Embargoed till after 11am, 15 November 2026

Singapore-India Hackathon brings together 120 student innovators and opens pathways to careers and further study

A new scholarship and connections with leading companies give participants opportunities in post-graduate education, deep tech skills and entrepreneurship beyond the competition

SINGAPORE, 15 November 2026 – Mr Desmond Lee, Singapore's Minister for Education and Minister-in-charge of Social Services Integration and Mr Pralhad Joshi, India's Minister of Education, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and New and Renewable Energy, today kicked off the **Singapore-India Hackathon 2026** at Singapore Management University (SMU), as 120 tertiary students from both countries came together to tackle real-world industry and societal challenges.

Now in its fourth edition, this year's competition is co-organised by SMU's Institute of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SMU IIE), the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the India Ministry of Education's Innovation Cell, in collaboration with TiE Singapore. The three-day hackathon, themed 'Build a Better Future,' runs from 15 to 17 November.

First proposed in 2018 by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Singapore's then-Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, the SIH returns to Singapore this year after two editions in India.

Working in 20 mixed-country teams, participants present their solutions at the Grand Finals on 17 November, competing for S$88,000 in cash prizes. Beyond the competition, participants will have opportunities to connect with potential employers and industry mentors, explore further study, and take promising ideas forward.

The teams comprise students from 55 institutes of higher learning in Singapore and India, including Dayananda Sagar College of Engineering, IIT Kharagpur, Rathinam Technical Campus, National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University and SMU. They will develop solutions across four tracks: Emerging Technologies; FinTech and InsurTech; Sustainability and Climate Action; and Social Innovation and Inclusive Development.

The Singapore-India Bilateral Innovation Pathway

In her welcome remarks, Professor Sun Sun Lim, SMU Vice President, Partnerships and Engagement and Lee Kong Chian Professor of Communication and Technology, said, “The SIH is a culmination of SMU’s efforts to deepen ties with India as we strive to equip Singapore students with a stronger understanding of India's business environment and enterprise. Aside from business study missions to Mumbai, overseas internships in high-tech hubs such as Bengaluru, Chennai and Pune, SMU has in recent years partnered with the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad to develop and offer joint fintech courses aimed at enhancing the skills of working professionals.”

SMU had also established an India International Advisory Council, chaired by Mr Uday Kotak, Founder and Director of Kotak Mahindra Bank, to grow the University’s connections with Indian business leaders. To boost innovation in deep tech, the University also signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding with a Bengaluru-based quantum technology company called QpiAI at SWITCH in October 2026.

“This partnership with QpiAI is crucial as it gives SMU researchers and students direct access to both quantum hardware and cloud-based development tools. It will also encourage students from business, finance, engineering and computing to develop quantum-enabled solutions. With this collaboration, Singapore will have a fresh pipeline of a new breed of deep tech professionals for the country’s financial, risk and urban industries.”

Building on these ties, Professor Lim announced the Nupur A. & Amrish Bahadur Scholarship made possible by a gift from Nupur and Amrish Bahadur, the Patrons of SIH 2026. The scholarship is open to all participants in this year’s SIH and the two previous editions, regardless of nationality.

“The scholarship will support four outstanding members of the SIH community in pursuing postgraduate studies at SMU, including in programmes such as the Master of IT in Business, Master of Science in Business AI, and Master of Science in Entrepreneurship and Innovation. The scholarship will create a pathway for Singapore-India innovation at the university level, enabling SIH participants and SIH alumni to connect and build skills in technology, business, innovation and entrepreneurship,” she added.

Mrs Nupur A. Bahadur said, “We supported the SIH because there is something powerful about bringing talented young people from both countries together to interact, learn from one another and solve problems. With these scholarships, the students have an opportunity to carry that initiative forward into a tangible outcome. It is our way of helping empower today's brightest minds to build and shape the future of tomorrow."

From the Hackathon to Careers, Industry and Entrepreneurship

This year's SIH includes a dedicated talent networking session, giving students direct access to more than 10 leading companies with operations across Singapore and India, including GIC, Singapore Airlines, Singtel and Temasek, which are offering projects, internships and career opportunities beyond the Hackathon.

Participants will meet founders, industry leaders and mentors. Teams that want to continue developing their solutions after the competition may explore opportunities with mentors and industry partners or SMU IIE's Business Innovations Generator (BIG), an award-winning equity-free incubator supporting early-stage start-ups.

