

MEDIA RELEASE

**Investments in startups grew by more than 45% per annum
to reach S\$14.7 billion in 2021**

*Growth in Singapore's innovation and startup ecosystem spurred by strong
partnerships and co-innovation platforms*

MR No.: 048/22

Singapore, Wednesday, 5 October 2022

1. Singapore's innovation and startup ecosystem has continued to experience strong growth over the past five years, remaining vibrant and resilient amid the pandemic. As a signal of confidence in the startup investment scene, funding activities have increased exponentially to reach S\$14.7 billion in 2021, growing by more than 45% per annum between 2017 and 2021. Venture funding within the first half of 2022 alone has reached S\$8.18 billion¹, up 54% compared to the same period last year.
2. **To ensure that Singapore remains a vibrant and attractive startup and innovation hub, Enterprise Singapore (EnterpriseSG) will continue to deepen our support for innovative startups and SMEs. This includes catalysing more financing opportunities, providing the right platforms and infrastructure to drive development of innovative solutions, building our pipeline of local and global talent, and deepening global connections.**
3. "Driving innovation and nurturing startups is, and will continue to be one of our key priorities over the next decade. The pandemic has spotlighted the vital role that startups played in developing solutions to disrupt and rejuvenate industries despite trying circumstances. This resilience and entrepreneurial mindset is what we need to form the bedrock of our innovation economy. EnterpriseSG is committed to deepening our support for startups, including by expanding our network of local and foreign partners, so that we can continue to catalyse the formation of innovative startups and support their growth in Singapore and beyond," said **Mr Edwin Chow, Assistant CEO (Innovation and Enterprise), EnterpriseSG.**

¹ The funding of S\$8.18 billion investments was made across 388 deals.

MEDIA RELEASE

Tapping new opportunities through innovation platforms and networks

4. Recognising the need to scale overseas, EnterpriseSG has supported over 780 companies² through our Global Innovation Alliance (GIA) programmes, which connect them to international business and tech communities and drive two-way collaboration. This includes our Co-Innovation Programmes (CIPs), where companies jointly develop and test-bed new solutions with trusted in-market partners, before scaling into the market or region. To expand opportunities in this area, EnterpriseSG introduced two pilot GIA acceleration programmes in Stockholm and Cape Town earlier this year. We are also working with partners like Leave a Nest in Japan and Brinc in China, to launch sector-specific programmes and targeted assistance in areas like advanced manufacturing and foodtech respectively.
5. EnterpriseSG and its partners have continued to encourage enterprises to press on with innovation efforts even during the pandemic, with 600 enterprises undertaking innovation projects to develop new products and solutions in 2021. Partners like IPI Singapore and the Centres of Innovation (COI) have played an instrumental role to help companies deepen business innovation and tech capabilities, and we are looking to increase the capacity of our centres to further accelerate SMEs and startups' innovation journeys.
6. To nurture a more vibrant startup ecosystem and catalyse growth through market-led innovation, EnterpriseSG launched the Open Innovation Network in 2019 to encourage co-innovation by both private and public stakeholders. Since then, there have been nearly 150 Open Innovation Challenges (OIC), with close to 900 challenge statements issued across various sectors. This includes the Building Construction Authority's (BCA) Built Environment Accelerate to Market Programme (BEAMP), the Land Transport Authority's Xcite Innovation Call, as well as the Healthcare OIC involving National Healthcare Group (NHG), National University Health System (NUHS), SingHealth, HMI Group and St Luke's Eldercare. Corporates³ such as ExxonMobil, SATs and L'Oreal have also actively engaged in OICs to partner with startups and co-develop demand-led solutions in industries like energy and transport & logistics, as well as to address today's most pressing challenge – climate change.

² This includes both Singapore startups and SMEs looking to venture abroad, as well as international startups tapping on in-bound GIA programmes to scale in Singapore and the region

³ This includes energy companies like ExxonMobil, Shell, Chevron; transport and logistics companies like YCH, SATS, Continental, and global MNCS like L'Oreal and Volkswagen.

