

Transforming downtown KL into creative, cultural district

Jom!

By Nur Najlaa Mohd Rahmat



Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) Dr Zaliha Mustafa at the launch of the Creative KL Grants Programme 2024 with Think City managing director Hamdan Abdul Majeed.

EFFORTS to rejuvenate downtown Kuala Lumpur as a creative and cultural district are underway with a RM20 million allocation from the 2024 Budget, a collaborative effort between City Hall and Think City.

The Creative KL Grants Programme offered grants ranging from RM30,000 to RM300,000 for projects aimed at enhancing the city's creative and cultural landscape.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territory) Dr Zaliha Mustafa said this initiative marked a pivotal effort to transform Kuala Lumpur into a dynamic hub of culture and creativity.

She said that as the nation's capital, Kuala Lumpur should not only focus on being an economic centre, but also be upgraded to a dynamic hub of culture and creativity.

"This is because we need to ensure that Kuala Lumpur remains relevant and competitive internationally by showcasing its uniqueness through innovation and enriching cultural heritage.

"This will attract both domestic and international tourists," she said at the launch of the Creative KL Grants Programme for 2024 at Semua House in Kuala Lumpur recently.

Drawing parallels with successful creative districts in East London and Kampung Glam, Singapore, Zaliha emphasised the potential of Kuala



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Lumpur Creative and Cultural District (KLCCD) to enhance its international competitiveness and attract tourists.

Zaliha also linked the initiative to the Malaysia Madani Economic Framework, noting its potential to boost high-value-added economic activities and sustainable growth.

"In addition to the RM15.11 billion the government has allocated for 270

entrepreneurship programmes this year, the KLCCD initiative will significantly benefit local businesses, artisans and entrepreneurs.

"This will ensure that economic benefits are distributed fairly.

"The government will support flagship projects, enhancing and coordinating efforts to maximise their potential, and revitalising Kuala Lumpur as a

world-class creative destination.

"The initiative is also part of preparations for the MYASEAN Chairmanship Year in 2025 and Visit Malaysia Year in 2026, with an anticipated influx of 35.6 million tourists and RM 147.1 billion in tourism revenue."

Think City managing director Hamdan Abdul Majeed, meanwhile, encouraged projects that enhanced

downtown Kuala Lumpur to leverage its rich cultural heritage and historical significance.

"This initiative aims to empower communities and support local businesses, artisans and entrepreneurs.

"Community involvement has been crucial in driving cultural and economic revitalisation. The success in other cities like George Town is an example of it.

"Only with close cooperation and continuous effort can we achieve the goals we aspire to," he said in his opening speech.

Hamdan said the grant programme revolved around six key themes, which were space rejuvenation, creative business expansion, creative content activation, enhancing environmental resilience, digitalisation, and capacity-building.

The KLCCD Strategic Master Plan was developed by Think City and Kuala Lumpur City Hall, in collaboration with the Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry, National Heritage Department, and Yayasan Hasanah.

Application for the Creative KL Grants Programme is open to stakeholders and other private sectors until July 29.