

# National GRIP: Accelerating Singapore's Deep Tech Innovation

Alita Sharon | October 30, 2024



In another significant boost for Singapore's [deep tech ecosystem](#), Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat announced the National Graduate Research Innovation Programme (National GRIP) today. This new initiative, launching in January 2025 with SG\$ 50 million in financial and in-kind support over five years, brings together the National Research Foundation (NRF), National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU) to support aspiring founders and researchers.

National GRIP is set to train up to 300 startup teams by 2028 and aims to nurture over 150 spin-offs by 2030, bolstering Singapore's ambition to become a leader in global technological entrepreneurship.

National GRIP consolidates NUS's Graduate Research Innovation Programme 2.0 (NUS GRIP 2.0) and NTU's Lean Launchpad (LLP 2.0), both of which have previously launched more than 400 startup teams and nearly 160 spin-offs since their inception. This unified programme is structured to bridge the gap between scientific research and market-ready products. It will guide startups through stages of idea refinement, market validation, and business model development, ensuring that innovative solutions move from the lab to the global marketplace.

The 12-month programme is open to founders, researchers, and innovators from Singapore's autonomous universities and A\*STAR research institutes. Through the programme, participants will draw on their institutions' distinct strengths in research, engineering, and design to create deep tech ventures. National GRIP will also facilitate access to intellectual property across these universities and institutes, and participants can join existing teams under NUS GRIP 2.0 and LLP 2.0 to support the launch of new startups.

A key feature of National GRIP is the inclusion of strategic venture capitalists (VCs) and industry partners who will guide participants on investment readiness and market access. Notable partners will lend their expertise early in the programme, providing startups with valuable insights and access to specialised markets. The programme will also help founders connect with experienced entrepreneurs who can join as co-founders or advisors, further enhancing the startups' growth prospects.

Associate Professor Benjamin Tee, Vice President of NUS Enterprise, highlighted the programme's alignment with Singapore's Research, Innovation, and Enterprise (RIE) strategic plans. "By integrating the best practices and insights from our individual programmes, National GRIP will accelerate the growth of globally competitive deep tech startups, providing a well-structured end-to-end support system," he stated. National GRIP aims to combine academic, technical, and commercial insights to nurture startups capable of addressing global challenges.

Professor Louis Phee, NTU's Vice President for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, echoed this sentiment. "Bringing together Singapore's two leading universities in a national programme offers a unique opportunity for collaboration in innovation and entrepreneurship, allowing us to cultivate high-potential teams and transform them into Singapore's next generation of investable deep tech ventures," he said.

A General Partner at an early-stage investor and venture capital fund for Southeast Asia & India expressed her enthusiasm for National GRIP's mission to transform university research into commercially viable solutions, "National GRIP offers a safe environment for teams to refine their technological and market propositions, ensuring their ideas are ready for real-world impact."

The Founding Managing Partner of a prominent venture capital firm, emphasised the timeliness of National GRIP, as deep tech continues to advance sectors such as semiconductors, AI, manufacturing, and space tech, "This initiative not only supports the success of local deep tech startups but also draws international deep tech talent to Singapore."

With its comprehensive support for founders, mentors, and investors alike, National GRIP is set to make Singapore a global hub for deep tech innovation and

entrepreneurship, cementing its role as a frontrunner in cultivating high-potential startups that drive long-term economic growth.

OpenGov Asia reported that Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister announced SG\$ 440 million for Startup SG Equity and launched "Stage One" to [strengthen Singapore's startup ecosystem](#) and attract global deep tech investment.