Background

1 As Singapore moves towards the Digital Economy, a priority for the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) is to bolster the local technology sector by developing the next generation of digital expertise and businesses. We aim to groom our Singapore-based technology product companies to be globally competitive, through providing relevant assistance at different stages of their growth journey.

2 Through the Tech Acceleration Lab, it is envisaged that these Singapore-based technology product companies can have a strong foothold in securing projects from Government-led demand and pull-through from the initial Proof-of-Concept (PoC) stage to a successful production deployment.

3 Technology product companies that enable and support the digital transformation of Government Agencies often face challenges with long PoC cycle due to the lack of knowledge in Government security and deployment requirements, as well as limited access to production-like PoC environment. On the other hand, Government Agencies that are keen to adopt leading-edge technologies also face challenges, for example the long and tedious process time required in setting up a test environment even for a short-term PoC.

4 Enterprise PoCs face similar challenges as government PoCs, especially the complex environment setup with its own enterprise-grade IT security and compliance requirements. Cloud Solution Providers (CSPs) do not offer pre-configured enterprise-grade sandboxes or company-specific tech assistance, resulting in prolonged sales cycles and missed opportunities.

IMDA-Tech Acceleration Lab

5 Supported under IMDA's Accreditation and Spark programmes, the Tech Acceleration Lab (TAL) is an initiative that was launched in 2021 to help Singapore-based enterprise technology product companies accelerate and seamlessly transition from initial Proof-of-Concept (PoC) for Government projects to successful deployment.

6 Expanding TAL for enterprises will help IMDA's portfolio of accredited and spark companies to accelerate the PoC-to-buy cycle as well compete in future tenders and generate more lead demand opportunities both in the public and private sectors:

a. Secured and compliant Sandbox

  i. Provision of sandbox administrated by IMDA Government Commercial Cloud (GCC) for short-term PoC on a secure cloud-based environment for the purpose of Government PoCs.

  ii. Provision of enterprise grade sandbox or/and offer architecture review that can shorten the enterprise compliance cycle.

  iii. Conduct workshops to increase companies' awareness and knowledge of Government security and deployment requirements.

b. Increased Competitiveness and Business Opportunities

  i. Provide application testing to evaluate product functionality, as well as assess product's performance and security.

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ii.   Replicate successful PoC images (e.g., pre-configured OS, applications, data) for product demonstration to other potential Government and Enterprise buyers.

Validated Outcomes To-Date

a. Since TAL's launch in 2021, 46 government PoCs projects benefitted from TAL, reducing the setup time by a minimum of 66% with the typical setup time ranging between 6 and 9 months. This has accelerated the adoption of leading-edge technologies for government buyers, 20 of which were successfully converted to paid contracts.

b. Through the onboarding process, 41 companies have benefitted from TAL's facilities to level up their deployment capability through security workshops and technical architecture reviews.

c. Since the commencement of its pilot testing phase in January 2023, TAL Enterprise has tripled the deployment of enterprise grade sandbox.

Testimonials from Users of Tech Acceleration Lab for Enterprises

"Having access to Tech Acceleration Lab's compliance and security framework was a game-changer for BeLive Technology. The added layer of trust of being a TAL-Enterprise-approved company unlocked conversations with large corporates that we would otherwise be unable to engage. It has helped us navigate tough questions on cloud architecture stability, scalability, and data protection."

Mr Kenneth Tan – Founder & CEO of BeLive

"Being a part of IMDA's Tech Acceleration Lab Enterprise is an honour and a privilege for me and my team at Whale. We specialise in providing AI-based retail and marketing solutions, and with the support of the TAL, we have been able to seamlessly migrate to AWS, which allows us to reach our clients on a regional and international level. TAL has also given us the resources and the platform to harness cutting-edge technology such as AI, IoT, and data to build efficient and user-friendly marketing infrastructure and applications for brands. I am eager to continue innovating and expanding with the support of the Tech Acceleration Lab as we onboard more enterprise clients."

Mr Jerry Ye – Founder & CEO of Whale

"As data is the lifeblood of innovation in the digital age, we are excited to work with TAL Enterprise to enable and support digital transformation by fulfilling critical security and deployment requirements. Yugabyte is continuously innovating with cloud-native technologies that empower the next generation of digital experts and businesses with always available and accessible real-time data. For example, key use cases of our distributed SQL database include real-time monitoring of utility systems with smart sensors, edge computing projects that drive community welfare initiatives, and highly secure yet citizen-friendly systems."

Mr Karthik Ranganathan – Co-Founder & CTO of Yugabyte[1]

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[1] Yugabyte was founded in 2016 by former Facebook and Oracle engineers with experience building business-critical database systems. YugabyteDB is a 100% open source, distributed SQL database designed from the ground up to eliminate expensive tradeoffs with legacy databases. YugabyteDB delivers enterprise-grade RDBMS capabilities such as distributed ACID transactions and replication with strong consistency as well as the horizontal scalability and resilience of non-relational databases.

"Scantist is excited to be on Tech Acceleration Lab – Enterprise, as the platform provides our clients more trust with holding their information and ensures high SLA (Service Level Agreement) and application performance."

Dr Liu Yang – Co-Founder & CEO of Scantist

Testimonials from Clients of TAL Enterprise Users

"The government-backed sandbox reinforces the reliability on our platform - we can assess the full potential of our offerings with Scantist."

Mr Derick Teo – Head of IT at BIPO Service

"Scantist's seamless PoC setup is complemented by the support of IMDA's Tech Acceleration Lab sandbox, which bolsters Nexusguard's assurance in their solution's performance and security."

Mr Andy Ng – CEO at Nexusguard

Past Testimonials from Users of Tech Acceleration Lab for GCC

"One of the biggest challenges for startups without prior experience selling to government agencies is the implicit knowledge about government processes and rules that incumbent vendors have built over the years.

What TAL is doing is to help with the translation. Helping startups understand government IT and procurement. This is win-win: startups understand how they need to adjust their technology to meet government requirements and government agencies get access to the latest technology. For example, when we understood that cybersecurity was important and Centre for Internet Security (CIS) benchmarks were important, we obtained certification for our Bedrock product.

What's even better about the TAL's work is the sandbox environment. This has strong demonstration value. It isn't about a paper review but about detailed architectural review and deployment and validation of our technology in a government IT system. Of course, it is still a sandbox, but it is an important step to clear some of the initial hurdles and to prove our technology capabilities and compatibility.

It has been a great experience working with the team so far. They understand the urgency that startups face and the importance of getting from zero to one. At the same time, they are able to bring in the right experienced architects who can reflect the concerns and considerations of government IT teams."

Mr Liu Fengyuan – CEO & Co-Founder of BasisAI

"Tech Acceleration Lab (TAL) is foundational lab for innovative tech ideas to shape into successful POCs through accelerated iterations. TAL provides us the secure environment to collaborate effectively with government agencies to build and showcase new ideas and future 5G use cases powered by the scalable government commercial cloud infrastructure."

Mr Anuj Khanna Sohum – Founder, Chairman & CEO of Affle

For more information, please enquire at Tech_Acceleration_Lab@imda.gov.sg.