
Survey: 1 in 5 students wants to be an entrepreneur

■ BY JONATHAN KWOK

SINGAPORE is a nation of budding student entrepreneurs, according to a new survey.

A National University of Singapore (NUS) Entrepreneurship Centre study released yesterday showed that 18 per cent of tertiary students polled wanted to become entrepreneurs after graduation.

This compared to 69 per cent who preferred a regular salaried job, and 13 per cent who wanted to involve themselves in other activities or were unsure about their future.

"Some people perceive that university students will definitely want to work in an MNC or with the Government after they graduate. This survey shows that some students have thought about being entrepreneurs before their graduation," said Professor Wong Poh Kam, director of the NUS centre.

He pointed out that increased awareness of entrepreneurship due to initiatives by the Government and schools was a major factor propelling youths towards wanting to run their own businesses.

He added: "The younger generation will have different ideas from the previous generation. In the past, people wanted only a job after graduation, but now perhaps they think differently."

The results of the study - conducted in the fourth quarter of last year and involving 2,319 students from polytechnics and universities in Singapore - were announced at the opening ceremony of this year's Global Entrepreneurship Week.

The seven-day programme started yesterday and includes youth competitions to develop innovative solutions to business challenges.

Rather than look for a regular job after graduating from the Singapore Management University earlier this year, Mr Keith Ng, 27, co-founded online gaming company Socialico with a schoolmate. "I like creative freedom and I don't like to be bounded by rules. The best way for this is to set up my own company. This is the dream job for me," he said.

Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports Vivian Balakrishnan, who was the guest of honour at the opening ceremony, said: "The only way to generate sustainable, and hopefully exponential, growth (for Singapore) is through innovation and enterprise."
