Ministry of SMEs and Startups

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Applications Open for 2026 Program Supporting Foreign Startup Founders in Korea

A new round of support is now available for foreign entrepreneurs seeking to establish and grow their ventures in Korea, with applications opening for the 2026 Global Startup Commercialization Program.

Designed to attract high-potential founders from abroad, the program supports both market entry and early-stage business development, while contributing to a more globally integrated startup ecosystem. To make participation more accessible, all procedures – from application to evaluation – are conducted entirely in English.

Startups selected for the program will receive funding averaging KRW 50 million, with a ceiling of KRW 80 million. The support is intended to accelerate commercialization, including product and service development, market localization, intellectual property acquisition, and marketing.

Beyond financial backing, participants are connected to a broader support framework through the Global Startup Center (GSC). This includes workspace, legal and marketing and advisory services, investor outreach, and opportunities to collaborate with established Korean companies – offering a structured pathway for both market entry and long-term growth.

Interest in the program has continued to rise. In 2025, it drew a 13-to-1 competition ratio, reflecting increasing global attention toward Korea's startups environment.

One example is Polymerize, a materials-tech startup that entered Korea in September 2024. Using AI-driven models to predict material development, the company has since created 11 jobs locally, supported through this program alongside its participation in the K-Startup Grand Challenge.

Reflecting this growing demand, the 2026 program expands both in scale and support. The number of participating startups has increased from 10 to 15, while funding has been raised from an average of KRW 40 million (previously capped at KRW 60 million) to the current level.

"More founders with advanced technologies and strong innovation are considering Korea as a base for their ventures," said Cho Kyung-Won, Director General for Startup Policy. "Through this program, we aim to support their stable settlement and sustained growth within Korea's startup ecosystem."

Applications can be submitted online via the Global Startup Center website from March 18 to April 10. Further details are available through MSS and the K-Startup platform.

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