

# NURTURING INNOVATIVE THINKERS



Through the Innovate Malaysia Start-up Pre-accelerator, powered by MDEC, participants were taught on Lean Start-up methodology and new elements in entrepreneurship to give them the right mind-set before pursuing their journey, which was also supported by the Second Start-up.

By: DR. NURUL HAZLINA NORDIN and MOHD RAIZALHIMY MOHD RAIS

A total of 264 teams from 25 institutes of higher learning (IHLs) took part in the Innovate Malaysia Design Competition (IMDC) 2016 but only 45 made it through to the grand finale which was held in Equatorial Hotel in Penang on August 9, 2016.

Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) hosted the grand finale which was officially opened by Deputy Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation, Datuk Dr. Abu Bakar Mohamad Diah.

Some 400 people attended the event comprising captains of the local and international companies, educators, stakeholders as well as guests from the government departments and agencies.

Also present was UMP Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Alumni & Student Affairs), Professor Dato' Dr. Yusserrie Zainuddin who, in his speech, stated that IMDC served as an intellectual platform for undergraduates to further enhance their engineering education and experience particularly in the electrical and electronics field.

This was done through constructive engagement with representatives from the participating industries and academia, he said, adding, the number of participations had increased this year as compared to the previous years.

He also said 45 technical papers were scheduled for presentation in the competition and this provided ample time and opportunity for participants to engage in constructive

discussions that would help to contribute to knowledge dissemination and experience enrichment.

TechSource Systems, which was the sole distributor for MathsWork in Southeast Asia, was picked as the host representing the industry for this year's grand finale.

The company strongly backed the development of Internet for network connectivity - the Internet of Things (IoT), Data Analytic Trend, Model Based Design (MBD) and usage of low-cost hardware such as Arduino and Raspi 3 which were related to subjects in technology among university students.

Chief Executive of TechSource Systems, Kenneth Koh said IMDC aimed to encourage and ignite innovative thinkers among university students by using the right tools as applied by industries and the latest products and technology that engineers and scientists around the world were now using.

He added that the company was very pleased to be part of the event as they were able to demonstrate, educate and empower the young talents, who were in the engineering and computer science fields, to become more skilful and competent.

Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) Chief Operating Officer, Dato' Ng Wan Peng, in her speech at the closing event, explained how IMDC was very much aligned to the agency's National ICT Initiative and National Digital Economy Initiative.

She said these initiatives, among others, were aimed at advancing the country towards a developed digital economy and in the process, helped to fulfil the government's aspiration of becoming a high-income nation.

For this year, IMDC had expanded its focus by including aspects of entrepreneurship, charting the path to create more Internet of Things (IoT) start-ups, she added.

Through the Innovate Malaysia Start-up Pre-accelerator, powered by MDEC, participants were taught on Lean Start-up methodology and new elements in entrepreneurship to give them the right mind-set before pursuing their journey, which was also supported by the Second Start-up, she said.

She also said MDEC viewed this as a good platform to nurture and accelerate high potential IoT start-ups, a sector that the agency strongly supported and deemed as one of the key drivers of the digital economy.

IMDC is a multi-discipline engineering design competition open to all final-year engineering and computer science undergraduates in Malaysia.

First introduced in 2010, IMDC has grown significantly over the years. It is organised by a panel of companies such as Altera, Intel, Keysight Technologies, MathWorks, Microsoft, National Instruments, SilTerra/CEDEC, Motorola Solutions and Vitrox.

IMDC has strong support from the