

# Vote now in the spirit of enterprise

200 entrepreneurs in the running for top spot

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VOTE not for your favourite singer or rock band, but for your favourite entrepreneur.

From now until Sept 15, members of the public are invited to take part in a poll organised by Spirit of Enterprise (SOE), the non-profit body that promotes and advances entrepreneurial spirit in Singapore, to vote for the entrepreneurs by whom they are inspired.

A total of 200 nominees are in the running for this year's Spirit of Enterprise Awards, almost double the 107 seen last year.

Votes from the public will help the SOE Board of Governors decide on the 41 finalists who will be honoured at the awards ceremony on Oct 23.

The entrepreneurs nominated include restaurants, cafes, fashion boutiques, recruitment companies, design companies, undertakers and public relations agencies.

The success stories of the 200 nominees, the background of their business ventures and

how they overcame their initial difficulties are now posted online at [www.soe.org.sg](http://www.soe.org.sg), the SOE's website.

The project was carried out with the help of more than 130 students from local universities, polytechnics and institutes of technical education, who interviewed the business heroes and heroines with a predetermined set of questions.

The responses provide insights into how some of the entrepreneurs faced personal adversities and how they view education as a stepping stone in building their enterprises.

"We are pleased to announce that the number of nominees for this year has increased to 200 from 107 in 2005, and this is a telltale sign of Singapore's enduring prospects in business opportunities not just for big players but also smaller businesses, said Mr Richard Eu, chairman of the SOE.

"We hope the success stories of these promising entrepreneurs will continue to inspire and promote the enterprising spirit in all of us," he added.



OOI BOON KEONG

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— Mr Richard Eu, chairman of the Spirit of Enterprise

## SMEHELPLINE

**I AM planning to develop a prototype of my invention. Is there any programme that I can tap onto?**

You may wish to explore the Innovation Commercialisation Scheme (ICS) offered by the Economic Development Board (EDB).

This grant provides young start-ups that are less than three years

old with co-funding for proof-of-concept projects. The aims of this fund is to encourage the development and commercialisation of innovations in Singapore by supporting proof-of-concept activities.

ICS works by reimbursing up to 50 per cent of the qualifying costs of supported projects, up to a maximum of \$75,000.

Please visit EDB's website for

more information.

Answers are provided by Spring Singapore. Please visit [www.spring.gov.sg](http://www.spring.gov.sg) to find out more about Spring Singapore's assistance schemes.

If you have questions on starting or running a business, please send them to [news@newstoday.com.sg](mailto:news@newstoday.com.sg).

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President & CEO of  
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