



Inclusion for ALL: Promoting Inclusion, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship for Women, Youth, and Persons with Disability in GMS

Lina Maulidina Sabrina, ERIA



Since its inception in 2008, ERIA will continuously update research activities that cover crucial areas such as trade and investment, energy security, climate change, environment, digital economy, innovation, entrepreneurship, food security, and healthcare.

OVERVIEW

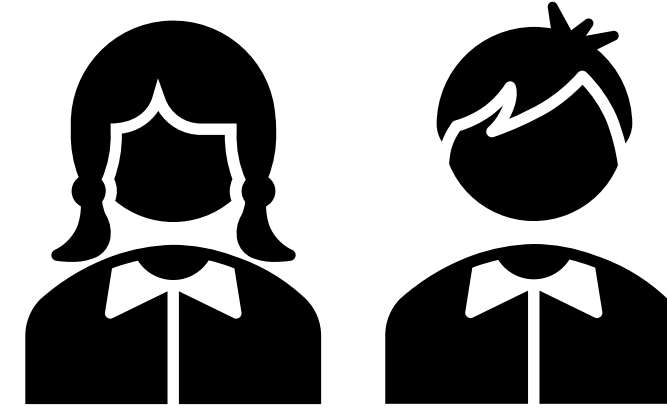


WOMEN

Half of the ASEAN's productive age population is female.

Data showed the percentage of women in AMS are **Myanmar (52.2%)**, **Cambodia (51.2%)**, **Thailand (51.2%)**, Singapore (51.0%), and Viet Nam (50.2%), compared to Brunei Darussalam (47.4%), the Philippines (49.5%), Malaysia (49.8%), Indonesia (49.8%), and **Lao PDR (49.9%)**

(ASEAN, 2021)



YOUTH (age 15- 34)

In 2022, 32.5 % of the ASEAN's total population are youth.

(ASEAN, 2022)



PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The estimated of 472 million people with disabilities of productive age in the Asia Pacific region, who are already two to six times less likely to be employed than their peers without disability.

(UNESCAP, 2020; ERIA, 2023)

Leveraging the participation of women, youth and persons with disability is aligned towards achieving **ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) 2025 Vision of a resilient, inclusive and people-oriented and people-centered community**

*While inclusiveness has been a priority on ASEAN's agenda,
there is room for improvement.*

The concept of an inclusive digital economy in ASEAN should extend beyond broadband connectivity, incorporating inclusive digital policies especially those from marginalized groups including women, youth, and persons with disabilities. It can support and unlock the estimated potential of ASEAN's digital economy to US\$ 2 trillion by 2030 catalyzed by the ongoing Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA).

Despite the positive trajectory, the ASEAN digital economy success story has predominantly benefited men in hyper-connected metropolitan cities

Country	Score	Ranking from 146 countries
Philippines	0.779	25
Singapore	0.744	48
Thailand	0.720	66
Vietnam	0.715	72
Lao PDR	0.700	89
Indonesia	0.686	100
Cambodia	0.685	102
Brunei Darussalam	0.684	105
Malaysia	0.668	114
Myanmar	n/a	n/a

Across 146 countries, the Global Gender Gap Index 2024 captures the four key dimensions of gender parity evolution:

Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment

Women face stereotypes, created by uncondusive environments including ***Gender-based Prejudice, Discrimination, and Harassment that inhibit women’s engagement with technology.***

Women thrive as entrepreneurs in micro- and small-medium enterprises (MSMEs) which is the backbone of ASEAN’s economy

Geographically, ***Women, especially in rural areas, do not have access to the same opportunities,*** risk continuing to be worse off in the future, thus enlarging the digital gender divide across ASEAN

Source: WEF, The Global Gender Index Ranking 2024



YOUTH PARTICIPATION

The ASEAN Youth Development Index (YDI) captures the 7 domains: *education and skills, health and well-being, employment and opportunity, participation and engagement, equity and inclusion, safety and security, and ASEAN values and identity*. Overall, ASEAN saw an overall improvement in the YDI, improving from 0.535 in 2013 to 0.606 in 2022.

ASEAN’s youth , millennials and Gen-Z (digital natives), play crucial role in the acceleration of digital transformation. For instance, in the entrepreneurship ecosystem in 2020, **startups led by youth have contributed to US\$ 8.2 billion**.

