

InvestHK releases annual survey results in 2021 and announces StartmeupHK Festival will return in May 2022

According to the 2021 Startup Survey conducted by Invest Hong Kong (InvestHK), Hong Kong's start-up ecosystem remains vibrant despite the ongoing economic challenges of the global pandemic. This year's results revealed that the overall number of start-ups in the city reached a record high of 3 755, up 12 per cent from the figure in 2020, showcasing a positive impact on the job market across different business sectors with the number of staff hired by start-ups rebounding from that of last year by 29 per cent.

Key factors driving start-ups to set up in the city were accessibility to international or regional markets (73 per cent), the simple tax system and low tax rate (67 per cent), business opportunities in Mainland China (61 per cent), and access to funding (59 per cent). Additionally, the survey recorded start-ups in Hong Kong had engaged 13 804 staff and spanned different business sectors, such as fintech, e-commerce, supply chain management and logistics technology, as well as professional or consultancy services. This uptick in hiring highlights a positive outlook for the Hong Kong job market.

The Head of StartmeupHK at InvestHK, Ms Jayne Chan, said, "Although the world has faced overwhelming disruption, there continue to be many exciting opportunities for start-ups to unlock. The growth in the number of start-ups in Hong Kong is expected to keep rising as the digitalisation trend continues to accelerate and broaden due to the pandemic. In 2022, we expect to see greater numbers of start-ups focusing on ESG (environmental, social and governance) and net zero, with proptech, social ventures and greentech expected to grow substantially in future."

Increase in digital adoption fuels developments in innovation and technology (I&T)

The continued rise of both businesses and consumers adopting digitalisation has fuelled specific start-up growth in certain sectors such as e-commerce and in turn also benefited the supply chain management and logistics industry, while the pandemic also accelerated the adoption of remote/e-learning, driving exciting developments in edtech – up 27 per cent from the 2020 figure. With China's 14th Five-Year Plan promoting Hong Kong as an international I&T hub, it is expected that the local I&T ecosystem will be further promoted to complement the I&T strength in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, giving new impetus to the growth of start-ups in the years to come.

Hong Kong attracts record number of start-ups from overseas and Mainland

China

As one of the leading international financial centres and with its unique role as a bridge for innovative companies to access the Mainland and Asian markets, Hong Kong continues to be attractive to overseas start-ups. While results showed 66 per cent of the start-up founders were Hong Kong locals and 7 per cent were Hong Kong returnees, 28 per cent of the start-up founders were non-local (Note). In terms of the source country/region of non-local founders, Mainland China ranked first (20.5 per cent), followed by the United States (14.4 per cent), the United Kingdom (11.1 per cent), France (7.1 per cent) and India (6.8 per cent).

StartmeupHK Festival 2022 to provide platform for new business opportunities

Organised by InvestHK under its StartmeupHK initiative, the StartmeupHK Festival, Asia's leading annual start-up event, will return from May 23 to 28, 2022. The Festival will adopt a hybrid format and will offer start-ups, investors, corporates, academia and governments worldwide the chance to explore new opportunities in Asia and in Hong Kong. Throughout the week, there will be keynotes, panel discussions, exhibitions, investor and business matching, hackathons and job fairs. More information on how to sign up for the StartmeupHK Festival 2022 will be available early next year.

Link to InvestHK's 2021 Startup

Survey: www.startmeup.hk/media/publications

About InvestHK

InvestHK is the department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government responsible for attracting foreign direct investment and supporting overseas and Mainland businesses to set up or expand in Hong Kong. It provides free advice and customised services for overseas and Mainland companies. For more information, please visit www.investhk.gov.hk.

Note: Individual percentage figures do not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding.