

**17 September 2018**

**Innovators Academy launched to develop future entrepreneurs,  
business leaders and innovators in Singapore**

1. Singapore's Economic Development Board (EDB) today launched the Global Innovation Alliance (GIA) Innovators Academy, a national programme which aims to create overseas internship opportunities for students at start-ups or companies that undertake entrepreneurship and innovation. The announcement was made by Minister for Finance Heng Swee Keat at the opening of the Singapore Week of Innovation and Technology (SWITCH).
2. With funding support from the GIA programme, participating schools will source overseas internships and offer these opportunities to AU students, as well as organise events and field trips to provide entrepreneurial education, exposure and mentorship, to enable networking and innovation.
3. The programme will be available to all autonomous university (AU) students through its first four partners, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore), National University of Singapore (NUS), Ngee Ann Polytechnic and Singapore Management University (SMU). It will create opportunities for more than 1,300 students to participate in entrepreneurship immersion programmes across 17 cities in 11 countries – Bangkok, Beijing, Berlin, Boston, Boulder, Chengdu, Guangzhou, Ho Chi Minh, Jakarta, London, Manila, Shanghai, San Francisco, Suzhou, Sydney, Tel Aviv and Toronto.
4. On the sidelines of SWITCH, a MOU was also signed between SMU and QBO, a Philippines innovation hub which links stakeholders and partners in the Philippines to support the startup community. This MOU is one of the collaborations under the GIA Innovators Academy that will facilitate the placement of SMU students with startups in the Philippines.
5. “The GIA Innovators Academy will give Singapore students exposure to entrepreneurship and innovation activities in overseas markets.” said Chan Ih Ming, Director, Global Innovation Alliance Programme Office. “By providing opportunities to learn from innovation ecosystems abroad, we

believe these valuable experiences will inspire homegrown entrepreneurs, business leaders and innovators to adopt a global perspective and pursue their dreams.”

6. The GIA Innovators Academy is one of the key pillars of the Global Initiative Alliance that was established in 2017. A key recommendation in the Committee on the Future Economy (CFE) 2016 report, the GIA was launched to strengthen Singapore’s connection to major innovation hubs around the world. The GIA aims to create more opportunities for Singaporeans, students, entrepreneurs and businesses to gain overseas experience, connect, and collaborate with their overseas counterparts.

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### **About the Singapore Economic Development Board**

The Singapore Economic Development Board (EDB), a government agency under the Ministry of Trade and Industry, is responsible for strategies that enhance Singapore’s position as a global centre for business, innovation, and talent. We undertake investment promotion and industry development, and work with international businesses, both foreign and local, by providing information, connection to partners and access to government incentives for their investments. Our mission is to create sustainable economic growth, with vibrant business and good job opportunities for Singapore.

For more information on EDB, please visit [www.edb.gov.sg](http://www.edb.gov.sg).

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# GLOBAL INNOVATION ALLIANCE INNOVATORS ACADEMY FACT SHEET

## 1. What is the Global Innovation Alliance (GIA)?

- The GIA was launched in 2017 to strengthen Singapore's connection to major innovation hubs around the world. The GIA will create more opportunities for Singaporeans, students, entrepreneurs and businesses to gain overseas experience, connect and collaborate with their overseas counterparts.
- GIA programmes include:
  - i. Innovators Academy: Expanding the pool of Autonomous University (AU) students with exposure to entrepreneurship and innovation activities, with the view of developing future entrepreneurs, business leaders and innovators in Singapore.
  - ii. Innovation Launchpads: Establishing launch pads for Singapore entities (startups, SMEs and large local enterprises (LLEs) to connect with the business and innovation community - access to talent, capital, customers and partners, in major innovation hubs.
  - iii. Partnership Forums: Strengthening links between overseas technology companies with Singapore companies and government agencies to enhance our technological capabilities and bolster the Singapore innovation eco-system.

## 2. How is the GIA Innovators Academy operationalised?

- EDB set up the GIA Programme Office (GIA PO) to coordinate the overall GIA initiative, and works closely with Enterprise Singapore (ESG) on this. These two economic agencies will partner various Singapore and in-market Operating Partners (OPs), such as universities, accelerators/incubators, and co-working space providers, to set up GIA networks overseas which our students and companies can participate in.
- The first four partners appointed in July 2018 are Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore), National University of Singapore (NUS), Ngee Ann Polytechnic and Singapore Management University (SMU).
- These partners will source overseas internships at start-ups or companies that undertake entrepreneurship and innovation, and offer these opportunities to AU students, as well as organise events and field trips to

provide entrepreneurial education and exposure, orientation, mentorship, to enable networking and innovation.

- Other AU students who are interested in overseas internships under the GIA Innovators Academy can also join Ngee Ann Polytechnic's programme.

3. What are the locations of the GIA Innovators Academy?

- Our AUs have, since Feb 2017, expanded their overseas internships programmes to eight new locations, including ASEAN.
- Over the next few years, the GIA Innovators Academy plan to offer overseas internship opportunities in 17 cities, namely, Bangkok, Beijing, Berlin, Boston, Boulder, Chengdu, Guangzhou, Ho Chi Minh, Jakarta, London, Manila, Shanghai, San Francisco, Suzhou, Sydney, Tel Aviv and Toronto.

4. What is the desired outcome of the GIA Innovators Academy?

- By exposing Singapore students to innovation ecosystems abroad, the programme hopes to groom future entrepreneurs, business leaders and innovators with a global and Asian perspective. As a national programme to foster potential future entrepreneurs, the GIA Innovators Academy will scale to create overseas internship opportunities in 17 cities for more than 1,300 students in the next few years.

5. How can I register my interest?

- AU students interested in taking an overseas internship under the GIA Innovators Academy; or
- Start-ups or companies that undertake entrepreneurship and innovation, who wish to tap on Singapore AU students to support their growth, may approach the following for more details:

IHL	Contact
<b>Ngee Ann Polytechnic</b>	Patrice CHOONG Director, The Sandbox, NP <a href="mailto:patrice@np.edu.sg">patrice@np.edu.sg</a>
<b>Nanyang Technological University, Singapore</b>	David YEOW Director, Overseas Entrepreneurship Programme, NTUitive <a href="mailto:David.yeow@ntuitive.sg">David.yeow@ntuitive.sg</a>

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