



SME REGIONAL MARKET EXPANSION, FUNDING AND FINANCING: LIMITED SPACES LEFT AT MITI'S WITI FORUM 2025 & ASEAN SME ECONOMIC CONFERENCE 2025

The Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI) will host two significant events this week that underscore Malaysia's leadership in promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth under its ASEAN 2025 Chairmanship (Economic Pillar). The **Women in Trade and Industry (WITI) Forum 2025** will take place on **8 October 2025**, followed by the **ASEAN SME Economic Conference 2025** on **9 October 2025**, both at **Menara MITI, Kuala Lumpur**.

The **WITI Forum 2025**, themed ***"Unleashing the Power of Women in ASEAN: Trade and Industry Across Borders"*** is jointly organised by **MITI, HAWA Malaysia, and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA)**. The event aims to highlight the role of women as key contributors to ASEAN's economic resilience and sustainable future and is expected to draw more than 1,000 participants. It will feature engaging knowledge-sharing sessions focusing on **women's empowerment in trade and digital innovation, access to finance and markets, leadership and mentorship opportunities**, as well as sustainable and inclusive business practices. Subject matter experts from **MATRADE, SME Corp**, and various **ASEAN business networks** will share practical guidance on export readiness and international market expansion. **YB Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Aziz**, Minister of MITI, will deliver the Opening Keynote, while **YB Dato' Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri**, Minister of Women, Family and Community Development, will deliver the Closing Keynote.

On **9 October 2025**, MITI will also host the **ASEAN SME Economic Conference 2025**, with the theme ***"Unlocking Economic Opportunities for SMEs in ASEAN."*** The event is organised in partnership with CIMB Bank Berhad as title sponsor, WPP Media and ASTRO. It will gather **thought leaders, investors, and entrepreneurs from across ASEAN** to explore strategies that can **enhance SME competitiveness, strengthen regional integration**, as well as **improve access to financing and markets**. The Conference will feature keynote addresses by **YB Senator Tengku Datuk Seri Utama Zafrul Aziz**, **YB Datuk Ewon Benedick**, Minister of Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development and his Deputy, **YB Dato' Sri Ramanan Ramakrishnan**.

The Conference's sessions will focus on **SME financing, digital transformation, and AI-powered marketing strategies**, alongside **sharing sessions by regional experts, investors and successful SME founders**. Targeting 600 SME participants, it will also feature the **launch of a new digital platform** designed to **support SME internationalisation** and **facilitate cross-border trade**.

In his statement ahead of both events, **Tengku Zafrul** said, "Malaysia's SMEs are the heartbeat of our economy—and they deserve every opportunity to grow beyond our borders. As Chair of ASEAN's Economic Pillar this year, MITI is honoured to co-organise **these knowledge-sharing and networking events** that could help **transform SMEs' businesses from a 'domestic hustle into regional muscle'**. Through **targeted funding, mentorship, regional networks, and strategic AI-powered marketing support**, we are **empowering SMEs to thrive across ASEAN and compete with confidence**."

Limited seats are still available for both events. For SMEs wishing to join, please register via the following links:

WITI Forum 2025 (8 October 2025):

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1JzWBNastE4zEliCrX8SjJe_P8SisusIIUrMqLGKNe2M/preview

ASEAN SME Economic Conference 2025 (9 October 2025):

<https://www.asean-sme.com/register>

MINISTRY OF INVESTMENT, TRADE AND INDUSTRY

7 October 2025

[About MITI:](#)

MITI is the key driver in making Malaysia the preferred destination for quality investments and enhancing the nation's rising status as a globally competitive trading nation. Its objectives and roles are oriented towards ensuring Malaysia's rapid economic development and help achieve the country's stated goal of becoming a developed nation.

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