



News Release

For Immediate Release

Rice Bowl Startup Awards Kicks Off Celebrating ASEAN Startups

First ASEAN awards to recognize breakout startups driving world-class innovation and excellence

KUALA LUMPUR, 2 June, 2015 -- The Rice Bowl Startup Awards 2015 officially kicks off with a call for nominations targeting new startups in ASEAN. In conjunction with the 1 ASEAN Entrepreneurs Summit and organized by the New Entrepreneurs Foundation, the awards aim to increase the region's visibility as a vibrant global hub for innovation and celebrate the startups instrumental in driving that progress.

"ASEAN startups have tremendous opportunities for growth given the region's young tech-savvy population," said Tan Sri Dr. Irwan Siregar, Secretary General, Ministry of Finance. "The Rice Bowl Startup Awards will help reinforce a stronger, more collaborative network throughout the region, and serve as a celebration of our continued efforts to foster world-class innovation in technology and entrepreneurship."

With a market of over 633 million consumers and a combined GDP of nearly US\$2.4 trillion, the ASEAN is vibrant and growing. The region is a dynamic marketplace with high potential due to under tapped emerging markets, and the ease of running organizations in multiple ASEAN countries.

"We've witnessed emerging young talents who are relentlessly pushing the boundaries on how technology can disrupt various industries to enrich the lives of consumers and generate positive social and environmental impacts in the ASEAN region," said Ashran Dato' Ghazi, Chairman of New Entrepreneurs Foundation (myNEF). "We aim to recognize their contributions and successes as well as provide an additional platform to support them in their endeavours."

The Rice Bowl Startup Awards will celebrate rising startups that harness technology innovatively to propel their business regionally. "We hope that the Rice Bowl Startup Awards will become the benchmark of success for startups across the region" added Ashran.



The awards will honour startups in 10 categories:

1. Startup Business of the Year
2. Women in Business Startup of the Year
3. Retail Startup of the Year
4. Media Startup of the Year
5. Digital/Online Startup of the Year
6. Social Enterprise Startup of the Year
7. Tech Startup of the Year
8. Product Startup of the Year
9. Service Startup of the Year
10. Innovative Go-To-Market Campaign of the Year

Finalists in each category will be awarded startup coaching worth USD15,000, regional media engagements, and investor matching. Winners of each of the categories will also receive a Rice Bowl trophy.

Nominations are open to all companies established within the past three years in an ASEAN country. The nomination period is between 1 June 2015 to 15 August 2015. The Top 30 finalists will be announced on 1 October 2015. Winners will be announced during the Awards ceremony in November 2015 during the 1ASEAN Entrepreneurship Summit 2015.

The 1 ASEAN Entrepreneurs Summit (1AES) seeks to bring together stakeholders and entrepreneurs throughout the ecosystem across the region to share ideas, best practices, develop solutions and partnerships that benefit ASEAN. The mini initial summit in March 2015 launched the Rice Bowl Startup Awards, and the second summit will be held in conjunction with the ASEAN leaders meeting in November 2015.

The Rice Bowl Startup Awards are initiated by Ministry of Finance, National Blue Ocean Strategy and National Strategy Unit, with MaGIC as a strategic partner. Community partners include Brand Geeks, Cradle, MAD Inc, MDEC, myHarapan, myPAA, NEF, Startup Malaysia, UStart, Watch Tower & Friends, WENA, and YBPW.

For further information and to submit nominations visit www.ricebowlawards.com.

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About the New Entrepreneurs Foundation

New Entrepreneurs Foundation (myNEF) is a not for profit organization that focuses on creating and developing sustainable entrepreneurs via strategic developmental programs. MyNEF designs and caters programmes with the entrepreneurs in mind, helping them achieve their business goal. For more information, visit www.mynef.com.

About the Rice Bowl Startup Awards

Just as rice is a staple among Southeast Asians, so is technology for fuelling businesses of the future. The Rice Bowl Startup Awards is the first ASEAN awards that recognize breakout startups in the region that harness digital technology. The Rice Bowl honours rising entrepreneurs in various categories of excellence including industry awards, cross-sector awards, and star awards celebrating Best Startup of the Year and Best Woman in Business Startup of the Year. Mooted by the New Entrepreneurs Foundation (myNEF), the inaugural Awards will be held in November 2015 at the 1ASEAN Entrepreneurship Summit (1AES) in Kuala Lumpur. For more information, visit www.ricebowlawards.com.