

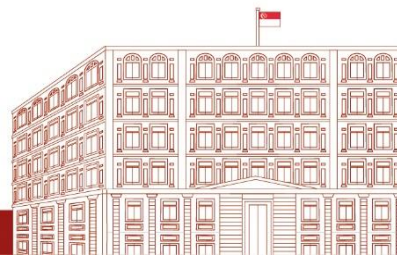
Closing Remarks by Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Communications and Information, Mr Tan Kiat How at Apple's Swift Explorers Singapore 2022 Graduation (26 Oct)

Mr Mike Seifert, Apple's Senior Director, Pacific Operations, and Singapore Site Director

Finalists of the Apple's Swift Explorers

Ladies and gentlemen

1. Good morning. I enjoyed the presentations by our young Swift Explorers. Thank you very much, Neha from Crescent Girls' School who presented on Elderly Care. It is very timely that you think about how we care for our seniors in our families. The apps are very thoughtful and most importantly, it is the creativity and effort that you put in.
2. It is always heartening to see so many young people harnessing technology to express your creativity, and importantly, doing something to solve real world problems that benefits someone. It could be your family, loved ones, someone that you care about deeply in the community. Whether it is about ageing or climate change, these are good examples of how technology can really change the world and make a difference in our lives. Experiences like these provide a firm foundation for all of you as you explore the many valuable opportunities in the digital domain.
3. I would also like to thank Crescent Girls' School for organising the Swift Explorers Singapore 2022, the first in this region, and for bringing app design and Swift coding to Primary and Secondary Schools as well as Junior Colleges. I am also encouraged by your commitment to expand access to opportunities in the fast-evolving tech sector, and especially to young women and girls.
4. Initiatives like these are integral to our shared digital future. It is not just about having the skills. It is also about having the confidence to apply those skills and technology to transform the way we work, live and play in the coming years, especially in our region.
5. Our region represents one of the fastest growing digital economies in the world. ASEAN alone will see nearly 575 million internet users within this decade, putting it on track to become the world's fourth largest digital economy. A joint report launched recently had projected that Southeast Asia's digital economy will more than double between 2021 and 2025.
6. Singapore is well-placed to reap the benefits of this growth, with many innovative companies like Apple, creating good opportunities for those with the right skills. Apple is one example, that is growing its regional presence through Singapore, creating roles not just in key functions but also in hardware and software engineering.
7. We now have 22 Singapore-based unicorns, with eleven of them produced in 2021 alone. I am sure you will be familiar with these names – Grab, Razer, Ninja Van, Carro. Across our economy, around 10,000 new tech jobs are created every year with strong demand for roles such as data scientists, cybersecurity specialists and software engineers.
8. It is important for you to attain the relevant digital skills, in order for you to maximise the opportunities in the digital economy.



9. To support you in accessing these skills and opportunities, the Government is committed to delivering these together with our industry partners. Those of you here today have benefited directly from Apple's partnership with your schools, under the Swift Explorers programme.
10. We have recently also announced efforts to support your peers at Polytechnics and the ITE, under the TechSkills Accelerator (TeSA) for ITE and Polytechnics (TIP) Alliance. This Alliance brings together 12 global and local companies, such as DBS, IBM, NCS who have committed to provide students with high quality internships, on-the-job training via apprenticeships, as well as opportunities to obtain further education and industry-recognised certifications.
11. As you look ahead to a possible career in tech, you can tap on the SG Digital (Undergraduate) Scholarship to support your aspirations. For those who wish to specialise further, we also have the SG Digital (Postgraduate) Scholarship to empower you to pursue tech and media specialisations at the Masters or PhD levels. There are also various work-study initiatives that we have rolled out to support your learning even after you enter the workforce.
12. All of these initiatives rely on the strong support of industry partners, not only to create training opportunities in cutting-edge tech areas, but also to ensure that our initiatives remain relevant to industry needs.
13. I encourage more schools and firms to follow the example of Crescent Girls' School and Apple, to develop more of such initiatives, and partner us in training our people, to support our businesses, to take Singapore into the next bound of economic growth.
14. Once again, I would like to thank and congratulate all of you for the fantastic effort here today.
15. I hope that you will share your experience in designing innovative apps and inspire your friends to be excited about technology.
16. Thank you very much, everyone.

