The CODETTE Project

ANNUAL REPORT

2019

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INTRODUCTION

MESSAGE FROM FOUNDER

2019 was a year of firsts for us at The Codette Project. With funding from the Facebook Community Leadership Programme, we were able to fund all our events for 2018-2019, including the creation of our first ever photo exhibition - #SuccessLooksLikeThis, funding internships for the first time, running our hackathon, as well as providing scholarships for madrasah students learning to code. Mendaki Club also came on board to support us for our first ever Future Forward career event for students.

More than events and numbers, 2019 was about people. We worked with allies from different backgrounds and experiences across the world. We welcomed community members who came to us for the first time, as well as familiar faces we can depend on to show up for our events. As a team, we grew to 13 people, saying goodbye to some old faces as they move on in their journeys, and saying hello to new people who want to help create a better ecosystem for minority/Muslim success in tech with Codette.

Thank you, all of you, for co-creating success with us. Success looks like us!

WHO WE ARE

THE TEAM

The Codette Project Team is made up of 15 women and man (yes, you read that right), all who have been part of Codette for a while. We come from different backgrounds, but share the same commitment to create long-term success for our community.

This year, we added 2 of our interns to the team, Liyana Abu Bakar and Raihana Farook, as well as one of our mentors from International Women's Day – Liyana Rosli. There are currently 3 Liyanas on the team, so if you ever need to reach out to one of them, please make sure you've got the right one!

Our team is also split geographically, with Amillin and Liyana Fauzi (yes, the third Liyana) both studying abroad in 2019. Salina Ibrahim has also joined us, bumping up the tech experience we have on the team with her years of doing product management both in Singapore and in Thailand. Nothing we do would have been possible without all of us together.
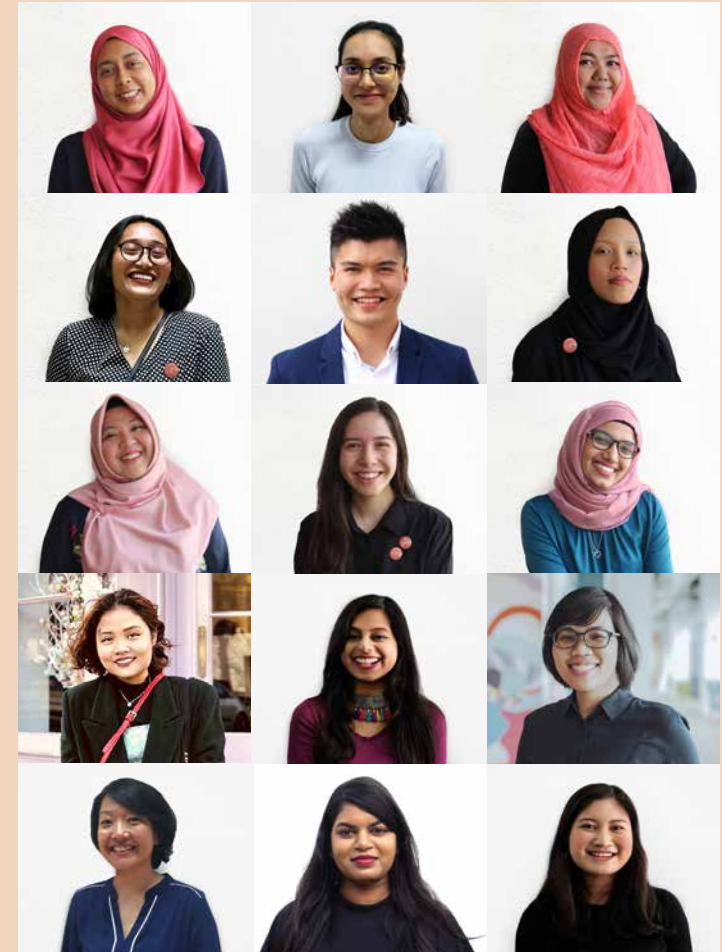
From left to right each row: Nurul Jihadah Hussain (Founder), Nurul Amillin Hussain, Zee Khamaruldin / Zafirah Zaharudin, Hakim Ariffin, Huda Ang / Liyana Fauzi, Anastasia Pavlovic, Attiya Ashraf Ali / Atikah Razak, Mariah Farzana, Liyana Rosli / Salina Ibrahim, Raihana Farook, Liyana Abu Bakar

INTERNS

We wanted to empower young women by providing them with internship opportunities that would help them develop skills as well as professional networks. In 2019, we were able to provide internship opportunities to 8 women with the help of funding from Facebook.

