



Our Arts Project will showcase exhibitions by Malaysian artists.



Swee Impact Consulting's manekNya project is giving individuals the opportunity to acquire skills including (inset) beading embroidery as well as business acumen in shoe-making.

MERDEKA 118 Community Grants Programme extended support to eight projects making a difference in the area.

Beginning in December 2022, the programme's second cycle received 43 applications, out of which 11 were shortlisted for in-depth evaluation by its technical advisory panel.

Ultimately, eight projects were selected, reflecting its mission to foster impactful initiatives within the community.

The grant programme was launched in June 2021 by PNB Merdeka Ventures Sdn Bhd (PMVSB), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Permodalan Nasional Bhd (PNB), in partnership with Think City Sdn Bhd.

PMVSB chief executive officer Tengku Datuk Ab Aziz Tengku Mahmud said, "We have not only awarded grants to new projects but also sustained our support to existing projects from the first cycle to ensure their ongoing progress and success."

"From empowering individuals with employment opportunities to improving quality of life and celebrating our culture and heritage, we look forward to continuing these efforts for the development of the precinct and wider communities."

"Together, we are creating a vibrant, inclusive community in which everyone can flourish."

One of the initial cycle's grant recipients is Smart Stingless Beekeeping Project by International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).

Building on the success of its inaugural honey harvesting in 2022, IIUM recently expanded its portfolio with a range of new stingless bee honey products, such as body lotion, honey drink and honey chilli sauce.

It also started training sessions on the production and packaging of these products.

Returning grant recipient Young Women's Christian Association of Kuala Lumpur (YWCA KL) remains committed to empowering young women through its skill development courses, which focuses on fields such as culinary, baking and beauty care.

They also aim to organise a career fair to offer employment opportunities to members of the community.

Additionally, YWCA KL plans to organise an entrepreneurship programme as well as a business plan and Shark Tank-type competition to encourage

# Programme lends support to KL community projects

## Grants help foster vibrant, inclusive Merdeka 118 neighbourhood



Returning grant recipient Kaki Jelajah Warisan leading a storytelling tour for visitors on the history and culture of the Petaling Street area.

innovative thinking.

Another initiative aimed at empowering communities is an embroidery training programme by Swee Impact Consulting Sdn Bhd, known as "manekNya".

The project aims to equip up to 70 individuals from the lower income segment with embroidery skills and hands-on experience with various shoe design samples.

The ultimate goal of manekNya is to empower participants to establish their own home shoe-making businesses or pursue careers as skilled shoemakers or cobblers, with the opportunity to market their products at Merdeka 118.

Merdeka 118 Community Grants Programme also supported the publication of two books that highlight the history and culture of the precinct.

The first involves translation of *Petaling Street Walking Guidebook* from English and Mandarin into Bahasa Malaysia by Kaki Jelajah Warisan under the project "Eat, Pray, Love" in Petaling Street.

The other is *Somewhere in the Kuala, a Children's Architecture*



Suburbia Projects' book is a child-friendly read to promote Kuala Lumpur architecture and history among the younger generation.

*Book by Suburbia Projects Enterprise.*

The latter is already available for purchase online as well as in-store at GMBB Kuala Lumpur, Riwayat Bookstore and Ilham Gallery gift shop.

A new grant recipient in the

second cycle is Project Otai by Project Future Malaysia, which produces videos spotlighting traditional trades.

In addition to promoting the cultural fabric of communities within the Merdeka 118 precinct, the project aims to

enable sketching sessions with local artists, and call for fiction writers who are proficient in different languages.

Similarly, "Under the Shadows of Merdeka" project by Azul Sidek Adnan also received support.

This innovative photography workshop and photo walk aims to capture hidden gems nestled within the precinct, so that local and international visitors can appreciate and explore these places.

The Kampung Attap Collective continues its commitment to promoting local arts and solidifying Kampung Attap's status as a creative hub.

Through the grant, the collective actively participated in PESZTA, a Malaysia-themed festival organised by PMVSB, DBKL, Think City and Kampung Attap community.

Additionally, the second cycle will see Our Arts Project Sdn Bhd showcasing exhibitions by Malaysian artists such as Kara Inez, Dexter Sy, Minstrel Kuik, and Puti, to be held at The Backroom, located in the Zhongshan Building.