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“Global Festival for Startups, COMEUP 2021”**Successfully Ends with Great Response from Its Industry**

- A total of 5,931 startup CEOs and employees, 1,620 investors, and 42,740 visitors participated in the event both on and offline, totaling 50,291 participants (man-days); there were 406 business meetings, showing great passion for startups
- The event is considered to be a successful large offline event, providing opportunities for communication and exchanges during “Living with COVID Level 1” after the end of COVID-19

The Ministry of SMEs and Startups (Minister KWON Chil-seung, hereafter referred to as “MSS”) and the COMEUP 2021 Organizing Committee (Organizing Committee Chairman from the Private Sector AHN Seong-woo (CEO of Jigbang), hereafter referred to as “Organizing Committee”) announced that the three-day event global festival for startups “COMEUP 2021” that took place from Wednesday, November 17, to Friday, November 19, successfully came to an end.

COMEUP is a festival that shares the Korean startup ecosystem with the world and provides an opportunity for global investors to interact and cooperate with startup-related individuals all around the world. The event first took place in 2019.

Unlike last year, when the event was held online due to the COVID-19, this year’s COMEUP mainly took place offline (face-to-face), in strict compliance with the Korean government’s “Living with COVID” policies.

As there was a limit on the number of people who were able to join in the event at once, there was a total of 50,291 man-days both online and offline. There was a total of 5,931 startup CEOs and employees, 1,620 investors, and 21,110 participants, resulting in a total of 28,661 participants.

* Visitors (man-days): 50,291 (Offline: 28,661, Online: 21,630)

In particular, the number of people on site increased by approximately 7,000 to 28,000, from approximately 21,000 offline participants in 2019. This shows the greater interest for startups and the higher stature of the festival.

The official COMEUP YouTube channel reached 21,630 views online, showing great interest from the public for the COMEUP festival which marked its third year this year.

The conferences, which were held in 12 sessions, were visited by numerous participants in every session, as all seats were filled. The exhibition booths of 72 startups and business meetings were crowded with visitors as well.

[Conference]

84 renowned speakers, who are also the leaders of the global startup trend, participated in the conference to share their ideas and thoughts in discussions during 12 sessions related to education, environment, and other topics related to the theme of the world that will change after the COVID-19.

On Day 1, the startup accelerator CEO KIM Sejoon of Hashed, an expert in blockchain, gave a lecture titled “The Present and Future of Blockchain in Korea.” He predicted, “Next year, many startups will

seriously start thinking about crypto (currency).” He emphasized, “Blockchain startups in Korea should work on regulations and secure developers.”

On Day 2, CEO KIM Jeong-bin of Superbin, a startup that develops AI-based recyclables collecting robots, and Director PARK Jong-hyeon of SK Chemicals, an eco-friendly materials and total healthcare solution provider, shared their ideas on the topic of “Cyclical Economy, a New Order for the Upcoming Future.”

On Day 3, Head KIM Beomjoo from Unity Technologies Korea, a 3D content developing platform developer, and CEO CHOI Hyung-uk of LIFE SQUARE, an innovative planning company, discussed the topic of “From Fashion Shows to Park Hangang, An Era of the Metaverse.”

[COMEUP STARS]

72 COMEUP STARS, innovative startups that represent COMEUP 2021, enabled to attract investment and promote their companies to investors around the world by introducing their companies (IR), engaging in biz matching, and organizing booths.

A staff member of H Robotics, a robot-based startup, stated, “COMEUP was an excellent opportunity for startups to expand their businesses to various channels.”

A staff member from the comprehensive R&D data solution provider AtAnt stated “We decided to participate in COMEUP before our official launch early next year. I think we made a great decision.” He added, “We were able to come into contact with many clients at the event, and it was an opportunity for us to see the public’s response to our services.”

[Open Innovation]

The “Open Innovation Showcase,” which was new this year, was joined by 18 global companies actively taking part in open innovation, including Samsung and Google, to introduce their directions for open innovation and detailed strategies.

One member of a global company stated, “It was a great surprise to see how advanced the technologies of startups were.” He added, “We will expand our range of support for and cooperation with startups in the future.”

[Special Events]

Special events including “Challenge! Finding the Best K-Startup” on Day 1, “Global Startup Day” on Day 2, and “Startup-Large Company Solution Finder Platform Competition” on Day 3 ended on a successful note along with COMEUP.

“Challenge! Finding the Best K-Startup 2021,” the largest startup competition in Korea, took place on Day 1 with 10 government organizations.

Among the final 20 teams that were selected with a competition ratio of 368 to 1, “AU” (CEO KIM Baek-hyun) was selected as the final winner for the Startup League, and “Day1Lab” (CEO LEE Ju-bong) was selected for the Pre-Startup League.

On Day 2, “Global Startup Day” took place in cooperation with Mercedes-Benz Korea, ASEM SMEs Eco-Innovation Centre (ASEIC), the Korea-Africa Foundation, and the French government. It was an opportunity for COMEUP to grow even further as a global startup festival.

“Korea-Germany Startup Showcase” with Mercedes-Benz Korea was held in cooperation with Germany’s Startup Autobahn founded by Daimler AG. Three Korean startups that will pitch in Germany were revealed in the showcase.

“Korea-ASEAN-Africa Startup Showcase” took place with ASEM SMEs Eco-Innovation Center (ASEIC) and the Korea-Africa Foundation, along with 24 startups (13 from Asia, 11 from Africa) from Asia and Africa. Among these startups, seven excellent startups gave online presentations.

The finale for “Global Startup Day” was the “Korea-France Startup Meet-up,” a chance for 11 French delegate startups to pitch in Korea and engage in networking events with Korean investors.

The “Startup-Large Company Solution Finder Platform Competition” was also held. This event gave startups and large companies the chance to work together to solve problems and make up for each other’s weaknesses. The winner of Round 1 (Fourth Industrial Revolution) was ANPOLY, and the winner of Round 2 (AI Championship) was SurroMind.

[Other Events]

There were also many other events that caught the eyes of numerous participants, including business matching between startups and investors, and networking events for new and old startups.

In particular, considering the fact there were 406 business matching sessions that involved investment discussions between startups, investors, and global companies that participated in COMEUP, it is safe to conclude that there has been a surge in investor interest in startups.

[Upcoming Plans]

72 startups that participated in this year's COMEUP (COMEUP STARS) will be monitored in terms of their future performances, including attracting investments and taking part in collaborative models with global companies, until the first half of 2022.

Jigbang CEO AHN Seong-woo, also the COMEUP 2021 Organizing Committee Chairman, stated, "COMEUP 2021 will be an opportunity to encourage more young people to find their startups, and give rise to many K-startups who will go beyond the domestic market to enter the foreign markets."

Minister of SMEs and Startups KWON Chil-seung stated, "With rapid advancements in the Fourth Industrial Revolution and digital transformation, startups will be able to receive more opportunities for success than ever." He added, "I hope that startups will continue to take initiative to create their own futures, rather than passively waiting for the future to come to them."