

Media Factsheet:

UOB appointed as SkillsFuture Queen Bee to champion SME transformation, signs strategic MOUs with Institutes of Higher Learning to drive workforce upskilling in AI, digitalisation and sustainability

SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) has appointed UOB as its latest SkillsFuture Queen Bee (SFQB). As part of this appointment, UOB is supporting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to transform through its strategic community enabler, UOB FinLab, with the launch of the SME Elevate Programme.

The SME Elevate Programme is launched in conjunction with UOB's 90th anniversary and SkillsFuture movement's 10th anniversary, underscoring a shared commitment to advancing SME capabilities in Artificial Intelligence (AI), digitalisation and sustainability. The initiative will support about 200 SMEs and 800 employees in Singapore over the next three years.

SMEs can benefit from UOB FinLab's AI, digitalisation and sustainability programmes such as [AI Ready Programme](#) and the [Sustainability Innovation Programme](#) to facilitate SMEs' adoption of AI technologies, digital solutions and green transformation.

"This partnership with SSG reinforces our commitment to driving growth with SMEs through programmes that help them develop new capabilities and deeper resilience. For instance, SMEs can learn more about tapping solutions such as UOB BizSmart – a suite of integrated business management solutions spanning six categories that help to simplify and automate business processes, therefore maximising productivity. They can also develop sustainability capabilities with decarbonisation solutions such as U-Drive, U-Solar and U-Energy, that help them take the first steps towards lowering their carbon footprint." — *Paul Kan, Country Head, Business Banking Singapore, UOB*

Benefits of UOB FinLab's SME Elevate Programme

- Relevant and impactful training programmes and workshops:



- Equip SMEs with knowledge and best practices on sustainability, digitalisation, AI tools, digital marketing, business strategy, and data analytics.
- Participants will also benefit from customised training programmes that aim to support them at every stage of their transformation journey through a digital needs assessment which identifies areas for improvement.
- Empower SMEs to explore, adopt and scale AI, digital and sustainability solutions with confidence. The programme offers proof-of-concept sprints to help businesses harness technologies for business growth.
- Up to 90 per cent funding:
 - SMEs can receive up to 90 per cent funding from SkillsFuture for approved courses.
- One-to-one mentorship:
 - SMEs will have access to a network of more than 40 industry experts and gain dedicated guidance from business leaders.
- Access to UOB's financial literacy and banking solutions:
 - SMEs will also gain access to UOB's financial wellness, advisory and BizSmart solutions, a curated ecosystem of digital tools and services, to catalyse innovation.
- Community networking opportunities:
 - SMEs will receive exclusive networking opportunities that leverage UOB FinLab's vast ecosystem of 33,000 SMEs and partners across ASEAN including solutions providers, peers and industry leaders. SMEs can network and explore business opportunities with other like-minded members.

Strategic collaboration with Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs)

UOB has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with three leading IHLs — National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU), and Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) — under SSG's SFQB initiative. The collaboration reflects a shared commitment to uplift the capabilities of SMEs in Singapore through targeted skills development, joint programmes, and strategic industry engagement.

This collaboration will:

- Leverage academic expertise to design targeted upskilling content.



- Support SMEs in their transformation journeys.
- Align with SSG's national vision to deepen workforce and enterprise capabilities.

SMEs will have the opportunity to participate in the UOB SME Elevate Programme, a tailored initiative designed to drive AI, digitalisation and sustainability upskilling for SMEs in Singapore. Through this programme, UOB FinLab will work closely with NTU, NUS and NP to co-develop training curriculums, workshops, advisory and mentorship initiatives in high-growth areas such as AI, digitalisation and sustainability.

Mr Tan Kok Yam, Chief Executive of SSG, said: "The appointment of UOB as a SkillsFuture Queen Bee adds to the gathering momentum of the SkillsFuture movement. This partnership brings together the strengths of an established financial institution and our IHLs, to support our SMEs where it matters most – building skills and capabilities to develop and deploy business-relevant applications of AI, digitalisation, and sustainability."

Interested SMEs may register for the programmes via the UOB FinLab's website at <https://go.uob.com/sme-elevate-programme>

About UOB

UOB is a leading bank in Asia. Operating through its head office in Singapore and banking subsidiaries in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam, UOB has a global network of more than 470 branches and offices in 19 markets in Asia Pacific, Europe, and North America. Since its incorporation in 1935, UOB has grown organically and through a series of strategic acquisitions. Today, UOB is rated among the world's top banks: Aa1 by Moody's Investors Service and AA- by both S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings.

For nine decades, UOB has adopted a customer-centric approach to create long-term value by staying relevant through its enterprising spirit and doing right by its customers. UOB is focused on building the future of ASEAN – for the people and businesses within, and connecting with, ASEAN.

The Bank connects businesses to opportunities in the region with its unparalleled regional footprint and leverages data and insights to innovate and create personalised banking experiences and solutions catering to each customer's unique needs and evolving preferences. UOB is also committed to helping businesses forge a sustainable future, by fostering social inclusiveness, creating positive environmental impact, and pursuing economic progress.

UOB believes in being a responsible financial services provider and is steadfast in its support of art, social development of children and education, doing right by its communities and stakeholders.

About UOB FinLab

Established in 2018, UOB FinLab is the innovation accelerator of United Overseas Bank (UOB), dedicated to driving SME growth across ASEAN through digitalisation and sustainability. With a regional presence in Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia, UOB FinLab has supported more than 2,700 SMEs across 48 countries, helping businesses transform and thrive in the digital economy.



Its signature programmes include the GreenTech Accelerator, Sustainability Innovation Programme, and Womenpreneur Digitalisation Programme, each designed to foster innovation, build capabilities, and promote inclusive growth.

About SkillsFuture Singapore

SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) drives and coordinates the implementation of the national SkillsFuture movement, promotes a culture of lifelong learning and strengthens the ecosystem of training and adult education in Singapore. Through a holistic suite of national SkillsFuture initiatives, SSG enables Singaporeans to take charge of their learning journey in their pursuit of skills mastery. SSG also works with key stakeholders to ensure that students and adults have access to high quality and industry-relevant training that meet the demands of different sectors of the economy for an innovative and productive workforce. For more information, visit <https://www.skillsfuture.gov.sg/>.

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