The hackathon runs alongside TiE Singapore's annual conference, TieCon 2026, where participants can hear directly from unicorn founders and business leaders who have built and scaled technology companies. TieCon 2026 speakers include SMU Chairman Piyush Gupta; Piyush Shah, co-founder of SoftBank-backed InMobi; Shashank Kumar, co-founder of Indian fintech unicorn Razorpay; Prabhu Narasimhan, founder & CEO of UK-based AI unicorn , Brahma AI; and Andrea Baronchelli, co-founder of Aspire, a Singapore-headquartered fintech company.

Prantik Mazumdar, President of TiE Singapore, said, "Our goal at TiEcon SG 2026 is to create a platform where Asian founders who are building for the world can have an open dialogue about the frontier technology that they are building that will reshape the coming decade. By learning directly from founders and investors who have built unicorns and 'soonicorns'; testing their ideas against real market needs and building relationships across two dynamic ecosystems, students can develop the experience, industry understanding and trust that can support future careers, ventures and partnerships."

The Hackathon tackles real problems facing businesses and communities

Through four competition tracks, participants will tackle challenges drawn from real-world problems facing businesses and communities in Singapore and India, co-developed with the competition partners.

- Emerging Technologies track - **Singtel**'s Emerging Technologies challenge asks teams to explore how AI can help enterprise sales teams better understand customers, identify opportunities and recommend the next best action.
- FinTech and InsurTech track - **Income Insurance** challenges students to explore how data and AI could make insurance protection against climate risks more accessible and affordable for vulnerable households and SMEs in Singapore.
- Sustainability and Climate Action track - Singapore's **Ministry of Energy, Trade and Industry** challenges teams to explore how technology can help Indian smallholder farmers improve

the quality, consistency and reliability of their produce to meet the requirements of larger buyers, including Singapore importers.

- Social Innovation and Inclusive Development track - **Singapore Centre for Social Enterprise** (raiSE), meanwhile, is challenging teams on this track to develop solutions to support disadvantaged and lower-income seniors in Singapore and India to age well, improve their overall wellbeing, and remain active and engaged in their communities.

Hackathon judges include:

- Ravi Arora, Head of Group Innovation, Tata Sons;
- Madhabi Pura Bach, Former Chairperson, Securities and Exchange Board of India;
- Gaurav Kathpalia, Head of AI, Consumer and Enterprise, Singtel;
- Yoke Hui Wong, Director of South East Asia and Oceania, METI;
- Dhiren Amin, Chief Customer Officer at Income Insurance;
- Alfie Othman, CEO of raiSE; and
- Dr Josephine Kwa Lay Keng, Independent Non-Executive Director of Sembcorp Industries.

Professor Yogesh Singh, Chairman of AICTE, said, “The SIH shows the value of creating opportunities for young people from our two countries. When students work across disciplines, institutions and national boundaries, they encounter new ways of thinking and build an understanding of one another that can endure well beyond the Hackathon. This is the kind of educational collaboration we want to continue strengthening between India and Singapore.”

The SIH is held in consultation with the Ministry of Education Singapore, the Ministry of Education India, and the High Commission of India in Singapore. Winning teams for each of the four tracks will be announced at 6pm on 17 November 2026.

Enc: Annex with Chinese translation of terms

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About SMU IIE

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 Yew Global Business Plan Competition (LKYGBPC). For more information visit https://iie.smu.edu.sg

About SMU

Established in 2000, Singapore Management University (SMU) is renowned for its world-class research and innovative teaching. SMU's mission is to generate impactful research and cultivate creative, entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. Collaborating with global researchers, businesses, and public sector partners, SMU drives innovation with global relevance. For more information: www.smu.edu.sg

About TiE

TiE is one of the largest global network of entrepreneurs, investors, and corporate CXOs that exists to foster the spirit of entrepreneurship by helping founders through the key pillars of mentorship, education, incubation, networking, and fundraising. TiE Singapore was established in 2001, and over the last 25 years, it has become one of the largest chapters globally, outside USA and India. TiE Singapore's core objective is to help founders from the Southeast Asia region to successfully internationalize across larger global markets, and we do this by participating in the different global programs run by TiE, as well as through indigenous initiatives that we have created in partnership with the local government and industry. TiE has nurtured more than 25,000 startups globally that have gone on to raise over $50 billion, creating direct employment for over 2.5 million people, and the network collectively has generated more than a trillion dollars of wealth.

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Annex: Chinese translation of key terms

Singapore Management University (SMU)	新加坡管理大学 (简称 SMU)
SMU IIE	新加坡管理大学创新与创业研究院
Singapore–India Hackathon	新印编程马拉松比赛
Professor Sun Sun Lim, SMU Vice President, Partnerships and Engagement, and Lee Kong Chian Professor of Communication & Technology	林珊珊教授 新加坡管理大学 合作与交流副校长 李光前通信与科技教授