Talent gaps and digital skills shortage, avoiding the skills mismatch and job demand in the future workforce. As highlighted by LinkedIn report , in 2021, **41 out of 67 rising jobs required digital skills (basic software e.g., Microsoft office while 12 positions require advance digital skills** including proficiency in programming, coding, data science and analysis, and UI/UX.

Country	2021	2022	Ranking from 10 AMS
Singapore	0.826	0.830	1
Malaysia	0.693	0.699	2
Brunei Darussalam	0.691	0.692	3
Vietnam	0.657	0.661	4
Thailand	0.567	0.674	5
Indonesia	0.561	0.578	6
Cambodia	0.554	0.568	7
Philippines	0.515	0.522	8
Lao PDR	0.463	0.476	9
Myanmar	0.453	0.466	10

Source: ASEAN Youth Development Index, 2022

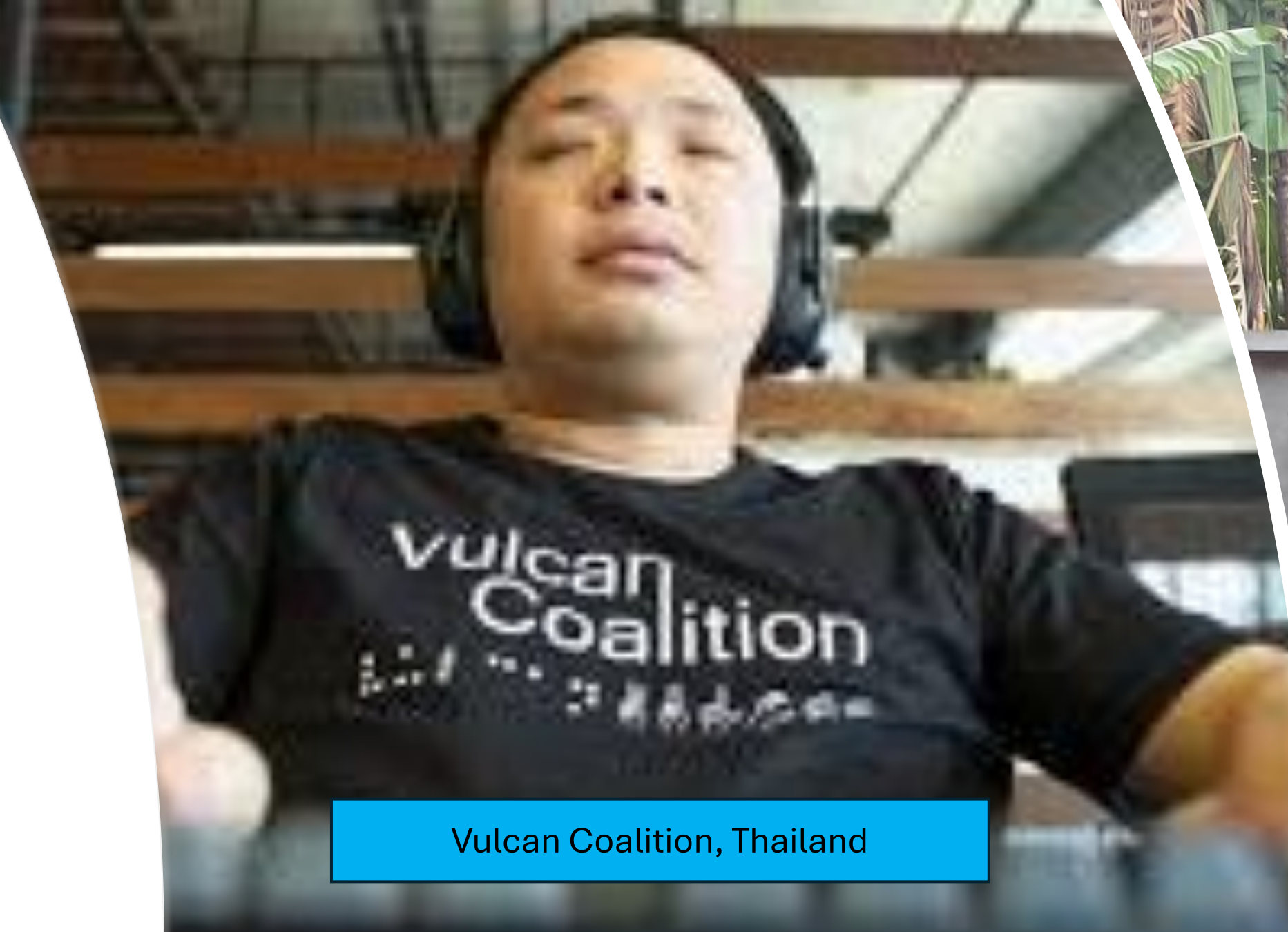
Country	Framework
Indonesia	Law on Persons with Disabilities (No.8/2016), 2016. Protects the rights of persons with disabilities from discrimination. Law No. 4/1997 on Persons with Disabilities and Government Regulation 43/1998 on Efforts to Improve the Social Welfare of Persons with Disabilities (1997/ 1998). Specifically regulates persons with disabilities. Article 14 establishes a quota of 1% for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector and 2% in the private sector.
Thailand	Section 33 of the Persons with Disabilities Quality of Life Promotion Act BE 2550 (2007). Requires that private and public businesses hire 1 person with a disability for every 100 employees.
Malaysia	Government Decision in 2008 on Quotas. 1% quota for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector.
Cambodia	Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disability, Sub-Decree on Determination of Quota and Formality for Recruitment of Disabled Persons. Establishes a quota of 2% for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector and 1% in the private sector.
Philippines	Labour Code 2014 + Magna Carta for Persons with Disability, Republic Act No. 7277, Section 5 (2014). Establishes a quota of 5% for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector.
Singapore	Article 12 of the Constitution. ‘All persons are equal before the law and entitled to the equal protection of the law’. No Quota – Special Employment Credit. Incentivises companies to hire Singaporean workers with disabilities. Employers get a credit of up to 16% of the wages of their workers with disabilities.
Viet Nam	Law on Persons with Disabilities (Nr.51/2010/QH12), 2010. Forbids stigmatisation of persons with disabilities and discrimination against them.