The internships were primarily for graphic design, social media and research. Interns had the opportunity to build their respective portfolios and develop their skills through working on our initiatives throughout the year.

While a couple of our interns have continued on with their studies post-internship, some have also moved on to the next step in their professional careers. All the best!

*From left to right: Ain Sya'bana Rosli, Raihana Farook, Fatin Nadzirah Binte Zahari, Nadiah Nadhirah, Nurliyana Abu Bakar, Natasha Kasim
Not in pictures: Syahirah Yusop & Sri Dhiya Dermawan*

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INTERNS

"(An) Internship at The Codette Project is a good platform that helps to empower minority/Muslim youths (young ladies) to gain confidence to work towards their definitions of success, particularly in the tech industry. Personally, it has challenged me to get out of my comfort zone, to speak out more and most importantly, to believe in myself.

The internship has also helped to upgrade both my hard and soft skills, to better prepare myself beyond the working world. It has guided me to think out of the box and to have a goal-setting and positive mindset as well."

- Nurliyana Abu Bakar, Design & Social Media Intern

"The experience has taught me important technical skills in data analysis and visualisation.

I have become more eloquent in deriving insights from data, an important skill in the workplace. Most importantly, my intern experience has given me a network of supportive individuals, within and outside of Codette, who genuinely care for my well-being and career progression. Their advice and support have made me more confident in myself as a minority/Muslim woman in my current workplace."

- Fatin Nadzirah Binte Zahari, Data Research Intern

"It was an experience that exposed us interns to a variety of experiences and pushed us to go beyond and not be afraid to try out new things."

- Ain Sya'bana Rosli, Design & Social Media Intern

Some of our interns would like to share their thoughts about their journey with The Codette Project

"I really enjoyed my experience working at The Codette Project. It was a very nurturing and comfortable environment that placed more emphasis on individuals' development over the course of their stay. There were also many mentors who were willing to help mentor and guide the interns through their journey.

Overall it was an amazing internship experience and I would recommend any of my friends to join."

- Natasha Kasim, Design & Social Media Intern

"Interning at The Codette Project allowed me to work across multiple areas. While majority of my tasks/responsibilities involved aiding the communications team in design work, and managing the social media calendar, I was also given chances to help out at events. I am grateful to have had opportunities to step out of my comfort zone and be open to varied ideas and opinions.

The people at The Codette Project made me feel appreciated for my effort, which in turn made me believe in my own capabilities. I am thankful to have been exposed to the tech industry through the safe space Codette provides."

- Raihana Farook, Design & Social Media Intern

"I was open to the graphic design world and met so many inspiring women that inspired me to do better as well"

- Sri Dhiya Dermawan, Design & Social Media Intern

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OUR COMMUNITY

OUR COMMUNITY

The Codette Project is working towards creating long-term change for minority/Muslim women in tech through three main ways:

1) Community-building
2) Skills-based experiences
3) Reclaiming narratives of success for minority/Muslim women

The Codette Community is essential for the success of anything that we do in any of these three categories. The people we consider to make up The Codette Community are those who believe and participate in what we do, including through online and offline interactions, allyships or advocacy. Approximately **80%** of The Codette Community is minority/ Muslim women, with allies from other communities as well as male allies making up the remaining **20%**.

COMMUNITY
-BUILDING

COMMUNITY-BUILDING

Community-building has always been an integral part of what we do at The Codette Project.

We believe that it is incredibly important for minority/ Muslim women to have access to communities of people who also believe in our success, and to have spaces to explore what success means to us.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The Codette Project celebrated International Women's Day by bringing together minority/Muslim women in our community through small group mentoring sessions, a flea market, confidence circle and networking night.

This all-day event was held on 7th March at the minority/Muslim woman co-owned co-working space, Camelia & Co.

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Through this event, we provided a platform through which our community would be able to have more visibility of minority/Muslim women who have achieved success in their own ways in the tech space and subsequently interact with them through intimate conversations.

The minority/Muslim women we invited as mentors were from various professions, primarily from the tech industry. Many of the attendees came forward to these mentors to seek advice about navigating the working world and the various pathways that are available to students who aim to achieve specific goals.

