



IdeaPOP! 2025



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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"Citi Presents IdeaPOP! 2025"

Hong Kong Secondary School Students Startup Pitch Competition Successfully Concludes

Platform supports youth innovation to tackle social challenges

"Citi Presents IdeaPOP! 2025" startup pitch competition for secondary school students in Hong Kong, organized by SEED Foundation and sponsored by Citi, concluded successfully on May 10, 2025. The team from Hong Kong University Graduate Association College emerged as the champion after securing the unanimous approval from the panel of judges comprising eminent executives from their respective industries, including representatives from Citi, Lee Hysan Foundation, VCA Capital, WeLab, and PARKnSHOP (HK). The winning solution, Eye-Dentify, which focuses on elderly ocular care, also won the Audience Vote Award by obtaining the most votes from live participants.

Eye-Dentify is an AI-powered application, which provides preliminary assessment of the users' eye condition by scanning their pupils using the cameras on mobile devices. Apart from eye examination, Eye-Dentify also features an AI chatbot assistant that can handle ocular health inquiries. The solution enhances the convenience and accessibility for both the elderly and the public in tracking their ocular health.

Citi's Commitment to Supporting Youth Innovation for Social Betterment

Aveline San, CEO and Banking Head for Citi Hong Kong & Macau, said, "Citi has a longstanding commitment to accelerating solutions that address the most pressing needs in our communities. We are delighted to once again support SEED Foundation on this impactful initiative, which ignites innovative thinking and entrepreneurship among secondary students, while driving transformative solutions for social challenges. Innovation and social betterment go hand in hand; I am truly encouraged by the students' determination to pursuing both, paving the way for their future roles as changemakers who drive progress in society. We look forward to continuing our partnership with like-minded organizations in strengthening our community together."

Bridging Creativity and Feasibility

Cecilia Ho, President of Lee Hysan Foundation and a first-time judge of IdeaPOP!, expressed her admiration for the exceptional projects presented by the students, "I am genuinely impressed by the innovative concepts and the commitment to sustainable business practices demonstrated by the participating teams. Their capacity to confront significant social issues while ensuring the feasibility and long-term impact of their solutions is truly commendable. It is inspiring to witness these young talents tackle social challenges with such a well-rounded perspective, integrating creativity with practical

implementation. This competition exemplifies the capability of the next generation to implement significant, innovative, and sustainable changes within our society.”

About IdeaPOP! 2025

IdeaPOP! 2025 attracted a record total of 168 applications with 80 teams shortlisted for the first round of the competition. The teams went through a 10-week mentorship program, quarter-final and semi-final pitches. Ten teams were selected to advance to the final.

This year, several new elements were introduced to further enhance the program. These include inviting NGO partners to provide students with tailored insights into disability inclusion, education, elderly care and waste reduction.

On the “Project Kick-start Day”, over 300 students presented their initial project ideas to 50 professionals from various industries for feedback. The collaborative efforts of the mentors were instrumental in elevating students’ logical thinking and entrepreneurial skills.

This year’s Semi-Final Pitch was a physical event, moving away from the online session held previously. The new format enabled students to gain more experience in in-person pitching and facilitated the rapid exchange of ideas between the students and mentors in refining their projects.

Ken Lo, Chief Executive Officer of SEED Foundation, said, "As the organizer of IdeaPOP! for the third consecutive year, we are committed to providing an extraordinary learning experience to students. We strive to incorporate new elements continuously for a compelling startup pitch competition filled with joyful and meaningful moments. It is rewarding to witness the students unleash their creativity and full potential over the last six months," he said.

The success of “Citi Presents IdeaPOP! 2025” reaffirms the importance of creating platforms and opportunities for young minds to think out of the box and develop ideas, solutions and skills that can be implemented for social betterment. This program will continue to serve as an essential platform for nurturing the next generation of changemakers and innovators for the Hong Kong community.

Event Photos:



Photo 1: The champion team of "Citi Presents IdeaPOP! 2025" Hong Kong Secondary School

Students Startup Pitch Competition, hailing from Hong Kong University Graduate Association College with the Eye-Dentify solution. Aveline San, Chief Executive Officer and Banking Head, Citi Hong Kong and Macau (left) presented the trophy to students from the winning team.



Photo 2: Aveline San, Chief Executive Officer and Banking Head, Citi Hong Kong and Macau, addressed the audience at the Final Pitch.



Photo 3: (Front row from left to right) Judging panel of “Citi Presents IdeaPOP! 2025”: Ernest Leung, President and Group Chief Operating Officer, WeLab; Cecilia Ho, President, Lee Hysan Foundation; Aveline San, Chief Executive Officer and Banking Head, Citi Hong Kong & Macau; Danny Lee, Chairman of the Board, SEED Foundation, and Managing Partner, VCA Capital; and Freda Ng, Managing Director, PARKnSHOP (Hong Kong) with NGO and social enterprise partners, mentors and all students at the Final Pitch.

About SEED Foundation

SEED Foundation, a registered charity organisation in Hong Kong, aims to future-proof our youths in the technology-driven economy by delivering a unique, equal-access ICT education program that builds students' expert knowledge and use of technology tools, enabling them to capture future opportunities in the digital world, and in the process, provide the talent pipeline for a digital Hong Kong. SEED Foundation is supported by Alibaba (HK) Entrepreneurs Fund as founding sponsor, and Lee Hysan Foundation as strategic partner and sponsor. For more information, please visit www.seedfoundation.hk.

About Citi

Citi is a preeminent banking partner for institutions with cross-border needs, a global leader in wealth management and a valued personal bank in its home market of the United States. Citi does business in more than 180 countries and jurisdictions, providing corporations, governments, investors, institutions and individuals with a broad range of financial products and services.

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