



PRESS RELEASE

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

MALAYSIA LAUNCHES FULL-SCALE STARTUP ASEAN PLATFORM TO DRIVE REGIONAL GROWTH

PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA, 25 June 2025 – Malaysia today launched the Startup ASEAN platform, marking the full-scale rollout of a bold, unified digital gateway to connect and empower startups across ASEAN. Spearheaded by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI) and executed by Cradle Fund Sdn Bhd (Cradle), the platform's regional launch underscores Malaysia's commitment under its 2025 ASEAN Chairmanship to fostering inclusive innovation and economic dynamism across the region.

Unlike the earlier pre-launch phase, this official launch represents a fully operational rollout, equipped with critical capabilities to serve the ASEAN innovation ecosystem. The Startup ASEAN platform is designed as a comprehensive one-stop hub, offering startups direct access to regional market opportunities, funding, investor networks, talent development and ecosystem insights.

YB Tuan Chang Lih Kang, Minister of MOSTI, said "Malaysia is honored to chair ASEAN in 2025 and take the lead in building a truly integrated and empowered regional startup ecosystem. The Startup ASEAN platform is more than a digital gateway, it is a strategic enabler designed through collaboration with all ASEAN Member States to address fragmented access to market, funding, talent and data.

This launch marks the first major deliverable under the ASEAN Startup Technology Ignite 2025, and I would like to commend Cradle for its focal role in driving this initiative with all other ASEAN Member States. Through this platform, we are not only unlocking new opportunities for collaboration across region but also creating greater access for Malaysian startups to expand, scale and thrive in ASEAN and beyond," continued YB Chang.

"Today we witness the official launch of Startup ASEAN-a transformative initiative designed to serve as the centralised hub for all startups across our region. By seamlessly connecting entrepreneurs, investors, government institutions, and ecosystem builders across our Member States, this platform embodies ASEAN's

unwavering commitment to deepening regional integration while unlocking unprecedented opportunities through technology and innovation,” said **H.E. Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN.**

Norman Matthieu Vanhaecke, Group Chief Executive Officer of Cradle, emphasised “Cradle is proud to lead this effort and contribute to ASEAN’s growth through innovation. The platform is beyond technology itself. It is about creating opportunities within the startup ecosystem, strengthening partnerships and unlocking the potential of our ASEAN startups.

In addition to the regional database, the platform will host regional programmes aimed at strengthening cross-border collaboration among all ASEAN Member States and dialogue partners such as South Korea and China,” continued Norman.

The ASEAN Startup Initiative, approved in 2023, appointed Cradle under MOSTI’s mandate to lead its implementation. The initiative focuses on developing startup friendly policies, enhancing ecosystem readiness and driving impactful regional programmes and partnerships.

As ASEAN Chair in 2025, Malaysia’s leadership under the ASEAN Technology Startup Ignite programme signals a strategic move to position the country as a regional innovation hub. The multi-phased implementation includes:

- Phase 1, 2024: Development and pre-launch of the Startup ASEAN platform,
- Phase 2, 2025: Launch of Startup ASEAN platform, ASEAN startup programmes and capacity-building efforts,
- Phase 3, 2026 onwards: Establishment of the ASEAN Centre of Excellence for early-stage startups.

The hybrid launch event featured an immersive Startup ASEAN video tour, highlighting unique startup success stories and cultural diversity from all member states. Coinciding with the launch, Cradle hosted the regional market access session, ASEAN Cross Connect, matching 10 successful global mentors from ASEAN countries with startups from all over the region.

Cradle will continue working closely with all ASEAN Member States to enhance the platform’s value, ensuring it delivers meaningful impact through improved access to markets, investment opportunities and knowledge exchange.

To be part of the regional startup ecosystem, please visit www.startup-asean.org

#END#

Published by:

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

25 JUNE 2025



For more information, please contact:

Elmy Fairuz Azmi

Group Communications

Cradle Fund Sdn Bhd (Cradle)

elmy@cradle.com.my

+6012 – 271 3457