

Speeches

**Keynote Address by SMS Tan Kiat How
at SCS TechConnect 2026**

19 October 2025

1. Good morning, everyone. It is a pleasure to join you at SCS TechConnect. I am especially glad to see so many students and young technology professionals here.
2. Let me begin with a question. If you were graduating with a diploma or degree in technology today, would you be excited about your future? Or worried? I suspect, for many of you, the answer is a little bit of both.
3. AI can write software, analyse data and build applications. It can help smaller teams accomplish work that previously needed many people. These are exciting advances in the technology field.

IMDA plans 3,000 year-long tech internships for ITE, poly and university students over three years

Description

[Bridge2Tech](#), a new set of tech-career measures from the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA), aims to provide 3,000 year-long internships for ITE, polytechnic and autonomous university students over the next three years.

The placements last 10 to 12 months, are linked to course curricula and are co-designed by the institutions and employers. IMDA is putting up funding support to bring more employers in.

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The 19 October keynote at SCS TechConnect 2026 set out the Bridge2Tech measures.
Screenshot: MDDI, 20 October 2026

Who the internships are for

Bridge2Tech sits under TIP Alliance+, the partnership that grew earlier in 2026 out of the TechSkills Accelerator alliance for ITE and polytechnics. The expansion brought the autonomous universities into the same scheme, so the year-long placements now cover all three tiers of tertiary education.

For a three-year diploma, a placement of that length is a third of the course. Institutions have had to rework curricula and academic calendars to fit it in, and employers have to commit staff time to

mentoring.

Because the internships are built into courses, students reach them through their own school or university rather than through an open application. Eligibility is set course by course, so the first stop is the internship or career office at the student's ITE, polytechnic or university.

Funding for certifications

Students also get cheaper access to the Singapore Computer Society's industry-led Skills Pathways in cloud, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence. Eligible students can receive IMDA funding of up to 90 per cent for approved courses and certifications, subject to caps.

A Government Tech Domain Pathway opens for applications in November. It is meant to teach public-service requirements and accountability to students who want to build systems for government agencies or the firms that supply them. A Financial Services Tech Domain Pathway was piloted two months ago with the Institute of Banking and Finance, and a HealthTech pathway is being planned with partners for 2027.

Why IMDA is doing this now

The problem: junior engineers used to learn by writing simpler programs, debugging and testing, and AI now assists with many of those tasks. "Some describe this as the disappearing early rungs of the career ladder," Senior Minister of State for Digital Development and Information Tan Kiat How told the SCS TechConnect 2026 audience on 19 October.

The latest Singapore Digital Economy Report puts the tech workforce at more than 222,000 professionals in 2025, up 3.8 per cent, with almost six in 10 working outside the information and communications sector.

More than 200 employers have pledged support for skills-based hiring under TIP Alliance+. NCS is one of them, and for some roles it now puts relevant experience and industry certifications ahead of academic qualifications.

The Government Tech Domain Pathway is the next fixed date: applications open in November 2026.

Date Created

20/10/2026

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