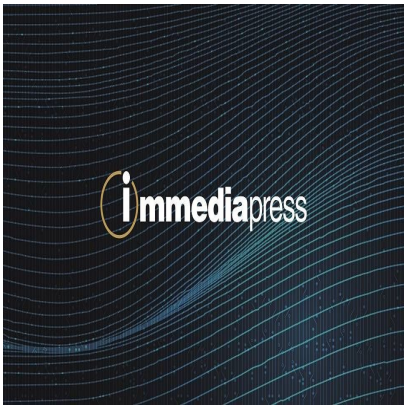


NextRise 2026, Seoul Successfully Wraps Up as Asiaâ??s Leading Startup Fair Co-hosted by KITA and KDB

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SEOUL, South Korea, June 26, 2026 /PRNewswire/ â?? The Korea International Trade Association (KITA) and Korea Development Bank (KDB) successfully wrapped up NextRise 2026, Seoul, Asiaâ??s leading startup fair, at COEX in Samseong-dong, Seoul, after a two-day run from June 18 to 19, 2026.

This yearâ??s exhibition featured the largest startup showcase in the eventâ??s history, with more than 540 Korean and international startups, including around 140 overseas startups from 30 countries. Participating companies presented new technologies through booth exhibitions, while 23 global corporates, including LG, CJ, Hanwha Aerospace, Google Cloud, and Renault, joined the fair to explore collaboration with startups.

The 1-on-1 business meetup program, one of Asiaâ??s largest of its kind, held more than 4,000 consultations across over 170 booths, connecting startups with major global corporates, investors, and venture ecosystem partners to identify concrete business cooperation and investment opportunities.

The conference program shared global trends and practical insights through more than 60 expert sessions on future strategic industries, including AI, Biotechnology, Creative Industry, and defence, as well as strategies for startups seeking overseas expansion. Major sessions included OpenAI Head of Startups Marc Manara on the next era of AI, MIT Institute Professor and Moderna co-founder Robert Langer on bio innovation, CJ CheilJedangâ??s Hee-jun Lee on sustainable K-Food growth, and KAIST Professor Man-Ki Kim on applications of dual-use technologies.

NextRise 2026 also introduced new on-site programs designed to broaden participation in the venture ecosystem, including experience zones where visitors could see technologies from future unicorn candidates, such as humanoid robots, AI drones, and Security, as well as startup and job-fair programs and 1-on-1 recruitment meetups connecting startups with young AI developers.

A total of 32 startups were named honorees of the NextRise 2026 Awards, as detailed below:

An official from the Korea International Trade Association (KITA) stated, â??At this critical juncture of major transformation, where AI is changing our way of life and industrial paradigms, the role of startups with innovative technologies is more important than ever,â• adding, â??KITA will actively support these innovations so that they can transcend barriers between the national government, industries, and companies and lead to tangible results.â•

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