

## StartSingapore

### One-stop information portal on start-ups

One-third of start-ups receiving investments from venture capital firms and angel investors were focused on Internet, e-commerce and mobile segments.

But only about one-fifth of start-ups financially supported by the National Research Foundation were focused in these areas.

Biomedical and healthcare start-ups accounted for higher numbers – 40 per cent and 37 per cent respectively – of research spin-offs of A\*Star (Agency for Science, Technology and Research) and the National University of Singapore (NUS).

The data was collected from 1,888 start-ups and 1,974 founders by online directory TechSG as well as submissions by investors, entrepreneurs and others in the start-up community.

Professor Wong Poh Kam of the NUS Business School said the information provides trends and data for start-up policymaking, funding and

investments in Singapore.

He is steering the direction of TechSG, which comes under NUS Enterprise, the entrepreneurship arm of NUS.

“For us to nurture innovation and entrepreneurship, it is necessary to have data. Then we can see gaps and opportunities,” said Prof Wong who is also a director of NUS Entrepreneurship Centre.

Set up in November last year, TechSG also highlights the spiderweb of links among founders, entrepreneurs, venture capital firms and groups of graduates of NUS, Singapore Management University and Insead business school.

This web traces, for instance, the funding moves by founders whose start-ups have been acquired. The online directory also captures the background of founders.

The database showed that about 58 per cent of founders achieved the highest educational level in Singapore. By contrast, only 17.3 per cent of start-up founders in the United States had that level of education. The figure was just 5.7 per cent in Britain.

Figures on the overall number of investors and start-ups collected by TechSG and start-up directories in New York and London – Digital NYC and Tech London respectively – also show that Singapore is ahead of the two cities.

According to TechSG, Singapore has 1,888 start-ups and 215 investors compared with only 1,722 and 62 respectively in London. New York may have a huge number of start-ups at 7,577 but only 200 investors.

Across all three cities, media, entertainment, lifestyle and leisure formed the largest number of start-ups. But TechSG data show a higher proportion of biomedical start-ups than the other two cities.

Prof Wong said TechSG is built as a “wiki” in that it allows the start-up community to upload its own information.

“We do curate it but to get a richer directory, we need the support of the community.”

TechSG is providing the information free for now.