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Adding colour to the capital

Think City's Downtown KL Grants Programme set to boost capital's arts and cultural appeal.

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SUBMISSIONS for the Downtown Kuala Lumpur Grants Programme are now open. This programme, launched by Think City, invites individuals and organisations to rethink the future of Kuala Lumpur and to submit projects to improve quality of life for communities in the city centre, and to transform and revitalise spaces with creative ideas.

Rooted in the spirit of recovery from the pandemic, the programme is part of a long-term plan to enable communities to participate in the recovery and transformation of the historic centre of KL into a creative and cultural hub.

Think City managing director Hamdan Abdul Majeed says that they are looking for projects that will strengthen, transform and add value to the Downtown KL area and its communities.

"This programme aims to empower individuals or organisations in Downtown KL to bring their projects to fruition and enable them to play an active role in building back better – giving them the opportunity to realise enhancements to existing projects or operations. We hope that potential applicants will consider how they can elevate the surrounding communities so that they too can rise from this pandemic and



A DBKL mural project series at Medan Pasar in the vicinity of the River Of Life project in Kuala Lumpur. — LOW LAY PHON/The Star

inspire the community to be resilient to future challenges.

"In view of the uncertainty we live with due to the pandemic, we will be seeking projects that can be manifested either physically, digitally or in a hybrid format to ensure a wider scope of opportunity for applicants," he says.

Think City is a community-foc-

used urban regeneration organisation in Malaysia that aims to create more liveable, resilient and people-centric cities.

Hamdan notes that over the past decades, Downtown KL has hollowed out due to the migration of administrative centres, businesses and residents to other suburbs and districts within Greater Kuala

Lumpur and the Klang Valley.

This has created imbalances in the diversity of residents and businesses, gaps in inclusivity, unused and neglected buildings and public spaces, the decline of traditional trades and negative perceptions of safety, among other issues.

"Revitalising Downtown KL together with the community, and

deploying existing assets such as historical landmarks and heritage buildings, its green belt and transportation system can reactivate lost opportunities in the area and realise our vision for the KL Creative and Cultural District, which has the potential to contribute significantly to the country's economy," he adds.

The Downtown KL Grants Programme is the first of two culture-based economic recovery programmes by Think City supported by the Malaysian Government through an allocation in the Budget 2020.

It is aligned with a larger vision developed in partnership between the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur or DBKL) and Think City, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture and the National Heritage Department.

Applicants may submit proposals for projects in the areas of business renewal, community resilience or space rejuvenation. This includes community projects, publications, digital content, vocational training, educational programmes and entrepreneurial programmes.

This programme is focused on Downtown KL, while the other, to be launched soon, will have a national focus.

The Downtown KL Grants Programme is open for submissions until Oct 31.

More info: thinkcity.com.my.