88% of respondents who attended mentoring sessions valued having intimate time with the mentors, which we believe showcases the need for more connections between women in different stages of their career.

Our mentors included the following amazing women, to whom we are very grateful:

Mentors:

- Amalina Zakaria, Co-Founder, Coding For Her
- Denise Koh, Co-Founder, Coding For Her
- Khalishah Nadhirah, Data Scientist, Infocepts
- Liyana Fauzi, Senior Manager (Strategic Planning & International), Tech Agency
- Liyana Rosli, Recruiting, Internet Firm
- Marie Wong, Co-Founder, Reassemble
- Mizah Rahman, Executive Director, Co-Founder, Participate in Design
- Rasyida Paddy, ASEAN PR Lead, Oracle
- Sharliza Rahman, Vice President, Group Strategic Marketing Communications, Banking Sector
- Zee Khamaruldin, Co-Founder, PlayPause Pte Ltd

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

We also got minority/Muslim women entrepreneurs to showcase their products and services in our flea market.

The range of offerings during this flea market was quite extensive: we had booths for services such as design, web development and training courses, as well as products such as magazines, headscarves, wellness, knitwear and Islamic stationery.

Do check out their Instagram pages to have a look at their merchandise!

Accessories/Scarves

- Calypsoul (@calypsoul.co)
- Eldora Scarves (@eldora.scarves)
- Equiee Scarves (@equiee.scarves)
- Hajira Handmade (@hajira.handmade)
- Lully Selb (@lullyselb)

Event Planning Services
- The Meet Up (@themeetupsg)

Graphic Design Services / Tech Workshops
- Coding for Her (@codingforher)
- Lookeesan Creatives (@lookeesan)

Publication
- Akar Magazine (@akarprint)

Wellness
- Knitknacker Wellness (@knitknackerwellness)

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Our first confidence circle aimed to create a safe space for our community to come together to share their experiences and challenges in any sphere of life they felt comfortable sharing.

This was led by Atikah Amalina, a diversity manager in a global tech MNC. **80%** of respondents in the confidence circle felt comfortable sharing their thoughts, which we were grateful for, and we hope to have more such activities in the future.

The day ended with a networking night, with food catered by the minority/Muslim women owned Limaa Café. Many confidence circle participants extended their stay over to dinner, enjoying the delicious spread.

From our post-event survey, **100%** of respondents from our post of the mentoring sessions and sharing circles enjoyed the event, with **88%** and **70%** of them indicating strongly positive feedback in this regard.

FUTURE FORWARD

The Codette Project, together with M Society and Mendaki Club, organised our first ever full day career event on 28th September 2019.

The Future Forward Career Critique Convention aimed to address the hiring gap for minorities in the tech industry through providing personalised feedback from experts from various a range of tech companies. We hoped that this will help in their job search, especially during application processes by being more prepared and confident as they transition into the workforce.

The event consisted of sessions where attendees received one-on-one resume critiques and mock interview sessions conducted by hiring managers and recruiters of organisations. Attendees spoke to experts in their fields and attended sharing sessions where speakers spoke about their experiences working in tech.

FUTURE FORWARD

Attendees also interacted with companies at their booths during the career fair. Prior to the event, The Codette Project worked with Facebook and NVPC to deliver a half-day workshop on resume writing and interview preparation.

The targeted number of signups was exceeded, with **192** interested participants, **64%** being female. **61%** of the attendees were studying in tertiary institutes, with the average age range of **21-25** years old.

We received positive feedback from both participants and companies alike , expressing that they were glad to have the opportunity to be part of this event.

There was an increase in confidence levels of participants in building a resume and preparing for interviews following the event; **60-70%** of pre-event survey respondents indicated low confidence in this regard, but this number dropped by about **20** percentage points, based on the post-event survey respondents' inputs. Companies expressed interest in collaborating with The Codette Project for future events as they found this initiative to be very meaningful.

FUTURE FORWARD

The insights drawn from this event will also allow The Codette Project to tailor future events, as the post event survey showed that participants highly valued one on one interactions with experts.

This was something that many participants did not have access to outside of the event.

The one-on-one sessions for resume critique and mock interviews were deemed the most useful, as they received personalised feedback.