Source: ERIA, 2022

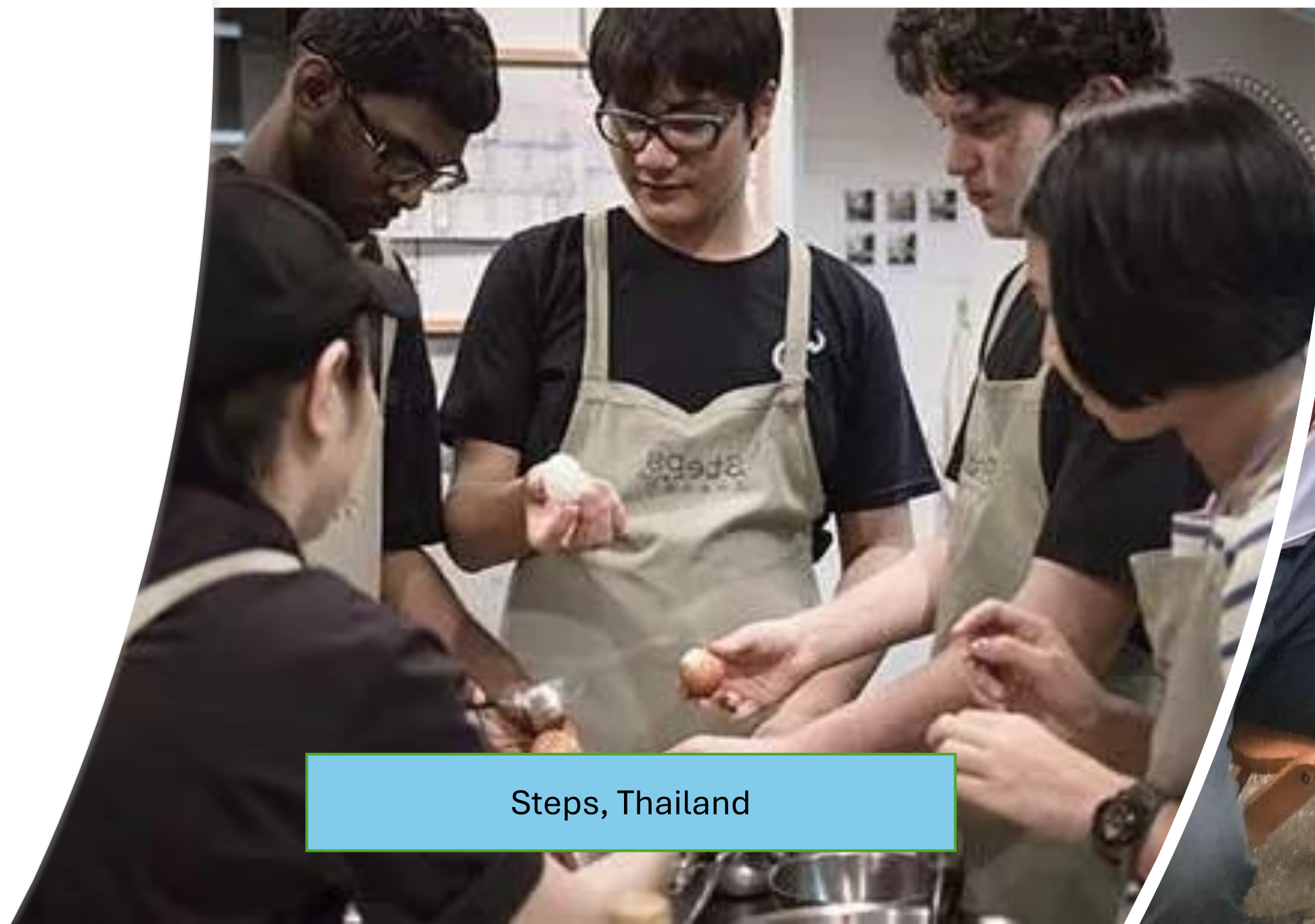
DISABILITY AND INCLUSION MATTERS

Persons with disabilities (PwD) represent an enormous unexploited potential for the region. They often face discrimination, leading to a lack of access and opportunities, despite of the existing regulations in AMS. Promoting inclusive education, inclusive workplace (physical and cultural), and digital inclusion (assistive technology for PwD) is pivotal.

Social Enterprises that drive Innovation and Inclusion



Vulcan Coalition, Thailand



Steps, Thailand



Epic Art, Cambodia

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT; NURTURING TALENT; BUILDING ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSET

- Various international reports have highlighted the need for today's workers to be adaptable, which requires **a combination of hard skills (basic digital skills and advance digital skills) and soft skills, as well as pursuing lifelong learning**
- **A framework of entrepreneurship education** outlining innovative value creation towards knowledge, skills, and attitudes that also allows students to have **experiential learning**
- Some ASEAN countries, including Indonesia and Viet Nam, are **liberalizing higher education systems to bring in foreign programs and scholars**, as a way to increase competition and improve quality.
- Higher education plays a vital role in developing a highly skilled workforce. It is crucial to build up a vibrant **research and innovation ecosystem supported by our universities and research institutes that lead** pioneering work in various areas.
- **Highlight on TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)** and learning mechanism systems that emphasize on interdisciplinary education and soft skills, to meet evolving private sector demand
- Promoting more involvement of Women in **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)**. Breaking the gender stereotype, allowing more graduates to pursuing career in this field.



CATALYST FOR INNOVATION

- Incubators and Accelerators: Providing a platform for upskilling and reskilling, networks and mentorship.
- Social Entrepreneurship: The emergence of young inventors, innovators, and social entrepreneurs who do not only seek profit but also create digital and sustainable solutions to help their communities.
- Public-Private Partnership:
 - Governments: collect data, review and apply laws to mainstream inclusion strategy for instance gender mainstreaming policy strategy, enforce inclusive education, and enforce corporate companies.
 - Investors: go beyond sectoral silos, impact investing
 - Corporates: promote inclusive workplace starting from transformative change mindsets (recognize the advantage of inclusive workplace for instance +28% performance IKEA Microsoft Asia)
 - Universities: research and innovation ecosystem

Policymakers in the ASEAN Member States will need to coordinate how to connect national incubators to regional networks and overlay regional business and financial support services to synergize and catalyze innovation.

