promoting innovation in the company.
- (d) Experience: At least 10 years of experience in a related field.

- (e) Language: Proficiency in written and spoken English is essential.  
Proficiency
- (f) Health: Physically and mentally fit to attend an intensive program entailing strenuous travel and several plant/field visits.

### **13. Financial Arrangements**

#### **(a) To be borne by the APO**

- (i) Round-trip economy-class international airfare by the most direct route between the international airport nearest to the participants' place of work and Seoul, Republic of Korea, for participants. As far as practicable, all participants are strongly encouraged to purchase and use discounted tickets (following IATA PEX or other applicable discount fares) Please note that arrangements for the purchase of air tickets should be in accordance with the "Guide on Purchases of Air Tickets for APO Project Participants" dated 7 July 2006, which will be sent to the selected participants and is available from APO Liaison Officers in member countries.
- (ii) All assignment costs of overseas resource persons.

#### **(b) To be borne by the host country—Republic of Korea**

- i) Expenses for hotel accommodations for 18 overseas participants for 5 days;
- ii) Per diem allowances for all overseas participants for up to 5 days; and
- ii) Other local implementation costs.

#### **(c) To be borne by participants or participating countries**

- (i) Participants must be fully insured against accident and illness (including hospitalization) for a principal sum of US\$10,000.00 for the entire duration of the project and travel, and must submit to the APO a copy of the comprehensive travel insurance certificate before participation. Such insurance must be valid in the locations to be visited. If a participant is unable to arrange for insurance coverage in the host country at the start of the project, he/she must pay the premium himself/herself out of the per diem allowances provided. Neither the APO nor the implementing organization will be responsible for any eventuality arising from accident or illness.
- (ii) Any expenses incurred by participants for stopovers on the way to and from the project venue as well as for extra stay at the project venue before and/or after the official project period on account of early arrival or late departure, for example, due to either limited available flights or any other reason whatsoever.
- (iii) Any expenses related to visa fees and airport taxes.

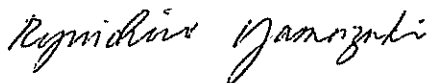
#### 14. Actions by Participating Countries

- (a) Each APO member country is requested to nominate two or more candidates for selection. Please ensure that candidates nominated meet the qualifications specified above.
- (b) We will not accept any form of self-nomination. All nominations must be endorsed and submitted by an APO Director, Alternate Director, Liaison Officer, or their designated officer.
- (c) Please note that nomination does not necessarily guarantee that a candidate will be selected. Selection is at the discretion of the APO Secretariat. A basic criterion for selection is the homogeneity of the participants in terms of qualifications and work experience. Nonselection therefore does not mean that the candidates concerned are not competent. Sometimes candidates are not selected because they are overqualified.
- (d) Each nomination should be accompanied by the documents listed below. A nomination lacking any of these documents may not be considered:
  - (i) Two copies of the candidate's biodata on the APO biodata form together with passport-sized photograph. The biodata form can be downloaded from the APO website. Downloading information is also available from [www.apo-tokyo.org](http://www.apo-tokyo.org). We encourage submitting the biodata form to the APO Secretariat in electronic form as an attachment to a cover e-mail message from the APO Director, Alternate Director, or Liaison Officer.
  - (ii) APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form. Every candidate must complete and submit a copy of the APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form with his/her biodata at the time of nomination. Please note that for this particular project self-declaration is sufficient for candidates without any of the health conditions or illnesses enumerated on the reverse side of the medical form. However, for all others, medical certification by a recognized physician on the reverse side of the medical form is required.
- (e) Member countries are encouraged to submit the necessary documents electronically as mentioned in (d)-(i). In that case, there is no need to send a hard copy by postal mail. However, if the documents are submitted by fax, member countries are requested to mail the originals of the documents to the APO as well. If a digital photograph of a nominee is not attached to the electronic biodata form, a hard-copy photograph should be sent to the APO Secretariat by postal mail. Please specify the candidate's name and the project code on the reverse side of the photograph.
- (f) Member countries are requested to abide by the nomination deadline specified in Section 7 on the first page. The APO may not consider late nominations as they have in the past resulted in considerable difficulties to the implementing organization in its preparatory work for the project.
- (g) Under normal circumstances, candidates who are selected after the initial screening will be informed of their acceptance at least four weeks prior to commencement of the project.

- (h) Member countries are requested to inform candidates that, once selected, they are not to bring family members or to engage in any private business activities during the entire duration of the project. Further, if they should become unable to take part, the NPOs concerned are requested to inform the APO and the host country promptly of their reason for withdrawal.
- (i) Each selected candidate is required to arrive at the venue one day before the start of the official project. Also, he/she is expected to return home upon completion of the official project because he/she is visiting the host country for the specific purpose of attending this APO workshop.

#### **15. Guide for Participants**

Other conditions for participation are given in the *APO Guide for Participants*, which is available from APO Liaison Officers/NPOs in member countries and on the APO homepage ([http://www.apo-tokyo.org/05part\\_guide.htm](http://www.apo-tokyo.org/05part_guide.htm)).



Ryuichiro Yamazaki  
Secretary-General