The Codette Project would like to extend their gratitude to the following organisations, speakers, and experts who made this inaugural event possible:

Partners involved in Critique Sessions and Career Fair

- AI Singapore
- Carousell
- Circles.Life
- Esri
- Essence
- Expedia
- Facebook
- Glints
- Grab
- Indeed
- Isentia
- Mendaki Club
- Netflix
- Oracle
- Reassemble
- Stripe
- Thoughtworks
- Ubisoft
- Wantedly

FUTURE FORWARD

Partners involved in Networking and Sharing Sessions

- **Ahmad Husaini**, Stowage Coordinator, Maersk
- **Alexandra Roza**, Senior Director, APAC Customer Solutions, Tableau Software
- **Amalina Zakaria**, Co-Founder of Hello Pomelo; Web Designer and Web Developer
- **Anis Yusof**, Cybersecurity Researcher, NTU
- **Arshad Ali**, Software Engineer, Govtech
- **Azwan Rahim**, Recruiter, Gojek
- **Cheng Heng**, AI Apprentice, AI Singapore
- **Eugene Lim**, Security Researcher, Hackerone
- **Faisal Zainal**, Senior Media Activation Executive, Essence
- **Faryanni Jasin**, Campaign Manager, Financial Institution
- **Fazlina Arzami**, Business Development Executive, Nimble Marketing Consultancy
- **Gladys Ng**, Fintech & Innovation Analyst, UOB
- **Hanna Ruslan**, Regional Marketing Lead (APAC), Esri
- **Jeff Salleh**, Director, DevOps and Emerging Tech, Oracle Corporation (OARDC)
- **Lauren Ooi**, Product Strategy & Operations, Google
- **Luqman B Lukman**, Software Engineer, J.P. Morgan
- **Marmiel Inzon**, Business Development Advisor, Tableau Software
- **Natasha Salleh**, APAC Market Development Lead, LinkedIn

- **Nisa Zainal**, Enterprise Sales Manager, Tableau Software
- **Nisah Ahmad**, Senior System Support Analyst, Essence
- **Pongpat Chiewpanyathong**, Product Consultant, Tableau Software
- **Poornima Venkataraman**, Data Analyst, Facebook Singapore
- **Rabi'ah Khairy**, Agile Software Engineer, Govtech
- **Sai Pogaru**, Account Manager, Facebook Singapore
- **Sahil Patel**, Senior Marketing Operations Specialist, Tableau Software
- **Saiful Shahril Saini**, Software Engineer, Govtech
- **Saifullah Jumari**, Robotics Software Engineer, Dyson
- **Salina Ibrahim**, Product, Operations & Biz Dev Lead
- **Shawn Wong**, Talent Sourcer, Gojek
- **Stephen Ngo**, International Product Analyst, Indeed
- **Sufiartie Sudyono**, Campus Recruiter, J.P. Morgan
- **Ummi Jameel**. Strategic Designer, BCG Platinion Singapore
- **Varsha Mantri**, QA Automation Engineer, Indeed
- **Wei Ren**, Talent Coordinator, Netflix

SKILLS-BASED EXPERIENCES

SKILLS-BASED EXPERIENCES

At The Codette Project, skills-based experiences include workshops as well as larger scale events like our yearly Tech for Good Hackathon and, in 2019, our first ever Future Forward convention that focused on supporting minority students in their job search.

The team consistently strives to create a safe and comfortable learning environment for our community especially taking into consideration that **54%** of our workshop participants are first-timers. The proportion of first-timers tends to increase for non-workshop events as those are of a larger scale. We love that our participants find our spaces to be comfortable, with up to **93%** of our participants feeling comfortable in our events. For our hackathon, we created spaces for multi-faith prayer and meditation, breast-feeding, and offered child-minding for children between **4-10** years of age. We believe that creating welcoming spaces for all is the first step in creating more equal outcomes in tech.

It's heartening to see that **88%** of our participants who have attended workshops would like to attend more skills-based experiences. We also found that they are interested in learning more the following: Programming/Coding **(11%)**, Design Skills **(11%)**, Website Building **(10%)** and Digital Marketing **(10%)**. Challenge accepted, and we're looking at offering more options in the future.

TECH FOR GOOD HACKATHON

Thank you to everyone who made our first Tech for Good Hackathon a success in 2018! All the positivity encouraged us to bring it back in 2019, but better and bigger. In 2019, the number of applicants doubled to over 100 participants who attended the 2-day event on 13-14th July 2019 at the colourful and quirky lyf@SMU along Stanford Road. We were really grateful for the support of all our sponsors and supporters for this event, including lyf@Ascott and Facebook.

