



News Release

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STEM FESTIVAL 2019 IGNITES STUDENT INTEREST THROUGH DRONE CHALLENGE

LeapEd partners Heriot-Watt University to run STEM workshops for students



Trust School Programme students at STEM Festival 2019, an event organised by LeapEd Services in partnership with Heriot-Watt University, Malaysia to inspire students on STEM-related courses.

Selangor, 2 May 2019 – Malaysia’s first homegrown education service provider and social enterprise, LeapEd Services Sdn Bhd (‘LeapEd Services’) recently held the STEM Festival 2019 in partnership with Heriot-Watt University, Malaysia (‘Heriot-Watt University’), GREAT UK Challenge Fund and Youth Made Malaysia. The STEM Festival 2019 emphasises the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related subjects and experiences amongst Malaysian students.

Forty students from four secondary schools within LeapEd’s Trust Schools Programme participated in the event – from Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Cyberjaya, Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Pulau Indah, Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bandar Sunway and Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Salak Tinggi. The festival, held at the Putrajaya campus of Heriot-Watt University,

included a series of workshops and theory-focused sessions for students, culminating in an exciting drone flying challenge.

Throughout the day, students had hands-on experience in designing and building pre-engineered micro drones, mentored by students and lecturers from the university, as well as representatives from Youth Made Malaysia and LeapEd Services.

Managing Director of LeapEd Services, En Zulhaimi Othman said, ***“In line with our commitment to develop holistic students with 21st century competencies, we see a gap that requires immediate attention in the education landscape today. Students today do not realise the full potential of STEM and how its application can prepare them for their future careers. As such, many believe that STEM-related subjects and courses are merely technical and are uninteresting. This STEM Festival is one of our many efforts in helping to raise the awareness amongst young students on the importance of STEM-related skills and knowledge.”***

Professor Mushtak Al-Atabi, Provost and CEO of Heriot-Watt University, said, ***“Since 2016, Heriot-Watt University has organised annual STEM Festivals for school children to further emphasise the importance of innovation and STEM-related subjects. As the first Mechanics Institute in the world when it was established in 1821, Heriot-Watt has had a long history in producing STEM practitioners and graduates since the first industrial revolution. Now as we are faced with the fourth industrial revolution, we are keen in supporting the promotion of STEM among the youth to lead the way in a challenging work landscape in the future.”***

According to a recent School-to-Work Transition Survey (SWTS) by Khazanah Research Institute, only one third of all upper secondary school students are taking Science subjects followed by 44% for Mathematics, whilst only 32% tertiary students are enrolled in STEM-related courses.¹ ***“Most students do not realise that career opportunities are constantly evolving alongside the emerging technologies of the digital age we are living in. It is therefore no longer merely a question of interest but a requirement for students to equip themselves with the critical skills they will need as working adults. The STEM Festivals in the coming years will continue to provide students with the opportunity to explore new technologies and digital applications,”*** En Zulhaimi Othman added.

It was an amazing experience for me as I was given the opportunity to learn and work alongside seniors who are Engineering students and lecturers to build and fly a drone. It was truly an exciting learning journey for me and my team mates,” said Riena Adriana binti Rudie, a student of Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Cyberjaya.

The STEM Festival 2019 aims to inspire and engage students, parents and teachers with STEM-related fields and its importance as well as impact on the future job market. Teachers who participated in a number of activities explored ways of adopting technology applications in project-based learning in their respective schools.

¹ http://www.krinstitute.org/Publications-@-The_School-To-Work_Transition_of_Young_Malaysians.aspx



Students learning how to operate drones at the event.

At the STEM Festival 2019, teachers and parents also attended talks about the fourth Industrial Revolution, further raising awareness on the importance of Science and Technology. Undergraduates from the School of Engineering and Physical Sciences from Heriot-Watt University participated as mentors to the young secondary school students throughout the day. In the final segment of the event, The Drone Challenge Course, students had the chance to test their drones by flying them through an obstacle course.

One of the supporting partners of the STEM Festival 2019, Youth Made Malaysia, is a consortium of teachers in Malaysia that focuses on building collaborative links with key industry players and schools to promote Design Technology curriculum as well as inspire students on engineering, design and technology related fields. Another supporting partner is the GREAT UK Challenge Fund which is in partnership with Malaysian education partners to support educational campaigns for schools and universities.

About LeapEd Services

LeapEd Services Sdn Bhd is an Education Service Provider and social enterprise that aims to develop holistic students with 21st century competencies and schools that embed sustainable education practices. LeapEd Services began with a mission to initiate a movement towards student-centred education in Malaysia, with the aim of realising the individual potential of every learner. Together with Yayasan AMIR and the Ministry of Education Malaysia, LeapEd Services launched the nation's first Trust Schools Programme in 2011 and have since impacted over 90 schools nationwide.

Established as a social enterprise, our goal is to enrich lives through capacity-building and education transformation, which will in turn add value to communities and society at large.

For more information, please visit: www.leapedservices.com

About Heriot-Watt University, Malaysia

With a history dating back to 1821, Heriot-Watt University has a long tradition of excellence and a proven track record in educating, inspiring and challenging the professionals of tomorrow. The university is one of the top UK universities for business and industry and have an established reputation for world-class teaching and practical, leading-edge research. Heriot-Watt University has five campuses across the world: Edinburgh, Scottish Borders, Orkney, Dubai and Malaysia, as well as 53 Approved Learning Partners (ALPs) and educational collaborative partners in 150 countries.

Heriot-Watt University's purpose-built campus opened to students in Putrajaya in September 2014 and is Malaysia's first green campus.

Today, Heriot-Watt University has 29,500 students in 143 countries.

For more information, please visit: www.hw.edu.my

Issued by Perspective Strategies. For media enquiries, please contact:

Tel: 03 - 7491 3138, Fax: 03 - 7733 3138

Charmaine Jeeva, Ms

Email : charmaine.jeeva@perspective.com.my

Mobile : 012 610 4802

Anita Teh, Ms

Email : anita.teh@perspective.com.my

Mobile : 014 396 9433