

October 4, 2021

JX Nippon Mining & Metals Corporation

## **Implementation of Accelerator Program: Innovation Challenge for the Next Generation 2021–2022**

JX Nippon Mining & Metals Corporation (President: Seiichi Murayama; “the Company”) is pleased to announce its decision to implement the accelerator program<sup>1</sup> Innovation Challenge for the Next Generation 2021–2022 (the “Program”) jointly with French company Agorize<sup>2</sup> (Head Office: Paris, France; CEO: Charles Thou), with the aim of creating new businesses.

In its Long-Term Vision 2040, the Company announced a policy of developing and strengthening technology-based businesses that will be the mainstays of the future, with a focus on the advanced materials field. It is currently pursuing various related measures, and the Program aims to further accelerate these by inviting innovative ideas from start-ups and others. In addition to awarding prizes for particularly outstanding proposals, the Company will consider potential partnerships of various kinds, including joint development or capital tie-ups.

This is the second time that the accelerator program will be offered by the Company, following the Program’s launch in fiscal 2019. The first time it was held, the Program leveraged the well-developed network commanded by Agorize, and received proposals of ideas from 71 start-ups located primarily in Europe. The Company is currently exploring collaboration with several these start-ups to pursue ideas including next-generation interconnection technologies and battery materials.

For this year’s program, themes<sup>3</sup> were set with a focus on technological domains that the Company needs to engage with over the medium- to long-term, and this led to the addition of ESG-related elements such as decarbonization and resource circulation. Eligibility for the Program has also been expanded to invite ideas from pre-seed companies and academia, as well as start-ups. Consequently, the Company expects to receive even more proposals of innovative ideas promising synergies with its own business.

The Company will proactively implement the Program and other forms of co-creative development and leverage these initiatives to explore new possibilities for nonferrous metals in order to continue contributing to the creation of a sustainable society.

### Notes:

1. An accelerator program enables companies to use a contest format to invite ideas and proposals from start-ups and others with a view to cooperation or investment.
2. Agorize is a company with operating bases primarily in France, as well as elsewhere in the world. It offers support for accelerator programs and a variety of other forms of open innovation.

3. The Program themes are as follows.

Category	Sub-category
A. ADVANCED MATERIALS TO SUPPORT LIVES AND LIFESTYLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Materials and Processes for Next-Generation Communications</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Materials and Processes for Next-Generation Batteries</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interconnecting Technologies/Materials for Electronic devices</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Materials for Semiconductor Devices</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metal-based Additive Manufacturing</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Novel Copper-Based Materials</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative Materials and Processes for Sensing Technology</li> </ul>
B. TECHNOLOGIES TO FACILITATE MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Materials Informatics</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative Manufacturing Processes / Novel Measurement Technologies to Improve Productivity</li> </ul>
C. CIRCULAR ECONOMY & DECARBONIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technologies to reduce CO2 emissions in the metal smelting process</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E-scrap Materials Recovery Technology</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Innovative Hydrogen Storage/Transport Technologies and Materials</li> </ul>

Reference: Overview of Accelerator Program

Program Name	Innovation Challenge for the Next Generation 2021–2022
Overview	The Company and Agorize will be inviting innovative ideas in the categories of “Advanced materials to support lives and lifestyles” “Technologies to facilitate materials development” and “Circular economy & decarbonation”. (For details of Program themes, refer to Note 3). The forms of partnership on offer will include joint development, financial assistance, capital tie-up, provision of materials, and provision of sales channels.
Schedule (Subject to Change)	2021: Oct. 4 Start date for submissions (official launch of website) Dec. 6 Deadline for submissions 2022: Jan. First selection stage (document-based screening) Feb. Second selection stage (online interviews) Mar. Final selection
Website for Submission of Ideas	<a href="https://www.agorize.com/jx-challenge-2021">https://www.agorize.com/jx-challenge-2021</a>