

Yogyakarta, Bandung join list of BLOCK71 locations

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CLAUDIA CHONG ✉ chongkmc@sph.com.sg 🐦 @ClaudiaChongBT

TWO new Indonesian cities - Yogyakarta and Bandung - have been added to the BLOCK71 initiative spearheaded by NUS Enterprise, the entrepreneurial arm of the National University of Singapore (NUS).

The BLOCK71 project establishes entrepreneurial hubs in various cities for startups to collaborate, network and get access to mentors, funding and new markets.

It takes its name from its birthplace - the Block 71 building within the Ayer Rajah industrial estate of Singapore. The building has since been converted by NUS Enterprise, Singtel Innov8 and the then Media Development Authority into a physical location for the startup community.

BLOCK71 Yogyakarta and BLOCK71 Bandung were set up in partnership with Salim Group.

Salim Group is a large Indonesian conglomerate with diversified and integrated business activities spanning across industries such as food, agribusiness and real estate. NUS Enterprise had also worked with the group to launch BLOCK71 Jakarta last year.

Both parties will organise programmes that provide collaboration opportunities for student and entrepreneur communities from Singapore and institutes of higher learning in Indonesia such as ITB and Universitas Gadjah Mada (Yogyakarta).

Singapore-founded startup Wonderlabs.io, which builds and manages software development teams for businesses, will offer employee contracting and payroll management free of charge for all startups in the BLOCK71 ecosystem in Indonesia.

Preliminary operations in BLOCK71 Yogyakarta and BLOCK71 Bandung commenced in mid-Oct this year and the first group of startups will take up residence in the two locations next month.

"These BLOCK71 locations will open doors for startups from Singapore and the BLOCK71 family to grow their presence in Indonesia and facilitate access to international markets for local startups," said NUS president Tan Eng Chye.

Axton Salim, executive director of Salim Group, said: "We hope our initiatives will encourage more young people to develop a keen interest in the digital and technology arenas and become entrepreneurs. We would also like to bring these initiatives to other continents such as Africa and China in the near future."

BLOCK71 Yogyakarta is situated in a contemporary area across the popular Galeria Mall, while BLOCK71 Bandung is located along one of the busiest streets in the Dago area.

Other international locations in the initiative are San Francisco and Suzhou.