TALENTBANK

PRESS RELEASE

GRADUATES' CHOICE AWARD 2026.

Embargoed until 16 November 2026

Graduate Employability MOUs · 9th Presentation Gala

MEDIA CONTACT

Mavis Chan · +60 12-687 6084 · ceo@talentbank.io

EMBARGOED UNTIL 16 NOVEMBER 2026

Talentbank Career Passport to guide students from first year to first job, as Ministry, universities and industry sign MoUs at 9th Graduates' Choice Award

> *Nearly one million student votes honour Malaysia's preferred employers at GCA 2026, as partners work together to prepare graduates earlier for working life*

PETALING JAYA, 16 November 2026: The Ministry of Higher Education (KPT), public and private universities, a wide range of business associations and chambers, and Talentbank came together at the 9th Graduates' Choice Award (GCA) Presentation Gala on 13 November at the Grand Ballroom, Sunway Resort, signing and exchanging Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) in graduate employability. At the centre of the collaboration is the Talentbank Career Passport, which students can start as early as their first year of study, to guide them through university and into their first job.

Organised by Talentbank, the gala also recognised students' preferred employers. A total of 957,946 votes were cast this year, up 29 per cent from the previous year, giving the voice of Malaysia's emerging workforce a clear place in the national conversation on graduate employability.

The gala was officiated by Encik Ahmad Rizal bin Adnan, Deputy Secretary-General (Policy), Ministry of Higher Education.

Determined entirely by student votes, with results verified by career services practitioners from Malaysian universities, GCA gives employers a direct view of how future talent perceives them. The 2026 voting exercise drew participation from students and graduates across every state, recognising multinational companies and major local organisations as employers of choice.

The signing and exchange of MoUs focused on connecting career preparation, industry exposure and employment opportunities throughout a student's university journey. The initiative seeks to support the aspirations of the Graduate Employability Strategic Plan (PSKG) 2026-2030 by strengthening links between higher education and industry, developing adaptable graduates and encouraging continuous skills development. Its emphasis is on helping graduates build careers that make use of their capabilities and offer room for progression.

For the MoU between the Ministry of Higher Education and Talentbank, Encik Ahmad Rizal bin Adnan signed on behalf of the Ministry, witnessed by Dr. Ahmad Zairy bin Mohd Soieb, Secretary of the Strategic Planning Division, Ministry of Higher Education. Ben Ho, Founder and CEO, signed on behalf of Talentbank, witnessed by Muhammad Fadilah Bin Abd Rahim, Director of Graduate Employability & Government Affairs. University leaders and representatives of participating associations and chambers also exchanged MoUs with Talentbank.

CAREER READINESS FROM THE FIRST YEAR

Envisioned as a lifelong career companion, the Career Passport is designed to help students explore career options, understand employer expectations and prepare progressively for the transition into work.

The platform is designed to bring together job and internship opportunities, alumni connections, interview practice and job matching. Through the Career Passport, students can see job and internship openings from employers across partner campuses and associations, not only those that visit their own university. University career centres can follow students' progress throughout their studies and identify where earlier support is needed.

The Career Passport is also designed to give students access to thousands of verified mentors from leading companies, so they can learn directly from working professionals about career paths, industry expectations and the skills employers value.

For students and graduates, the aim is clearer career direction and more accessible opportunities. For universities, it is stronger support for career centres and closer engagement with employers. For industry, it is an opportunity to build relationships with future talent earlier and communicate the skills needed in the workplace. Associations and chambers extend that reach through their member companies.

> *"We are grateful to the Ministry of Higher Education, our universities and industry partners for their trust. Our hope is that every young Malaysian, wherever they study, will have a companion for their career, from the day they start university to their first job and through a lifetime of learning. No single organisation can do this alone. Our role is to serve, and we will measure ourselves by the progress students make, not by what we promise," said Ben Ho, Founder and CEO of Talentbank.*

With 16 years of experience in graduate employability, Talentbank brings together its work with students, universities and employers to support this shared effort. The longer-term ambition of the Career Passport is to help individuals navigate subsequent roles, identify skills to develop and continue learning as their careers evolve.

Students, graduates and employers can register a profile at talentbank.ai. The full list of this year's GCA winners is available at graduateschoiceaward.com.

· ENDS ·

ABOUT TALENTBANK

Established in 2010, Talentbank works with students, graduates, universities, employers and government to strengthen graduate employability in Malaysia. It organises the Graduates' Choice Award, now in its ninth edition, guided by its mission: Better Employability For The Nation. More information: talentbank.io.

MEDIA CONTACT

Name	Mavis Chan
Phone	+60 12-687 6084
Email	ceo@talentbank.io