

FIRST Program Workshop on Country-Led Projects in SMR Emerging Countries

<Background/Objectives>

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) supports the Foundational Infrastructure for Responsible Use of Small Modular Reactor (SMR) Technology (FIRST) program led by the U.S. Department of the State. The FIRST program harnesses the power of the nuclear industry and innovation to advance energy security worldwide by engaging potential nuclear energy newcomers under the highest standards for nuclear safety, security, and nonproliferation. As part of the FIRST program, JICC collaborated in the workshop organized by the U.S. Department of State, where SMR-related projects from four countries were presented.

<Details>

The workshop, held in Vienna in mid-November 2025, showcased the progress of 22 projects on stakeholder engagement, regulatory development, SMR technical studies, and education. At the request of the Association for Overseas Technical Cooperation and Sustainable Partnerships (AOTS), JICC contributed to the workshop by evaluating these projects' outcomes. An official from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry delivered a presentation titled 'An Overview of the Current Status of Nuclear Energy in Japan'.

<Results>

The evaluation of the project outcomes enhanced understanding of SMRs with the highest standards for safety, security, and nonproliferation in the four participating countries. Workshop participants included nuclear energy experts and policymakers from their respective nations. JICC successfully fostered relationships with these individuals, which are crucial for advancing nuclear cooperation. Furthermore, collaborating on this FIRST project has strengthened the partnership between JICC and the U.S. Department of State.



Opening Remarks by an officer of Nuclear Energy Policy Planning Division, METI as representative of Japan



SMR Session Facilitation and Project Report Evaluation by JICC member



Final Day Group Photo