MEDIA RELEASE

7. “Over the last few years, ExxonMobil has stepped up its R&D activities and collaborations in Singapore with institutes of higher learning, technology start-ups and SMEs in tandem with the country’s technology and innovation eco-system. With Performance Rotors Pte Ltd, we have developed a customised-in-Singapore drone solution for enhanced safe and quality inspections of sky-high towers from the ground. The customised drones are being used in our integrated manufacturing complex in Singapore, and have since been adopted by ExxonMobil manufacturing sites in other parts of the world,” shared **Dr Saifudin Abubakar, Strategic Portfolio Manager, ExxonMobil**. “Through the 2021 Sustainability Open Innovation Challenge, we had connected with Flakecoat Technology Pte Ltd and are co-developing a formulation to enable thermoset coatings used in automotives, piping, electronics and rigid packaging to be recycled using ExxonMobil’s proprietary technology and Flakecoat’s conversion expertise. The scale of the world’s energy and environmental challenges, requires all of us to develop the breakthroughs needed. That’s why ExxonMobil casts a wide net in search for new energy solutions and technologies, including collaborations with universities, national labs, and other companies and innovators around the world,” he added.

8. In 2021, EnterpriseSG launched the Abu Dhabi-Singapore Joint Innovation Challenge and the second Southeast Asia OIC to help startups access demand in these emerging markets. Building on these, this year, we will be working with new partners to facilitate demand-led innovation and test-bedding opportunities to address challenges in sectors like Energy, Healthcare, Agritech and more. We will also continue with global partners through the Sustainability OIC, which will soon return for its fourth year. Both will be launched during the Singapore Week of Innovation and TeCHnology (SWITCH) 2022 Flagship Event.

Supporting startup efforts in Singapore

9. Since its launch in 2017, the Startup SG⁴ initiative has played a pivotal role in supporting startups, by helping to galvanise funding, increase access to mentor and partnership networks, as well as connect startups with overseas markets to scale abroad.
 - a. The access to financing has made Singapore an ideal location in Southeast Asia to raise funds. As part of **Startup SG Equity**, more than S\$51 million was co-invested

⁴ Startup SG was launched in 2017 to unify the various support schemes for startups across different government partners.

MEDIA RELEASE

across 58 startups through SEEDS Capital and SGInnovate, catalysing over S\$400 million in private investments in 2021.

- b. Entrepreneurship has seen a boost. The number of innovative startups supported through the **Startup SG Founder** (SSGF) reached close to 480 as of June 2022, growing by 47% per annum since the initiative started in 2017. Of these, 104 startups have raised publicly disclosed rounds amounting to over S\$350 million. On average, they secured pre-seed funding more than 1.5x faster than their Southeast Asian counterparts between 2017 and 2022.

Year-long innovation efforts culminate at SWITCH 2022 Flagship Event

10. The Singapore Week of Innovation and TeCHnology (SWITCH), the year-long innovation movement, will culminate in the **SWITCH Flagship Event**, which will return in-person at the Resorts World Convention Centre from 25 to 28 October 2022. More than 300 speakers and 250 exhibitors from around the world including startups, entrepreneurs, investors, community multipliers and MNCs will convene at SWITCH to discuss emerging technology trends and opportunities for collaboration in innovation.
11. This year's SWITCH Flagship Event will comprise three main stages; **SWITCH Beyond**, focused on exploring the latest sector trends and innovation opportunities in Asia; **SWITCH Global**, to spotlight emerging market access opportunities and catalyse cross-border collaboration; **SLINGSHOT at the SWITCH Grand Stage**, where the top 50 global startups from Asia's leading deep tech startup competition will pitch to a live audience of investors and corporate judges. The top 50 finalists also had the opportunity to participate in an inaugural immersion programme in Singapore and connect with the local innovation and startup ecosystem.

-End-

For media enquiries, please contact:

Andrea Tan
Business Partner
Corporate Communications
M: +65 9188 1679
E: andrea_tan@enterprisesg.gov.sg

Lydia Lee
Business Partner
Corporate Communications
M: +65 9139 9470
E: lydia_lee@enterprisesg.gov.sg

MEDIA RELEASE

About Enterprise Singapore

Enterprise Singapore (EnterpriseSG) is the government agency championing enterprise development. We work with committed companies to build capabilities, innovate and internationalise.

We also support the growth of Singapore as a hub for global trading and startups, and build trust in Singapore's products and services through quality and standards.

Visit www.enterprisesg.gov.sg for more information.