

ARTICLE



“Kembara #mydigitalmaker bersama PINTAR” to expose students in rural communities in Malaysia to digital innovation

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The #mydigitalmaker partnership ecosystem is an across-the-board initiative that follows the students throughout their education years

Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC) together with [PINTAR Foundation](#), an organisation that spearheads school adoption programmes, rolled out a mobile learning unit under the [national #mydigitalmaker initiative](#) with the mission of creating exposure and opportunities to digital education for some 100,000 students in rural, sub-urban and underprivileged schools.

Supported by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MoE), the mobilisation of “Kembara #mydigitalmaker bersama PINTAR” aims to expose students, teachers, parents, and local communities in rural Malaysia to digital making content and tools. This will ultimately steer students’ interests in digital making and later develop a more concrete understanding of digital technology and its exciting future.

“Kembara #mydigitalmaker bersama PINTAR” is a bus, customised to fit a range of exciting digital making tools as well as information about future digital technology careers and the safe usage of digital technology. The bus will travel to most states throughout Peninsular Malaysia exposing students, teachers and local communities from rural, suburban and underserved schools to digital making opportunities, tools and content. **The unit is expected to reach 100,000 students over a period of 2 years.**

Digital technology corporations such as Microsoft Malaysia, Google Malaysia, DiGi Telecommunications, Sasbadi, Designex3D, Cytron Technologies, Janalima, Centillion Robotics, Acestor and Maker21 are among the industry partners that will be showcasing learning modules and content covering robotics, creative animation, virtual reality, apps development, cyber safety as well as 3D printing and modelling in the mobile learning unit. Volunteers will also be despatched to guide and help students understand the vast ecosystem of digital technology, and facilitate the introduction of Digital Maker co-curricular activities via school clubs, and Digital Maker Hubs in local communities.

“Today, digital innovation is reinventing all sectors and changing the job landscape. To ensure Malaysia remains competitive in the local and global scene, it is vital that we equip our young with essential digital skills so they are ready for the future ‘digital workforce’ and to embrace global digital opportunities. Creating a nation of digital makers requires concerted efforts from industry players and academia, which brings us to this milestone today. We are pleased to cement a partnership with PINTAR Foundation in supporting this outreach; and we thank all our strategic partners for their contribution in “Kembara #mydigitalmaker bersama PINTAR” and for their instrumental role in helping to transform our children from digital users to digital producers,” said Dato’ Yasmin Mahmood, Chief Executive Officer, MDEC.

MDEC is currently in partnership with numerous strategic partners and universities to foster a digital maker ecosystem to provide project-based learning opportunities via co-curricular activities, digital maker hubs and competitions. These companies offer expertise in digital innovation and creativity, tools and teaching materials as well as resources to host Digital Maker Hubs.

Engaging and preparing students for digital technology careers

The #mydigitalmaker partnership ecosystem is an across-the-board initiative that follows the students throughout their education years. From exposure to computational thinking and computer science concepts in primary and secondary schools, MDEC through its industry and academia partners further create avenues for students to pursue tertiary courses related to digital technology careers. Beyond career awareness, MDEC and its partners are also future proofing talents by providing internship placements during school holidays and potential scholarships to support tertiary studies in digital technology courses.

“When the opportunity rose to collaborate with MDEC and extend the outreach of “Kembara #mydigitalmaker bersama PINTAR”, we were excited to be on board as we knew the difference it would make to expose rural and suburban students to the rich and rewarding outlooks of digital technology. While school curriculum is important in shaping young minds, introducing a different approach through informal learning will certainly provide the boost our education system needs to give the future generation a competitive edge in an increasing technological and digital world,” said Encik Sabri Ab Rahman, Board of Trustee Member for PINTAR Foundation.

#mydigitalmaker movement is a public-private-academia partnership to create a nation of Digital Makers. This movement aims to transform Malaysian youth from digital users to makers in the digital economy by infusing digital competencies into the formal school curriculum and complementing it with co-curricular digital maker activities.

Since January 2017, Computational Thinking has been integrated into the new Standard Based Curriculum for Primary (KSSR) and Standard Based Curriculum for Secondary (KSSM) as a part of the agenda spearheaded by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MoE), and supported by MDEC. The integration of Computational Thinking and Computer Science is benefitting all primary schools nationwide, while Basic Computer Science and Computer Science are being offered as elective subjects at around 50% of secondary schools at the moment. By 2020, all school students are expected to expose to computational thinking and computer science concepts.

For more information on the #mydigitalmaker movement, visit <http://www.mydigitalmaker.com/> Featured image via MDEC.