



PROJECT NOTIFICATION

27 March 2018

- 1. Project Code** 18-IN-44-GE-OSM-A
- 2. Title** Multicountry Observational Study Mission on SME Development
- 3. Timing and Duration** 10–14 September 2018 (five days)
- 4. Venue** Seoul, Republic of Korea
- 5. Implementing Organization**
Korea Productivity Center (KPC)
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Republic of Korea
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e-Mail: phhan@kpc.or.kr; thkang@kpc.or.kr
- 6. Number of Overseas Participants** Up to 18 qualified participants
- 7. Number of Local Participants** Up to six qualified participants
- 8. Closing Date for Nominations** 13 July 2018
- 9. Objectives**
 - a. To familiarize participants with key elements and current trends in SME development and understanding the opportunities and challenges faced by SMEs in the era of Industry 4.0;
 - b. To observe good practices, policy programs, and development strategies for SMEs in the ROK; and
 - c. To facilitate participants' strategy formulation by comparing experiences and practices from the ROK and other member countries.

10. Background

SMEs, including microenterprises and startups, have been the backbone of socioeconomic development in APO member countries. Despite their differences in size, businesses model, and type of activity, they contribute directly to GDP and national income and provide opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship, leading to poverty reduction and inclusive economic growth. For their agile, adaptive nature, nowadays SMEs are also seen as an indispensable source of innovation and industrial resilience, which compensates for the inflexibility of business conglomerates and government systems. Ensuring the prosperity of SMEs is thus crucial to sustaining a nation's long-term development, and good practices and

strategies stimulating the vitality of SMEs should be identified as a priority for sustainability.

The economy of the ROK is characterized by the dominance of gigantic industrial conglomerates. Nonetheless, since the 1970s, the ROK has also been leveraging the momentum of SMEs through various assistance programs and policy initiatives to support their manufacturing, services, exports, and employment. Targeting the innovation capacity of SMEs in the era of Industry 4.0, in 2017 the ROK government upgraded its previous SME authority and incorporated a number of policy arms, venture funds, and technological innovation hubs into the new Ministry of SMEs and Startups, which is expected to strengthen the competitiveness of SMEs, incubate innovation and entrepreneurship, and improve employment conditions, especially for the youth. This study mission will provide a timely opportunity to observe the ROK's latest strategies in SME assistance and understand the dynamics between SMEs, innovation, and economic growth.

Promoting the development of SMEs is a core element of the APO's mandate and one of its strategic directions. The APO has been organizing a variety of activities focusing on SMEs, including bilateral capacity building in Cambodia, the ROK, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, and Singapore; workshops in IR Iran and Nepal; and study missions in the ROC, IR Iran, Japan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. This study mission is a continuation of those efforts, which will demonstrate the ROK's experience in and strategies for stimulating the development of SMEs.

11. Scope and Methodology

The tentative modules to be covered include:

- a. Core elements of SME development;
- b. The ROK's policies and programs for SME development;
- c. Good practices of SME support and examples of innovation from SMEs;
- d. New trends in sustaining SME development and resilience; and
- e. Strategies to support SMEs in the era of Industry 4.0.

The program will consist of interactive lectures, site visits, group discussions, and participants' presentations.

The tentative program of the study mission is given below:

Date/Time	Activity
Sunday, 9 September 2018	Arrival of participants in Seoul
Monday, 10 Sept.	Opening session Presentation of resource papers: Core elements of SME development; ROK's policy support to SMEs; Case studies from the ROK
Tuesday, 11 Sept.	Presentation of country papers Observational visits to SME authorities and relevant organizations
Wednesday, 12 Sept.	Presentation of country papers Observational visits to SMEs and relevant organizations

Thursday, 13 Sept.	Presentation of resource papers: Good practices of SME support from other countries; The role of SMEs in innovation and Industry 4.0 Group discussion and exercise
Friday, 14 Sept.	Presentation of group findings and individual action plans Program evaluation and closing session
Saturday, 15 Sept.	Departure of participants

12. Qualifications of Candidates

The participants are expected to possess the following qualifications:

Present Position	Government officials and policy research officers involved in industrial policies, development strategies for SMEs, and productivity improvement initiatives.
Experience	At least five years of experience in the position described above.
Education	University degree or equivalent qualification from a recognized university/institution.
Language	All proceedings of the project are conducted in English, and participants are frequently required to make oral and written presentations. They must therefore be proficient in spoken and written English. Those who are not proficient in English will not be accepted.
Health	Physically and mentally fit to attend an intensive project requiring participants to complete a number of individual and group activities and strenuous fieldwork. It is therefore recommended that member countries do not nominate candidates likely to suffer from physical and mental stress.
Age	Candidates who fit the above profile are typically between 30 and 50 years of age.
Attendance	Participants are required to attend the entire program.