The Tech for Good hackathon is a women-only hackathon aims to empower women to create digital solutions to challenge statements inspired by the 17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This year, we focused on the following goals:

Goal 2: **Zero Hunger**
Goal 8: **Decent Work and Economic Growth**
Goal 11: **Sustainable Cities and Communities**
Goal 14: **Life Below Water**

TECH FOR GOOD HACKATHON

Hackathons are still overwhelmingly dominated by men between the ages of **15-40**. We believe that hackathons should be for everyone, and encourage women who have never attended one before to come down.

We structure our hackathons to be welcoming to women without tech expertise by providing classes on key concepts like design thinking, user experience and prototyping to all participants. The overwhelming demand we've seen over the last two years proves that women want to be part of the hackathon scene.

We saw a wide variety of participants. There was a relatively even mix of those who were still in school and those who were in employment. While most were within the **19-25** year old age range, we had two family teams.

One included our youngest participant who was a 9 year old and attended with her mother. This was not her first hackathon, as she had come to Tech for Good 2018! We also had a lovely team that consisted of a mother and her three teenage daughters!

TECH FOR GOOD HACKATHON

During the first day of the hackathon, participants went through three workshops to help them with their ideation and execution.

INNOVATION & DESIGN THINKING

by **Akshita Joshi**, an innovation expert based in Singapore who coaches startups and large companies on human-centred design and agile ways of thinking

USER EXPERIENCE PRINCIPLES

by **Wilson Chew**, Co-founder of Reassemble, a user researcher and content strategist

PROTOTYPING

by **Sharina Khan**, who has over 10 years of experience working with global brands designing products, services and experiences

These proved to be very helpful to the participants before they broke into groups working on their chosen 1 of the 4 problem statements. **19** mentors from various tech backgrounds including data analysis and entrepreneurship were then assigned to the groups to help answer questions and bounce off ideas.

TECH FOR GOOD HACKATHON

Mentors

- **Ahshida Razali**, Digital Product Builder
- **Angeline Tan**, Software Developer
- **Elena Arens**, Entrepreneur and Data-Driven Innovation Leader
- **Emmy-Lou Hamley**, Collaboration Designer
- **Farah Sanwari**, Social Innovation Leader
- **Jeremy Chua**, Business Consultant
- **Jesstern Rays**, Software Developer
- **Jonathan Chua**, Founder of Beam and Go
- **Kathleen Muller**, Head of Small & Medium Enterprise, ASEAN
- **Ken Chua**, Director of (these)abilities
- **Khalishah Nadhirah**, Data Scientist

- **Mrinalini Venkatachalam**, Regional Event & Outreach Manager
- **Nelya Shakirova**, Data Analyst
- **Nesh Sooriyan Larsen**, Entrepreneur in Residence
- **Nidhi Agrawal**, Senior Data Analyst
- **Saurya Velagapudi**, Tech Lead Manager
- **Tengku Hafidz**, Founder of EchoedLabs
- **Yoong Shin Chow**, Senior Consultant and Data Solution Implementation
- **Ziqq Rafit**, Founder of Design Says Hello

The second day was a day of participants putting their ideas together into solutions. Groups were also taking turns to attend Pitch Clinics run by The Codette Project team.

At the end of the evening, groups presented their final pitches in front of judges; The judging panel consisted of Prof Yaacob Ibrahim *(Member of Parliament for Jalan Besar GRC)*, Salina Ibrahim *(Product, Operations and Business Development Lead)*, Jeff Saleh *(Senior Software Development Manager of Oracle Corporation)* and Kyla Guru *(Founder of Bits N' Bytes Cybersecurity Education & Co-Founder & Co-Director of GirlCon Chicago)*.

TECH FOR GOOD HACKATHON

In conclusion, the team was really encouraged by the results of the hackathon. Participants expressed that they found the lessons learnt from various segments of the hackathon useful.

The Innovation Principles Workshop and the **User Experience Principles Workshop** received the most positive feedback in this regard, with about **88%** of participants indicating that they are likely to use the new knowledge gained from either workshop in the future. This is followed by **77%** of participants expressing the usefulness of the **Prototyping workshop, 76%** for the Pitch Clinic and **75%** for the Mentoring Sessions.

Anecdotally, the appreciation for the workshops was also evident during our conversations with participants, as many expressed they were drawn to this event as they wanted to learn. We're looking forward to the next hackathon already!

