

Singapore-India Hackathon 2026: 120 students, S$88,000 in prizes and a new SMU postgraduate scholarship

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The Singapore-India Hackathon 2026 gave 120 tertiary students 36 hours to solve real business problems, with S$88,000 in prizes on the line. It ran at Singapore Management University (SMU) from 15 to 17 November, and the winners were announced on 17 November. For students, the more lasting prizes may be the employer meetings and a new scholarship.

Education Minister Desmond Lee and Indiaâ??s Education Minister Pralhad Joshi opened the event on 15 November. This was the fourth edition, and the first held in Singapore after two editions in India.

How the Singapore-India Hackathon 2026 worked

Twenty mixed-country teams drew on students from 55 institutes of higher learning in Singapore and India, including NUS, NTU, SMU and IIT Kharagpur. Many team members met for the first time. Each team tackled a challenge set by an organisation, across four tracks.

- Emerging Technologies, set by Singtel: how AI can help enterprise sales teams understand customers
- FinTech and InsurTech, set by Income Insurance: affordable protection against climate risks for vulnerable households and SMEs
- Sustainability and Climate Action, set by Singaporeâ??s Ministry of Energy, Trade and Industry: helping Indian smallholder farmers meet the needs of larger buyers
- Social Innovation and Inclusive Development, set by the Singapore Centre for Social Enterprise (raiSE): supporting lower-income seniors to age well

The judges came from both countries and included Tata Sonsâ?? head of group innovation, Singtelâ??s head of AI for consumer and enterprise, and the chief executive of raiSE. Each team also pitched at the Grand Finals on 17 November, after the 36-hour build.



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Source: Singapore Management University

The four winning ideas

Each track winner took home S$13,750, and each runner-up received an S$8,350 merit award.

- POINT BLANK built Payung, bad-weather income cover for hawkers that pays out automatically when haze, heavy rain or extreme heat disrupts business, with no claim form
- Signal built an AI lead-qualification tool that turns scattered business intelligence into sales leads, working inside Salesforce
- Holy Crop built a platform that turns buyer demand into coordinated crop plans for farmer producer organisations
- Kawan built a platform that connects seniors with flexible, meaningful work

raiSEâ??s Albert Ho said many teams went out onto the streets to test their ideas with the communities they hoped to serve. SMUâ??s press release said the teams had to test their assumptions about people and problems as well as their ideas.

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Source: Singapore Management University

Careers and further study beyond the hackathon

Participants met more than 10 companies operating across Singapore and India, including GIC, Singapore Airlines, Singtel and Temasek, to discuss projects, internships and career opportunities. They also attended TiECon 2026 at SMU, where founders and investors spoke. Teams that want to keep building can look to mentoring, or SMUâ??s Business Innovations Generator, an equity-free incubator for early-stage start-ups.

A new scholarship is the other headline. The Nupur A. & Amrish Bahadur Scholarship will support four members of the hackathon community to pursue postgraduate study at SMU. It is open to participants from 2026 and the two earlier editions, regardless of nationality.

- Master of IT in Business
- Master of Science in Business AI
- Master of Science in Entrepreneurship and Innovation

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Source: Singapore Management University

What students and career switchers can take from it

You cannot enter this yearâ??s hackathon any more, but the format is a useful template. Pick a real problem, test it with the people affected, and pitch it clearly. That is the same skill employers look for in internships and early roles.

If you are exploring schools or work-study routes, see how LASALLEâ??s new AI programmes are priced, or how working adults can share their careers with students through ECG Match. Hiring events near you are listed in our guide to the Punggol Digital District career fair on 11 December.

Details are from SMUâ??s press releases dated 15 and 18 November 2026. Scholarship eligibility and application steps are set by SMU, so check with the university.

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