

Killiney leads \$1.7m seed funding for food tech start-up

Food tech start-up Hoow Foods has raised \$1.7 million in seed funding led by local food and beverage heritage brand Killiney Group, it said yesterday.

Other backers include Innovate 360, Singapore's first government-backed food incubator, and Trive Ventures.

Hoow Foods was incorporated last year by four engineers and scientists from the National University of Singapore. The team specialises in food reformulation, and has successfully reformulated common food products such as coffee and baked goods into healthier versions while retaining their taste and texture.

One of its first innovations was a line of premium ice cream that contains less than a third of the calo-

ries, fat and sugar in Ben & Jerry's or Haagen-Dazs products. It hit the shelves of FairPrice Finest last year, under the brand Callery's.

Hoow Foods is in the process of reformulating a wider range of foods. The seed funding will go towards expanding its research and development capabilities and staff strength.

Chief executive and co-founder Ow Yau Png said: "With our experienced backgrounds in pharmaceuticals and engineering, we hope to lead the new age of food technology, changing the way people consume food and the food they consume."

Killiney Group director Woon Tien Yuan, noting that the coffee-shop chain has branched out into developing its own food pastes and premium instant beverages, said: "We

are constantly challenging ourselves to innovate and to enter new markets. This strategic partnership (with Hoow Foods) allows Killiney to tap Hoow Foods' expertise in food technology and food formulation, which signifies Killiney's strong belief in research and development.

"Further, this partnership marks Killiney's long-term direction and emphasis in producing quality, delicious and healthier food and beverage offerings under a truly home-grown Singapore brand."

Mr John Cheng, director of Innovate 360 and sugar business Cheng Yew Heng, said: "Innovate 360 and Hoow Foods' collaboration would help us and the industry develop quick, ready and healthier solutions without compromising on taste."