



For immediate release

SMU's Business Innovations Generator Named World's Best Accelerator/ Incubator at Global Startup Awards

This puts Singapore on the map as a global launchpad for venture creation



Caption: SMU's Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship team celebrates winning World's Best Accelerator/Incubator at the Global Startup Awards 2026.

Singapore, 26 May 2026 — Singapore Management University's (SMU) Business Innovations Generator (BIG) has been named the world's **Best Accelerator/ Incubator Programme** at the Global Startup Awards' (GSA) 11th edition. This is the first time a Singapore-based accelerator or incubator has claimed the global title in this category for this competition.

The recognition comes from one of the startup world's most expansive competitions, spanning 19 regions and 154 countries. This edition drew nearly 72,000 nominations from 65 countries across 13 categories. Selected from 17 global finalists, SMU BIG emerged victorious through an evaluation process combining expert jury assessment (75 per cent) and public voting (25 per cent). Judges included international venture capitalists, accelerator leaders and innovation strategists from Europe, Asia and the United States.

SMU BIG rose above other finalists including mobilityXlab, a Nordic mobility innovation hub backed by auto giants such as Volvo Group and Magna; SpinLab – The HHL Accelerator, ranked among Europe’s leading startup accelerators by the Financial Times and Statista; and Australia’s INCUBATE, a multi-time Startup Accelerator of the Year winner.

BIG also claimed the **Southeast Asia Regional Winner title in the Accelerator/Incubator category** for the second consecutive year, building on sustained recognition within the regional startup ecosystem. The organisers also noted that this is Singapore's first win at the global level.

Said Professor Lim Sun Sun, Vice President (Partnerships and Engagement), Lee Kong Chian Professor of Communication & Technology at SMU, “Receiving this award on the global stage is deeply meaningful, and what it truly celebrates is the remarkable ecosystem we have built together. At SMU, we see BIG not merely as an incubator, but as a community of conviction, where founders, mentors, industry partners, faculty and students join forces to turn bold ideas into ventures that matter.”

“Being named the world's best is a testament to every individual who has invested their time, expertise, and trust in this shared mission. As Singapore continues to emerge as a credible launchpad for world-class startups and innovation, SMU is proud to play a part in shaping that story,” she added.

BIG was established in 2009 by SMU’s Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (IIE) to guide aspiring entrepreneurs in their startup journey by helping them to navigate the process of taking their idea to market. To date, the programme has incubated 632 startups that have collectively raised S\$902 million in cumulative funding. SMU remains committed to nurturing entrepreneurial talent and venture creation in Singapore.

The competition was conducted across national, regional and global stages, culminating in the Global Grand Finale held on 7 May 2026 in Valletta, Malta, as part of the EU-Startups Summit. Headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark, GSA operates across multiple regions, bringing together startups, investors, and ecosystem builders.

Past global winners across various GSA categories have included Southeast Asian companies such as Grab and Gobi Partners. The recognition further reinforces Singapore’s growing position as a global innovation and entrepreneurship hub, with SMU continuing to support founders, accelerate venture creation and strengthen connections across academia, industry and the startup ecosystem.

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About SMU (新加坡管理大学)

A premier university in Asia, SMU is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and to produce broad-based, creative, and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU's education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative, and project-based approach to learning.

Home to over 13,000 students across undergraduate, postgraduate professional and postgraduate research programmes, SMU comprises eight schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Computing and Information Systems, Yong Pung How School of Law, School of Social Sciences, College of Integrative Studies, and College of Graduate Research Studies. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters', and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with its schools, as well as in multidisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU emphasises rigorous, high-impact, multi- and interdisciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities around the world, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector. SMU's city campus is a modern facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government, and the wider community. www.smu.edu.sg

About SMU IIE (新加坡管理大学创新与创业研究院)

The Singapore Management University's Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (IIE) empowers aspiring entrepreneurs and innovators to create positive change. It offers tailored training programmes, an equity-free incubator, and a vibrant community that connects innovators through events and networking opportunities, including the renowned Lee Kuan SMU Classification: Restricted Yew Global Business Plan Competition (LKYGBPC). For more information: <https://iie.smu.edu.sg>

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