



An Ecosystem Approach for Economic Recovery in Southeast Asia Session

17 March, 3:30pm to 5:00pm (GMT+8/ Manila Local Time)

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the digital revolution and transformed how businesses operate in Southeast Asia. Based on the e-Economy SEA 2020 report, the region's internet sectors continue to see strong growth, hitting \$100 billion in 2020, and are on track to cross \$300 billion by 2025. The report also reveals that 40 million people came online for the first time in 2020 bringing the total number of Internet users in the region to 400 million.

Maximising the immense potential of the digital economy will be crucial to Southeast Asia's overall economic recovery efforts. At the heart of these efforts sits the backbone of Southeast Asia's economy namely small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which account for 95% to 99% of all business establishments in the region, and young people who are the future of Southeast Asia's workforce. While these groups are important to the region's economy, they are vulnerable to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic especially since they work in the sectors hit the hardest by shutdowns.

Objectives of the Session and Benefits

In this session, in partnership with industry experts and nonprofit organisations, we will discuss the opportunities that digital technology can bring for our economies and identify solutions to support SMEs and young people as they manage the economic impacts posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Agenda

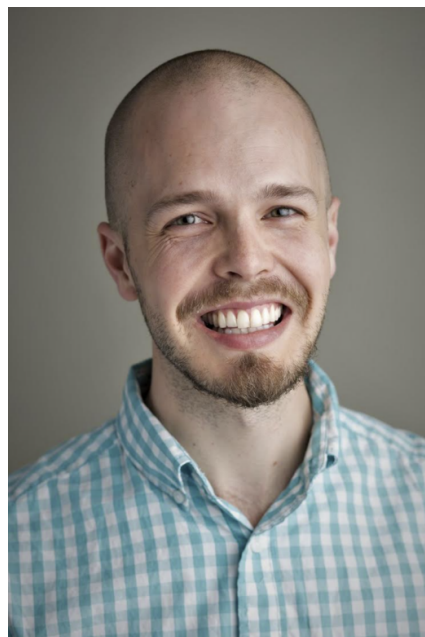
(GMT+8/ Manila Local Time)

Time	Activity
3:30pm – 3:45pm	● Opening Remarks by ASEAN Foundation (Dr. Yang Mee Eng, Executive Director ASEAN Foundation) ● Southeast Asia's E-economy by <u>Tenzin Norbhu</u>, Director Southeast Asia, Government Affairs and Public Policy, Google
3:45pm – 4:50pm	Panel Introduction: ● Plan International - Colton Hubbard, Technical Advisor, Youth & Economic Empowerment at Plan International USA ● The Asia Foundation - Meloney Lindberg, Country Representative, Cambodia. ● Ashoka Foundation - Sumitra Pasupathy, Global Partnerships Director for Ashoka Innovators for the Public Ltd ● Google.org - Marija Ralic, Google.org Lead, Google APAC Panel Discussion: ● SMEs and MSMEs are the heart of the South East Asia Economy and many were amongst the most hit by the pandemic. How can we support SMEs, particularly those in the rural areas ● Supporting job seekers. Based on <u>ILO</u> - 255 million jobs were lost globally in 2020, 140 million of which were from APAC - a staggering 55% of the world's losses'. In East Asia and the Pacific, COVID-19 has caused an additional 38M of "new poor", making up a total of 517M now living below the poverty line, according to the <u>World Bank</u>. What are some learnings from efforts to support underserved job seekers ● Supporting capacity building for social impact organisations; role of corporate philanthropy. Technology is a powerful force and we've seen social entrepreneurs and nonprofits around the world leveraging technology in inventive ways to solve urgent problems, bridge gaps, and create more equal societies. What can be done and what efforts have there been to strengthen social entrepreneurs' and nonprofits' impact in the short-term (particularly during the pandemic) and longer-term.
4:50 pm – 5:00pm	Closing Remarks

Speakers

Plan International - **Colton Hubbard**, Technical Advisor, Youth & Economic Empowerment at Plan International USA

Colton Hubbard is an international development professional with more than 12 years of experience in youth and community development. He joined Plan International USA (Plan) in 2020 as a Technical Advisor for Youth and Economic Empowerment. Prior to joining Plan, Colton served as Program Director for the International Youth Foundation, where he oversaw a complex portfolio of youth economic and social development programming across North and Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and Asia, while managing diverse relationships with local stakeholders, and providing in-house technical consulting for projects across the organization. Colton is an experienced trainer and has conducted a variety of workshops for an array of clients on behavioral skills instruction, market systems development approaches and Positive Youth Development (PYD) programming. Colton's technical focus areas include PYD theory and approaches, monitoring, evaluation and learning, youth entrepreneurship models, socio-emotional learning, and market systems development. Colton served as a Peace Corps Volunteer from 2006 to 2008 in the Tagant region of Mauritania, working in agricultural and community development. He holds a master's in public administration from Indiana University, an M.M. in music composition from Cincinnati Conservatory, and a B.A. in music from Ithaca College. Mr. Hubbard speaks French and Mauritanian Arabic.



The Asia Foundation - **Meloney Lindberg**, Country Representative, Cambodia.

