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NUS Enterprise invests S$150m to launch venture capital programme in Asia

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THE entrepreneurial arm of the National University of Singapore (NUS) is committing S$150 million to a new venture capital (VC) programme, the school said on Tuesday (Jul 22).

Through the NUS Venture Capital Programme, the university will invest S$50 million in selected VC firms to support NUS tech startups.

The first two VC partners are Granite Asia, a multi-asset investment platform, and specialist life sciences investor 4Bio Capital, which focuses on advanced therapeutics. The other S$100 million will be committed to an autonomous investment fund focused on NUS-affiliated startups, which is able to invest alongside selected VC partners.

The initiative is the first of its kind in Asia, said NUS, and seeks to enhance support for early stage tech innovation by focusing on high-potential ventures within the university's ecosystem, including startups from the National Graduate Research Innovation Programme (Grip).

The NUS programme complements the National Grip framework by addressing the need for downstream venture development. The National Grip helps those under the programme to transform lab-based research discoveries into globally competitive, market-ready ventures.

Various National Grip startups are still in the early stages of technological readiness and require continued, strategic support to advance from lab to market.

While Grip currently provides up to S$250,000 in seed funding per startup, the new VC programme focuses on accelerating post-seed growth and preparing ventures for external capital. This effort is set apart by direct engagement with leading VC firms selected not only for their track records, but also for their market access in global innovation hubs, said NUS.

The programme offers structured support such as mentorship, investor feedback, market entry, fundraising networks, and operational guidance by combining capital with deep venture expertise.

Dr Tan Sian Wee, NUS senior vice-president (innovation and enterprise), said: "National Grip is an important first step in helping deep tech startups take root. As such, the VC Programme builds on this by pairing promising ventures with globally connected investors, enabling a more complete pathway to scale and commercial success."

NUS says the programme aims to fill funding and mentorship gaps faced by tech startups in the region. In 2025, VC investments in Asia-Pacific fell sharply to a 10-year low of S$85 billion. With a 5 per cent decline from 2023, early-stage funding has totalled less than S$38 billion in 2024.

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