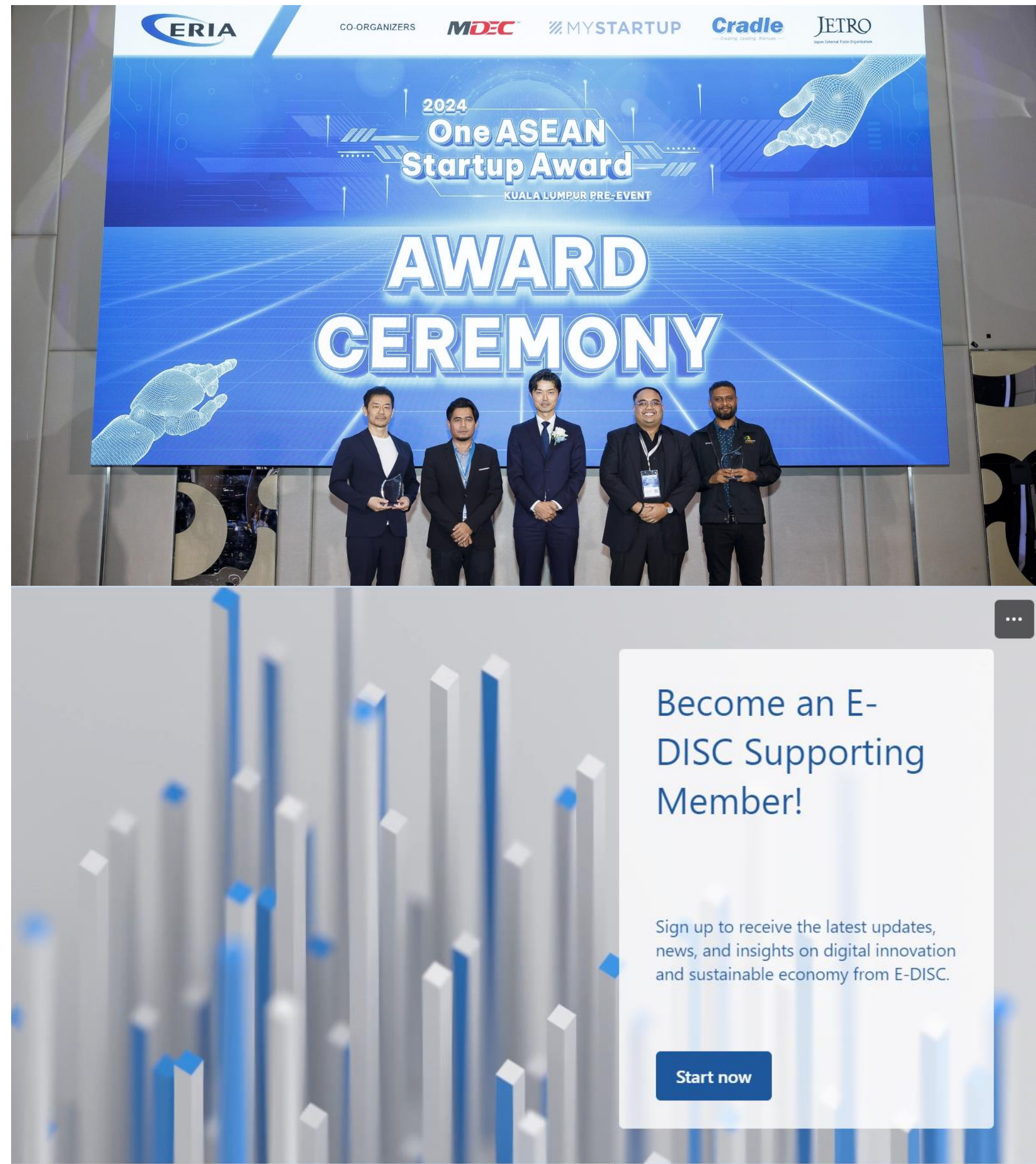
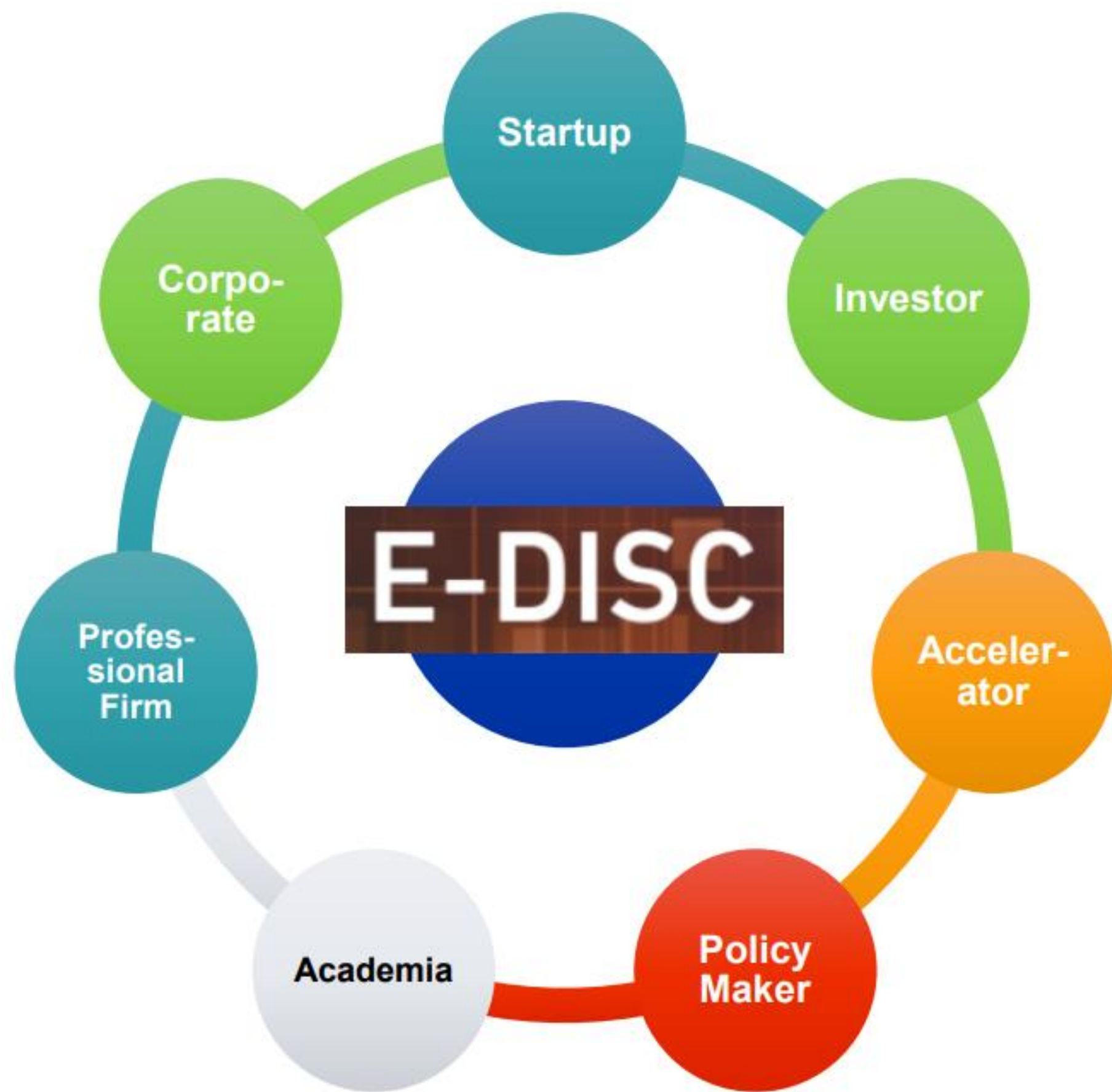
ERIA DIGITAL INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY CENTRE (E-DISC)

Since 24 August 2023, E-DISC is committed to building a strong and responsible digital transformation in ASEAN and East Asia. It will facilitate collaboration, knowledge sharing, and transformative initiatives that aim to harness the power of digital technologies for sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental stewardship.



“Indonesia and ASEAN eagerly anticipate the forthcoming inauguration of the Digital Innovation and Sustainable Economy Centre (DISC) which will serve as a virtual and physical platform for policymakers, businesses, and academic professionals to transform the economy to digitally driven sustainable growth across the region.”

*Minister Airlangga Hartarto
Coordinating Minister
For Economic Affairs, Indonesia*



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