CODE HERO PROGRAMME

In 2019, The Codette Project funded all 16 female madrasah students who signed up for the Code Hero programme run by DevLabs Academy (formerly EchoEd labs). Code Hero is a 2-year programme aimed at teaching coding with intention of turning its students from beginners to developers. They will be trained in Web UI Development, Front-end Functionalities, and Back-end systems. The program was curated by the EchoedLabs team, and funded by MENDAKI Singapore and The Codette Project with the aim of equipping youth with tech solutioning skills.

We've been tracking the progress of the students and it has been absolutely amazing to watch these young women develop. From having very little or no exposure to coding and development, we've watched them create their own webpages and programmes.

We'll be continuing to support the Code Hero scholarship recipients by providing them with opportunities to contribute to our projects in 2020.

RECLAIMING NARRATIVES OF SUCCESS

RECLAIMING NARRATIVES OF SUCCESS

The Codette Project community exists both online and offline. Online, we are staying connected with our community on various social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

We aim to not just update our community on our events and initiatives but to also reclaim narratives of success that have traditionally overlooked minority/Muslim women by highlighting inspiring stories of minority/Muslim women. We want to emphasize that success can, should and does look like us.

In 2019, we launched an online Instagram story series called **A Day in the Life (ADITL)**, featured minority/Muslim success stories on our **#WomenCrushWednesdays**, as well as created a set of stock photos featuring minority/Muslim women in tech for Shutterstock.

#SUCCESSLOOKSLIKETHIS

In April 2019, we created a set of stock photos that were published on Shutterstock. These depicted a diverse group of women, including minority/Muslim women, participating in the tech industry. The photos showcased women leading discussions, giving presentations, using tech tools and mentoring other women.

This project was important because representation is powerful in the way that it can shape how society views the tech industry and minorities. Anyone searching for "successful woman" or "women in tech" on the web will hardly find images depicting minority/Muslim women, especially minority hijabi women. This lack of representation can be disempowering as it portrays 'success' as an unattainable ideal for minority/Muslim women. Our stock photo project aimed to address this gap by showcasing minority/Muslim women participating in the tech industry.

#SUCCESSLOOKSLIKETHIS

Subsequently in August 2019, we launched a month-long photo exhibition titled #SuccessLooksLikeThis at Jurong Regional Library, featuring the collection of photos that were published on Shutterstock.

The exhibition also included an interactive component where visitors could contribute their responses to the photos. We estimated that at least 450 visitors saw the exhibition, and it was wonderful to see some of their responses to the photos. We're hoping that this is just the beginning of the work that needs to be done to redefine who gets counted as being visual representations of success, and especially success in tech.

The Codette Project would like to extend our gratitude to The Awesome Foundation and Facebook for funding this initiative.

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A DAY IN THE LIFE

In 2019, we launched the A Day in The Life (ADITL) series, which features Instagram stories of a day in the life of minority/Muslim women from various parts of the world.

We wanted to feature underrepresented narratives of different women and to showcase different definitions of what success looks like. We loved watching how minority/Muslim women were succeeding in diverse places like in the United Kingdom, Japan, Holland, and even as a juror at CANNES LIONS!

The most watched stories were from Sakinah in Japan, at a high of more than 500 views per story. We think there's something lovely about how many people wanted to celebrate these stories of success!

We're looking forward to doing more of these in the future. In the meantime, we would like to do a shout out to the amazing women who shared their stories with us:

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

IG TAKEOVER

Hi everyone! The Codette Project is launching a series of IG takeovers from Muslim women around the world!

The first up is our very own Codette **Amillin** who is in the second year of her PhD in Geography at Oxford University, UK! Have questions for her? Submit them in our IG stories!

Keep your calendars open and remember to tune in to our IG stories on the 17TH OF MAY!

- Dillah Zakbah, Creative Technology and Innovation Director at BBH North America

- Faizah Zakaria, postdoctoral researcher at the International Institute of Asian Studies in Leiden University, Holland

- Natasha Kasim, design/social media intern at The Codette Project

- Nurul Amillin Hussain, PhD Candidate in Oxford University

- Sakinah Mohd Khalid, business development associate and young mother working in a Japanese SME in Tokyo

FINANCES

FINANCES

Our goal was to build financial capacity in 2019. We believe that our strength lies in the people of The Codette Project and it is from this core that we managed to secure our largest sponsorship to date; moving away from ad hoc government grants completely. We managed to quintuply funds raised from 2018, a huge success for us. Facebook, through the Facebook Community Leadership Programme, contributed a total of **82%** of our funds for this year from a one-off corporate sponsorship. Another **12%** came from personal donations, and the remaining **6%** coming our first foray into Crowdsourcing.

