

Mr Michael Lim receiving his award from Trade and Industry Minister Chan Chun Sing at Founder Ignite yesterday. His idea to build a platform to address the rising need for soft foods was inspired by their availability in local flavours in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan.



Meeting the need for soft foods in Singapore's ageing population

Yeo Shu Hui

Last year, former naval officer Michael Lim, 57, took the plunge to join an initiative to groom aspiring entrepreneurs in Singapore.

He was encouraged by a professor at the Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), where he is an alumnus, to join the Venture Building programme, part of the enhanced Startup SG Founder scheme run by Enterprise Singapore.

Mr Lim's idea was to build a platform to address the rising need for soft foods for an ageing population, inspired by their availability in local flavours in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan.

He said: "We went into this Ven-

ture Building programme with a 'fun' idea. Can we create, make and deliver local soft foods within Singapore?

"The programme offered a safe space for social experimentation.

"We were totally surprised by the traction, acceptance and learnings."

The innovative business idea saw Mr Lim, who obtained a Master of Gerontology from SUSS in 2017, becoming one of the winners at an event yesterday, where 14 teams pitched their ideas.

The three-month Venture Building programmes are supported by several universities.

Mr Lim has had a long career including as a naval officer, a senior manager in the logistics sector and the head of a nursing home.

The online platform, Konnect,

aims to bring together consumers, food producers and advocacy groups to create and purchase soft foods that are familiar and visually pleasing.

The platform is currently targeted at local buyers.

So far, he has about five food producers on board.

For a start, they have managed to sell curry puffs through the platform and had more than 10 transactions.

Mr Lim hopes to further build the business.

He said that possible revenue sources could include selling recipes for soft foods and providing training for people who want to learn to make soft foods for their elderly loved ones.

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