

February 19, 2019
ASEAN-Japan Centre

AJWELP to support and empower women startups in the ASEAN Member States



Snapshot from the 3rd AJWELP

The ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC) organized the 3rd ASEAN-Japan Women Entrepreneurs' Linkage Program (AJWELP), a program to empower startup women entrepreneurs, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on January 27 - 30, 2019. It was co-hosted by SME Corporation Malaysia.

The governments of the ASEAN Member States and Japan are committed to promote development of MSMEs including women entrepreneurs' empowerment to enhance more gender equal societies. To boost this effort, AJC launched AJWELP, a support program for startup women entrepreneurs in the ASEAN Member States, to forge linkages among startups, companies and mentors. It was first organized in Manila, the Philippines in 2016, followed by Jakarta, Indonesia in 2017.

One of the highlights of the 3rd AJWELP was a business presentation on January 29, where startups from the 10 ASEAN Member States delivered presentations on their businesses and challenges, in front of representatives from companies and mentors who are senior entrepreneurs. After the business presentation, company representatives decided which startups they would support, in line with companies' businesses. There were 153 supports offered to 10 finalists by 27 supporting companies.

Another significant moment was a networking reception in the evening held after the business presentation, which was graced with the presence of Yang Amat Berhormat Dato' Seri Dr. Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia and Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, and other dignitary government officials. The Deputy Prime Minister delivered a keynote address, sharing facts of women-owned SMEs in Malaysia and how the Malaysian government supports them. Further, the Deputy Prime Minister commented on AJWELP that the program would have greater

success in empowering women within the ASEAN region as it is already in its third consecutive year of implementation.

AJC believes that supports and mentorship provided by companies and mentors will be encouraging and useful for startups to further expand their businesses. It is expected that participating startups will eventually become successful entrepreneurs and be role models for junior fellow startups in the future.

- ◆ **Report of the 3rd AJWELP:** <https://www.asean.or.jp/en/exchange-info/20190208/>
- ◆ **List of Country Representatives from the ASEAN Member States and Mentors:**
https://www.asean.or.jp/ja/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/AJWELP_2019_List_of_Finalists_and_Mentors.pdf
- ◆ **Short video of the 3rd AJWELP:** <https://youtu.be/2PF34OhW00g>
- ◆ **Facebook page of the AJWELP:** <https://www.facebook.com/joinAJWELP/>



Business presentation by startups



Session with AJWELP mentors



Workshop



Reception

<< ASEAN-Japan Centre >>

The ASEAN-Japan Centre is an intergovernmental organization established by the ASEAN Member States and Japan in 1981. It has been promoting exports from ASEAN to Japan while revitalizing investment, tourism as well as people-to-people exchanges between the ASEAN Member States and Japan.

URL : <https://www.asean.or.jp/en/>

Tourism & Exchange Cluster, ASEAN-Japan Centre
1F, Shin Onarimon Bldg., 6-17-19 Shimbashi,
Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0004 Japan

TEL 03-5402-8008 FAX 03-5402-8009 E-mail: info_to@asean.or.jp