Meloney C. Lindberg is the Foundation's country representative in Cambodia. She oversees a diverse portfolio of projects including improving the capacity of knowledge sector institutions to undertake quality research to inform public policy analysis and dialogue; engaging with private waste collection firms and local stakeholders to test interventions to increase accountability and responsiveness in municipal solid waste collection and management; and works at a regional level to co-lead an ASEAN-wide digital literacy program for underemployed youth and micro and small entrepreneurs. Her women's empowerment portfolio includes projects that advance women's economic opportunities through skill development programs; improving women's safety and security by building government capacity to deliver legal services to survivors of gender-based violence and conducting public safety audits to highlight women's urban safety at the subnational level.

Meloney has also served as the Foundation's country representative in Mongolia and as deputy country representative in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Afghanistan. She earned a bachelor's degree in International Studies from Miami University, and a master's degree in International and Intercultural Management from the School for International Training, World Learning in Brattleboro, Vermont.



Google - [Tenzin Norbhu](#), Google Government Affairs and Public Policy SEA Director

Tenzin Norbhu is Google's Director for Government Affairs and Public Policy in South East Asia based in Singapore. Prior to Google, Tenzin was Director for Connectivity and Access Policy in Facebook for Asia Pacific and before that, worked as ICT Policy Advisor in the World Bank Group in several countries across Africa, East and South Asia. Her work focused on ICT sector reforms; broadband policy regulatory and investment issues; transformative use of ICT for public sector reforms and ICT industry development. Before the World Bank, Tenzin worked for the Royal Government of Bhutan in the communications sector in telecommunications operations, policy and planning and as head of the telecommunications regulatory agency.



Google.org - [Marija Ralic](#), Google.org Lead, Google APAC

Marija Ralic leads Google.org APAC, the data-driven, human-focused philanthropic arm of Google. Marija joined Google in 2019 where she manages Google's philanthropic work across the Asia-Pacific region to support innovative nonprofits using technology to tackle complex global challenges. She works with teams across the regions to bring the best of Google to help solve some of humanity's biggest challenges -- combining funding, innovation, and technical expertise to support underserved communities and provide opportunity for everyone. She brings years of experience in driving regional planning and community investments, AI for Social Impact, the management of skills community projects, which focus on making digital literacy and computer science education accessible to all young people. Before Google, Marija served as a Regional Program Manager overseeing the Philanthropic programs at Microsoft Philanthropies across 17 countries and 20 countries in the Asia Pacific and Central and Eastern Europe, respectively. Before her corporate philanthropy journey, Marija spent five years in AIESEC Serbia, the world's largest youth-run nonprofit which focuses on developing the leadership potential of young people through experiential learning, volunteer experiences, and professional internships. She served AIESEC in various functions, including as president of the AIESEC chapter in Serbia and vice president of external relations.

Ashoka Foundation - [Sumitra Pasupathy](#), Global Partnerships
Director for Ashoka Innovators for the Public Ltd

Sumitra has over 25 years of lived experience in initiating, managing and leading innovation work globally in the creative, education and social impact sector. With her skills from the private sector and start-up social impact environment, Sumitra is now channelling her efforts through her role in Ashoka by mobilizing a world that embraces Changemaking. This spans from inspiring young people with Changemaking skillsets to building Changemaking economies which includes private and public sector participation. She has worked with diverse teams across different sectoral, geographic locations, leadership teams and Board positions. Her previous experience has been with Random House UK, Bertelsmann AG, Procter & Gamble and Kraft. This included work in new venture creation, innovative product development, growth programmes (organic and acquisitive), in-depth market research and marketing; in Europe, US and most recently Asia. Her industry expertise has been in the media sector, education and consumer goods; across private and public sectors. Most recently, she co-founded an international award winning independent non-profit citizen sector organisation - Playeum in Singapore to inspire creativity in children. Playeum's vision is to raise children's voice through play and creativity. Ultimately, building a future of young adults filled with empathy, leadership, collaborative and creative skills.



ASEAN Foundation - [Dr. Yang Mee Eng](#), Executive Director

Dr. Yang worked in private and government sectors for over 26 years. She was most recently the Senior Vice President at Alphacap. There, she assisted SMEs companies and led the development and execution of Bloconomic Expo 2019, a platform aimed at creating a vast network of blockchain entrepreneurs and developers in the fast-evolving blockchain companies. Prior to that, she was the CEO of Gameview, the largest mobile game publisher in Malaysia, where she oversaw more than 50 staff members in their three offices in Malaysia, China and Thailand.

Before moving to the private sector, Yang spent 19 years working as the Business Development Manager at Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation. There, she sought to build Malaysia as a creative economy hub and led the implementation of One Source Multi Usage for cross-platform business models to fully tap into the potential of locally-produced content. Yang also led the Digital Media sector foresight studies and created the Malaysia's creative industry forecast for 30 years (2019-2050) under Mega Science 3.0 project with Academy Science of Malaysia.

Aside from her professional work, she's also the Co-Founder and President of the Spina Association of Malaysia as well as the President of World Game Blockchain Association. Furthermore, Yang is part of the international advisory panel for Malaysia Communication and Multimedia Commission, University Tenaga National and Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur.