The one-off corporate sponsorship allowed us to expand our community activities to include sponsoring students for programming bootcamps and opening up internships for community members to gain meaningful experience with us, whilst bolstering their career prospects.

Our largest expenses remain the space rentals **(18.5%)**, logistics & merchandise **(11.8%)**, and food & beverages **(10.8%)** to support our community events; while our internship programme made up **24.7%** of our expenses, made up of allowances and co-working passes. The newly introduced educational sponsorship represents another **18.5%** of our total expenses. The rest of the expenses were directed towards operational expenses such as Audit Fees, Bank Charges, Bookkeeping Fee, Secretarial Fees, etc, associated with being a registered organisation. As always, we do not spend any money on Codette team events or socials – these are funded by individual team members. All the funds we raise go to the Codette community, our projects, and events.

In 2019 we have used the funds to build capability by developing our very own website, purchasing office equipment we can use for our events, and pre-paying rental spaces to last us for the year ahead. We are grateful for the people who made this year possible and are as always looking to find ways to make what we do more sustainable and enriching for the community!

MEDIA

MEDIA

29 Dec 2019	Do good with tech	The Straits Times
29 Sep 2019	Future Forward with The Codette Project	Wantedly
10 Sep 2019	Weaving Stories of Grit and Resilience	Perspectives@SMU
6-8 Jul 2019	Sisters are hacking it for themselves	The Business Times, HEAD TOPICS, The Straits Times
8 Jul 2019	More networking events for women in tech industry	The New Paper
24 Apr 2019	Women in IT Awards Asia 2019: shorlist revealed for inaguaral awards	Information Age
4 Apr 2019	What will be the next big thing in tech? (FUTURE stage at Echelon Asia Summit 2019)	The Independent
26 Mar 2019	How Nurul Hussain's Codette Project helps Muslim women get into tech and be successful	e27, creationsforu
5 Mar 2019	Catch Rita Ora, Pooja Nansi and other leading ladies at Apple Orchard this March	BK Asia
7 Mar 2019	Bukti wanita mampu sama gagah dengan kaum Adam	Berita Harian
7 Mar 2019	Girls in Tech: Why It Matters	SaturdayKids
8 Mar 2019	Celebrating Women #IWD2019	City of Good

MEDIA

The Straits Times — BUSINESS

Sisters are hacking it for themselves

Dr Yaacob Ibrahim, an MP for Jalan Besar GRC, with judges, mentors and participants at Singapore's first women-only hackathon last year organised by volunteer-run group The Codette Project. The second edition of the hackathon this weekend will take place during family-friendly hours, with the event ending no later than 9pm. PHOTO: ZAFIRAH ZAHARUDIN

PUBLISHED JUL 8, 2019, 5:00 AM SGT

Jessie Lim

Networking events that are organised exclusively for women in the technology industry are on the rise, dispelling the prevailing view that women are unempowered in this male-dominated industry.

For Ms Jana Marle-Zizkova, the co-founder of non-profit group She Loves Data, such events go beyond swopping business cards and names.

As a facilitator for Ladies Night at Kilo, a regular networking event organised by digital retraining firm General Assembly Singapore and nightclub Kilo Lounge, Mrs Marle-Zizkova observed that many attendees were in the midst of switching industries. Touching base with other women in similar situations allows them to "support each other, create mentoring circles and attend professional events together", she said.

At the ladies' night event she facilitated last November, Mrs Marle-Zizkova met about 10 to 15 women who later took part in She Loves Data workshops and meet-ups.

Apart from its regular ladies' night events, General Assembly Singapore also hosted a breakfast event commemorating International Women's Day on March 8, in partnership with SGInnovate and artificial intelligence firm Appier. On the agenda was a discussion on how companies could nurture a culture of inclusivity at the workplace.

Not only do women-only networking events provide a launch pad for women venturing into tech-related industries, they may also give a lift to those who are building their own tech start-ups.

GOVINSIDER

Nurul Jihadah Hussain, Founder, The Codette Project, Singapore

Women in GovTech 2018 Special Report.

