

Costa to speak at inaugural Startup Macau Forum

NEXT week Macau will become the center of a unique entrepreneurial competition and conference that will draw participants from Portugal, mainland China and Macau SAR together. The prime minister of Portugal Antonio Costa will deliver the keynote speech at the event and meet with young entrepreneurs.

The two-day event is designed to bring together investors and entrepreneurs alike and create a marketplace of ideas that fosters innovation and new business opportunities through workshops, an exciting juried-panel competition for entrepreneurs, presentations, and panel discussions with business leaders.

The conference is being organized by the Macau China Think-Tank for Fintech Industries, with the support of the Portuguese government, as well as the investment and economic promotion agencies of the Portuguese and Macau governments. The conference was conceptualized and led by CESL Asia - Investments & Services, Limited, a Macau-based services company, Portugal-based Fabrica de Startups and Tsinghua University.

According to a press release issued by the event's organizers, from the early stages of planning



Antonio Costa

the governments of Portugal and Macau both agreed to participate and sponsor the event in cooperation with several entities.

"This event puts Macau on the map as a place for new and exciting business opportunities and the platform of this competition demonstrates how China and Portuguese-speaking countries are coming together in Macau, working side by side and producing innovative business solutions," said Eric Yeung, chairman of the Macau China ThinkTank for Fintech Industries.

António Lucena de Faria, founder and CEO of Fabrica de Startups said: "We have helped more than 1,500 startups leverage their products and services since 2011

with our FastStart and FastGrowth methodologies, and we see this event as a timely opportunity to show the shortlisted 19 startups just how the right help and support can shorten the distance towards success."

Additional incentives for the three winning teams will be in the form of a cash prize totaling USD20,000 and tickets for Web Summit Lisboa 2016, as well as cash allowances for transportation and living costs. Cash prizes were made possible through the

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contribution and support of Asia Times, MGM Macau and Galaxy Entertainment Group. Turismo de Portugal is offering the opportunity for the awarded teams to be in Lisboa for the Web Summit, between 7 and 12 November.

This sort of educational and mentoring event for entrepreneurs is also intended to serve as a catalyst for establishing the Macau Startup and Innovation Center, which will serve as an offshore base for Portuguese and Chinese startups. Scheduled to open next year, the center will provide a platform to gather regional efforts and foster dialogue, networking, education and opportunities for emerging entrepreneurs.

"Macau is a vibrant city with an exceptional workforce, progressive and developing universities, a high-standard of living, low taxes and a business-friendly environment. And we are geographically well-positioned and culturally linked between the world's largest market - China - Europe and the Portuguese speaking Countries of the world," said Antonio Trindade, president and CEO of CESL Asia - Investments & Services, Limited and an organizer of the event.

Mr Trindade added: "The governments of Portugal, China and Macau SAR are committed to this effort and we see a mandate to diversify and grow our economy, encouraging young people to pursue their entrepreneurial goals, and making the most of what Macau can offer".