13. Financial Arrangements

a. Airfare

The APO will bear the cost of round-trip economy-class international airfare between the international airport nearest to the participants' place of work and Seoul, Republic of Korea, from organizations in any of these categories:

- a. SMEs;
- b. Nonprofit organizations; and
- c. Any organization from the APO list of LDCs.*

**As of 7 July 2006, the APO list of LDCs comprised Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Nepal.*

The APO will only reimburse discount air tickets for the most direct route. Participants should note that the arrangements for the purchase of air tickets should follow the “Guide on Purchases of Air Tickets for APO Participants,” which will be sent to the selected participants and is also available on the APO website and from APO Liaison Officers in member countries.

b. Participating Country Expenses (PCEs)

PCEs payable to the APO do not apply to organizations in any of these categories:

- a. SMEs;
- b. Nonprofit organizations; and
- c. Any organization from the APO list of LDCs.*

**As of 7 July 2006, the APO list of LDCs comprised Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Nepal.*

c. Insurance Coverage

Participants’ insurance premiums: All participants should be fully insured against accident and illness (including hospitalization and death) for a principal sum equivalent to USD10,000.00 for the entire duration of the project and travel and must submit to the APO Secretariat a copy of the comprehensive travel insurance certificate before participation. Such insurance should be valid in the host country. This insurance requirement is in addition to existing government insurance coverage in some member countries. If any participant is unable to insure himself/herself as stipulated above, he/she should secure this insurance in the host country at the commencement of the project and pay the premium himself/herself, if necessary, from the per diem allowance provided. Neither the APO nor the implementing organization will be responsible for any eventuality arising from accident, illness, acts of war, force majeure, or any unexpected events beyond human control such as those related to natural disasters.

d. Cost Sharing

Subject to the conditions stated in the Financial Arrangements section, the following table shows the cost-sharing arrangements between the APO, host country, and participants or participating countries.

Cost item	Cost to be borne by		
	Participants or participating countries	Host country	APO
Round-trip economy-class international airfare (refer to paragraph 13a for conditions)	Conditions apply	No	Conditions apply
Participating Country Expenses (PCEs) (refer to paragraph 13b)	USD50 per participant	No	No
Hotel accommodation in Seoul	No	Yes	No
Per diem allowance in Seoul	No	Yes	No
Transportation costs to and from hotel and airport in Seoul	No	Yes	No
Insurance coverage in the ROK (refer to paragraph 13c)	Yes	No	No

Cost item	Cost to be borne by		
	Participants or participating countries	Host country	APO
Any expenses related to visa fees and airport taxes	Yes	No	No
All expenses incurred by participants for any reason including but not limited to: a. Stopovers b. Extension of stay c. Early arrival or late departure d. Flight cancellation	Yes	No	No
Any cancellation charges for expenses such as airfare and accommodations incurred by the APO or host country after issuance of Letters of Acceptance	Yes	No	No
Assignment costs of international resource persons	NA	No	Yes
Assignment costs of local resource persons	NA	Yes	No
All local implementation costs including but not limited to: a. Meeting rooms b. Documentation c. Preparatory costs	NA	Yes	No

14. Actions by Member Countries

- a. Each participating country is requested to nominate three or more candidates in the order of preference. Please ensure that candidates nominated meet the qualifications specified under section 12 above.
- b. No form of self-nomination will be accepted. All nominations must be endorsed and submitted by an APO Director, Alternative Director, Liaison Officer, or their designated officer.
- c. Please note that nomination of a candidate does not necessarily guarantee that he/she will be selected. Selection is at the discretion of the selection committee 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 enough. Sometimes candidates are not selected because they are overqualified for a project.
- d. Each nomination should be accompanied by the necessary documents. A nomination lacking any of these documents may not be considered: two copies of the candidate's biodata on the APO biodata form together with a passport-sized photograph. The biodata form can be downloaded from the APO website (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.

The nomination documents should be sent to the Industry Department, APO Secretariat (e-mail: ind@apo-tokyo.org, fax: 81-3-5840-5324).

- e. The 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 self-declaration is sufficient for candidates without any of health conditions or illnesses listed on the reverse side of the medical form. However, for all others, medical certification by a licensed physician on the reverse side of the medical form is required.
- f. Necessary documents are to be submitted electronically. 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 Secretariat 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 give the candidate's name and the project code on the reverse side of the photograph.
- g. Member countries are requested to adhere to the nomination deadline given on page 1. The APO Secretariat 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.
- h. For member countries where nominations are required to be approved by higher government authorities and require a longer time, APO Liaison Officers/NPOs are urged to send the names of nominees on or before the deadline, indicating that government approval will follow.
- i. If a selected participant becomes unable to attend, he/she should inform the APO Liaison Officer/NPO in his/her country immediately and give the reason for withdrawal. The NPO concerned is requested to transmit that information to the APO Secretariat and the host country promptly.
- j. NPOs are requested to inform the selected participants that they are not to bring family members or to engage in any private business activities during the entire duration of the project.
- k. Each selected participant should be instructed 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 study mission.
- l. NPOs should inform participants that they must attend all five days of the project.
- m. NPOs should assist the APO and/or host country in collecting amounts corresponding to cancellation charges arising from withdrawal or no-show of a participant.

15. Actions by the APO Secretariat

- a. Under normal circumstances, candidates who are selected will be informed of their acceptance at least four weeks prior to the start of the project.

- b. If some candidates fail to qualify or be unable to participate after selection, or if some member countries fail to nominate any candidate, their slots may be filled by alternates from the same or another member country on a merit basis.

16. Project Preparation

The participants are required to prepare a short paper prior to departure for the project venue. In preparing the paper, they are expected to follow the “Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Papers” to be provided later.

17. Postproject Actions

All participants are required to prepare action plans and share the plans with their NPOs. The APO will also request participants to submit progress reports six months after completion of the study mission.

18. Evaluation of Participants

If the conduct/attendance/performance of a participant is not satisfactory, these will be reported to the APO director concerned.

19. 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 website (www.apo-tokyo.org).

20. Dress Code

Participants are required to wear business attire during the project. Other instructions will be provided in the circular for participants.



Santhi Kanoktanaporn
Secretary-General