



PRESS RELEASE

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

MYSTARTUP INAUGURATES 2024 WITH 'NXT JOHOR', UNLOCKING THE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SOUTH

ISKANDAR PUTERI, 29 February 2024 – MYStartup NXT, a series of micro-conferences by MYStartup, is commencing 2024 with a new location in Iskandar Puteri, Johor. The conference encompasses discussions on strategic insights, inspiring stories, and wealth-building tools from diverse speakers, including local entrepreneurs, government agencies and ecosystem experts.

Cradle Fund Sdn. Bhd. (Cradle), Malaysia's focal point agency for startup ecosystem under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI), has been pivotal in driving MYStartup NXT. This initiative is aligned with the overarching goal of cultivating a globalised, high-performing, inclusive, and sustainable ecosystem for the country.

In 2023, MYStartup NXT successfully covered four (4) locations, commencing in Cyberjaya, followed by Sarawak, Penang, and Sabah, which garnered a total of over 1,000 attendees. This year, Johor has been chosen as the inaugural location for MYStartup NXT to continue realising the national goal of creating over 5,000 quality startups by 2025, and providing them with the comprehensive support and resources needed to thrive in the startup ecosystem.

Johor's rapidly expanding startup ecosystem is experiencing significant growth, driven by strategic positioning, proactive government initiatives, and a burgeoning talent pool. Located close to Singapore, a vibrant tech hub, Johor is a strategic gateway for startups, providing valuable opportunities for networking, collaboration, and talent acquisition opportunities.

According to StartupBlink's Global Startup Ecosystem Index Report, Johor Bahru jumped 404 places, securing a spot among the top 600 cities worldwide in 2023 and solidifying its position among the global top 1,000 cities. Johor Bahru also jumped nine spots in Southeast Asia, where it ranked 13th and maintained as the 3rd vibrant most ecosystem in Malaysia.

In collaboration with Iskandar Investment Bhd. (IIB), the one-day micro-conference is poised to be an engaging platform that offers aspiring and existing entrepreneurs the opportunity to learn, network, and expose themselves to corporates, technology giants, investors, and other relevant stakeholders to start and scale their businesses.

"Fulfilling its mandates, MYStartup remains committed to empowering startups in the country, and our commitment knows no boundaries. We will continue to address challenges encompassing capital, talent, and infrastructure constraints. I'm confident that Johor's landscape will flourish and serve as a pivotal catalyst for our economic growth," said Deputy Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, YB Dato' Haji Mohammad Yusof Bin Apdal

"Our dedication is firmly directed towards realising Malaysia's complete potential as a nation aspiring to be a tech and innovation hub, aligned with the overarching vision of Malaysia MADANI, as well as the country's goal to become among the top 20 global startup ecosystem by 2030 as outlined in Malaysia Startup Ecosystem Roadmap (SUPER) 2021-2030. At MOSTI, we hold fast to the PRECISE principle, which encapsulates the essence of people-centric, research and development, enculturation, capacity building, investment, and startup ecosystem," added YB Dato' Haji Mohammad Yusof Bin Apdal.

Meanwhile, Cradle Group Chief Executive Officer, Norman Matthieu Vanhaecke, expressed that as the focal point agency for local startups in the country, it is truly inspiring to witness the thriving startup ecosystems in various regions across Malaysia.

"Our commitment to nurturing innovation is evident, and an initiative such as MYStartup NXT underscores the critical role of collaborative efforts in fostering a robust entrepreneurial landscape. At Cradle, we take pride in championing an inclusive and impactful development for startup ecosystems nationwide through three main pillars - founders, investors and tech developers. To date, we have onboarded more than 100 Johor-based startups on MYStartup Portal. Some of the notable ones are DF Automation & Robotics (robotics), Materials in Works (climate tech), Sayur Kita Asia (agritech), and

Imagine AI (artificial intelligence). Together, let us build a future where Malaysian startups can flourish, innovate, and contribute significantly to our nation's economic prosperity," Norman added.

"Iskandar Investment Berhad (IIB) is thrilled to be the Southern chapter partner for MYStartup. As the master developer of Medini, IIB recognises the pivotal role that startups play in driving economic development. Medini's recognition as the digital hub of Johor, its strategic location and robust infrastructure holds immense potential as a hub for startups and technology-driven enterprises.

"Together with MOSTI via Cradle, we are committed to harnessing the potential of Malaysia's startup companies. The collaboration with Cradle enables us to nurture a dynamic ecosystem where startups can thrive, collaborate, and contribute to the region's socio-economic growth", said IIB President and Chief Executive Officer Dato' Idzham Mohd Hashim.

NXT Johor kicks off with a thought-provoking opening panel discussion entitled "Elevating Innovation: Igniting Diversity in Johor's Startup Culture", featuring representatives from Cradle, Holistics Lab and Start iiX, in addition to sharing sessions from local startups namely Kestrl, Sayur Kita Asia, and Materials in Works.

A spotlight session on "Tackling the Talent Challenge: From Skill Set to Mindset" also took place, highlighting the demands of the future workforce by fostering the requisite skills and cultivating a mindset conducive to innovation, adaptability, and continuous learning, followed by a fireside chat titled "Ecosystem Resilience: Revolutionizing Johor through Collaborative Initiatives".

For more information on MYStartup, please visit www.mystartup.gov.my.

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