By Chia Jie Lin

14 DEC 2018

INNOVATION

How do you use technology/policy to improve citizens' lives? Tell us about your role or organisation.

I'm the founder of The Codette Project, which wants to get more minority/Muslim women into technology. We run workshops, panels and events to provide more access and opportunity to minority/Muslim women, as well as create online content around this.

What has been the most exciting thing that you worked on in 2018?

We ran the first-ever women-only hackathon in Singapore on July 14-15 2018! We had a very diverse group of participants: half of the attendees were minority women, the age range was between 9-45, more than half had no tech background, and over 70% had never been to a hackathon.

It was amazing to see these women come together collaboratively and create solutions for real-world issues, including solutions for the aging and the differently abled.

If you were to share one piece of advice that you learned in 2018, what would it be?

Just try. I didn't think that there was any chance of me getting into the first-ever Facebook Community Leadership Programme, but the programme sounded interesting, so I applied anyway. And I got in, and had the chance to meet amazing change-makers and community leaders from all over the world. I'll be working with Facebook throughout 2019, and it's been an incredible process.

What tool or technique particularly interests you for 2019?

I'm very interested in seeing how AR and VR technologies will be used, especially for community building, and if there will be interesting, low-cost ways to create AR and VR environments that will make this technology more accessible for all.

What are your priorities for 2019?

The Codette Project is trying to create a better ecosystem around success, and this includes online communities as well as offline classes and events. We really want to create more video and infographic content as well as do more engagement and interaction with minority/Muslim women from all over the world.

What is one skill that has helped you the most throughout the course of your career?

Being willing to learn how to do things. A lot of people have big ideas but aren't willing to learn the details of how to execute them. I was the only person in The Codette Project for the first six months, and it really taught me the value of being willing to do what was necessary to create the change you want to create.

What advancements do you predict will happen in your field in the next ten years?

In the next ten years, diversity and inclusion will not be seen as the 'soft' part of any industry, but a hard skill that every successful company needs to master in order to be resilient, adaptive and build genuine customer connections.

Coffee, yoga, music... what powers you through your day?

Being able to go home to people who love me really helps, because it's something to look forward to even on the worst days.

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ECHELON INTERVIEWS SINGAPORE   Sainul Abudheen K, 26 Mar, 2019

How Nurul Hussain's Codette Project helps Muslim women get into tech and be successful

The project aims to create a sustainable economic impact by providing minority women with awareness and access to the tech industry

The project aims to create a sustainable economic impact by providing minority women with awareness and access to the tech industry

The Codette Project team with Nurul Jihadah Hussain (in red scarf)

There are quite a few initiatives aimed at empowering women and providing them with various opportunities, globally. But there are not many that are specifically aimed at Muslim women, who are under-represented in many industries.

Can technology help bring in a change?

"Yes," believes Nurul Jihadah Hussain, Founder of The Codette Project.

Launched in December 2015, The Codette Project is a non-profit ground-up initiative with a mission to get more minority women in Singapore into technology by building an ecosystem of support, skills training and access. The project aims to have a sustainable economic impact through providing minority women with awareness and access to the tech industry.

Ladies, tell us about your startup and win 5 FREE Echelon Asia Summit 2019 tickets!

It mainly focuses on three aspects:

1. Skills-building through workshops, hackathons and classes
2. Story- shaping to reclaim the narrative of minority/Muslim women in tech via traditional and social media outreach
3. Community creation through providing a platform for minority/ Muslim women to come together

"The Codette Project is providing better access and opportunity for minority/Muslim
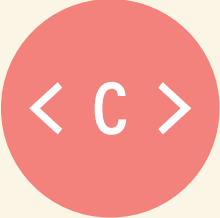
LOOKING AHEAD INTO 2020

2020 has started off challenging. But I know and believe in this truth – that this community is resilient. The women (and male allies) who make up the Codette community are creative, smart and driven, and what I believe 2020 will do is to show the world how resilient we can be.

This is why we are doubling down on our commitment to support minority/Muslim women owned businesses in this difficult economic environment, we will increase our efforts to showcase diverse expressions of success, and we will be creating more systems of support and community for the people who make up Codette.

Thank you for being part of this community with us, and send us some love wherever you are!

The
CODETTE
Project

thecodetteproject.com
hello@thecodetteproject.com
@thecodetteproject