

## Maybank GO Ahead. Challenge prepares students for future excellence

University students from 80 countries across the world had a chance to experience first-hand the demands of employers today when they participated in the highly competitive Maybank GO Ahead Challenge (MGAC) which was held over the last four months.

From a total of almost 10,000 students who made preliminary submissions online, to more than 1,500 who took part in the campus and national level shortlisting sessions, right down to the 50 who were ultimately selected for the finals in Kuala Lumpur, the participants were put through rigorous challenges that gave them a first-hand experience of working life particularly in this fast changing world of digitalisation.

At the finals held in Kuala Lumpur recently, the 50 participants, comprising 21 from Malaysia and 29 others from across the world, took part in an exhibition day themed 'Your Future, Your Call' which saw an interesting exchange of thought-provoking ideas and intense case challenge scenarios which were developed specifically to test their capabilities to come up with innovative products and services for youth customers in the future.

The challenge also tested the students' financial and non-financial knowledge, challenging them beyond academic excellence by requiring them to convince the judges on the viability of their 'company' and its 'products'.

Speaking at the event, Maybank's Group Chief Human Capital Officer, Nora Abd Manaf said, "MGAC acts as a platform to spot, build and nurture diverse global talents and equip them with the competitive edge they require to excel and compete in this new age which is full of expectations with diverse needs and requirements."

“From a national stand point, we also feel the need to foster and develop our local talents enabling them to compete among their peers in the international arena in hopes to adapt and thrive in the 4.0 New World Revolution,” Nora added.

This year’s case challenges were aligned with Maybank’s FutureReady Upskilling Programme focusing on its six key areas namely digital awareness, data-driven decision making, human-centred design, agile, future communication and risk & governance in the digital world.

Nora said that the GO Ahead Challenge reinforced its standing as an equal opportunity platform with the participation this year of hearing impaired student Kwang Hlaing Bwar from Myanmar , a Robotic & Mechatronics Engineering student at Swinburne University Sarawak. “We are proud that Kwang made it to the finals against all odds and was an active participant in all the activities and challenges that the teams had to confront. This is also in line with our mission of humanising financial services and our commitment to provide opportunities to all in the communities where we serve,” explained Nora.

The GO Ahead. Challenge culminated in a gala dinner in Kuala Lumpur where Bhavan Sarpal from Monash University, Malaysia was named Ultimate GO Ahead. Challenger. He was awarded a cash prize of US\$1,000, an opportunity to pursue a one month internship programme in Maybank London, and an all paid expense trip to the SLUSH Conference in Helsinki, Finland.

“Team S Club 7” comprising finalists from Malaysia, Singapore, Pakistan and Indonesia emerged as the Champion team, with its members walking away with an all-expenses paid trip to the SLUSH Conference in Helsinki, Finland as well as a Macbook Pro each.

Conceived in 2012, MGAC is the first student competition in the region that undergoes various selection rounds, with each round increasing in its complexity in the cases and activities. More than just a student competition, MGAC provides participants with the journey to deeper insights and expectations of global and regional organisations.

This year, a total of 29 Campus Levels selections were held in countries where Maybank has presence namely Hong Kong, Indonesia, United Kingdom, Singapore, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, and Malaysia, including an inaugural Campus Level in Sarawak.

MGAC has garnered various local and regional awards since 2014, year-on-year including Best Recruitment Innovation, Best Candidate Experience and Best Use of Digital Media from Asia Recruitment Awards.

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