

BY DHARSHINI GANESON

ASIA Pacific University of Technology and Innovation (APU) campus was a hub of activity and creativity as students came together to celebrate World Environment Day (WED) 2025, themed #BeatPlasticPollution.

The theme focuses on the toxic effects of plastic and how it has polluted every aspect of our life. Annually, about 11 million tons of plastic waste pour into water ecosystems worldwide.

The event organised by student-led club, Sustainability Future Fusion (SFF), brought together students, staff and community partners.

All those who attended WED were greeted by a variety of booths showcasing plants, terrariums and animal care awareness corners. Among the more popular workshops were terrarium-making and aquascaping, as many participants lined up to create their own individually designed miniature



Zhe's success with the "paludarium" spurred him into doing more for the environment.



WED involved students in many projects which created awareness on sustainable actions.

World Environment Day 2025

ecosystems.

Among the more unique systems created was a paludarium titled "Awakening", a self-sustaining semi-aquatic ecosystem, where all the living elements and non-living elements interact with each other and are linked through nutrient cycles and energy flows.

The brainchild of Lay Yang, president of SFF and Zhe Hee, the ecosystem proved an outstanding success and attracted tremendous

interest at WED.

Zhe Hee, who currently serves as vice-secretary of SFF, shared his journey towards the creation of his own individualised terrariums, which have provided him with a source of income towards his studies.

"My journey started during a tough time when my father passed away, as soon as I enrolled at the university.

"I was lost and heartbroken and had to work out how to pay for my

university fees and my living costs.

"Then in my second semester of my degree course, I took a class titled, "Introduction to Business" and as part of the studies, we had to create our own businesses. While most students were running food stalls and also selling drinks, I decided to do something different and meaningful for the environment. I came up with the idea of creating terrariums and was supported by my lecturer, Cynthia Mala Paul, who encouraged

me to go into it.

It turned out to be one of the most successful workshops and that's when I turned my pain into purpose and today I am growing my terrarium business slowly but surely" said Zhe.

Cynthia said she believed WED was not just a celebration but a call to action, a reminder that sustainability and awareness must go hand in hand towards building a better future for future generations and students must be involved.

Groundbreaking international collaboration

HELP University (HU) founded in 1986, has developed into a leading institution of higher learning in Malaysia. It offers a wide range of social science and humanities programmes including psychology, accounting, business, law, education and IT programmes. The university has recently embarked on a transformational journey to become an Analytics-Driven Entrepreneurial University.

The inaugural Institute of Future Technology and Design (IFTD) Forum and Workshops represent a groundbreaking collaboration between HU and China's top-ranked packaging institution, Hunan University of Technology (HUT).

It runs from 23 – 27 August 2025 at HELP University's Damansara Heights campus in Kuala Lumpur.

This pioneering initiative represents a strategic alliance to advance innovation, sustainability, and human-centric development in the circular economy.

In 2025, HUT and HU are launching the Institute of Future Technology and Design (IFTD) at HELP University, establishing Southeast Asia's premier hub for sustainable packaging, R&D

and talent cultivation.

This pioneering alliance brings together China's leading packaging technology expertise with Malaysia's innovative educational leadership to address one of our era's most critical challenges: rethinking packaging and design for ecological resilience, technological progress and inclusive growth.

Forum themes and focus

This Forum and Workshops cover seven key themes, that merge ecology, technology, and creativity to replace linear waste with circular regeneration.

The sessions cover a range of topics, from sustainable materials and eco-design,, focusing on bio-based and recyclable innovations, to smart packaging that utilise technologies such as QR/Rfid, sensors and supply-chain transparency.

HU will later co-develop courses in packaging, innovation and sustainability.

Strategic objectives and regional impact

The Forum aims to drive transformation across four critical areas in talent

development by equipping the next generation of sustainability leaders, helping business transformation by converting circular packaging into competitive advantage.

The event will also explore technology adoption, which looks at scaling AI, Internet of Things (IoT) and automation for eco-innovation and finally it will also address ecological repair, concentrating on designing systems that restore nature.

Our vision extends beyond national boundaries. Malaysia and ASEAN, positioned at the nexus of China's industry and regional dynamism, can lead Asia's green transformation in alignment with national and regional sustainability goals.

This forum represents Malaysia's opportunity to play a central role in the ecology of technology design and packaging.

Equipping the next generation of thought leaders.

The Forum provides an exceptional platform to connect globally with academia, industry and government leaders across borders. It also serves as an opportunity to showcase innovation by presenting cutting-



AI-DRIVEN DESIGN TECHNOLOGY & SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING FOR THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

edge research in design, packaging, and sustainability.

For HUT and HU, this initiative represents more than a forum- it sees a future where packaging regenerates, technology serves ecology and collaboration builds a humane, sustainable world.

Event Details

Forum: The Application of AI in the Design Industry

Workshop 1: AI Applications to Improve Productivity and Profitability (2 Days)

Workshop 2: Use of Technology for Sustainable Packaging (3 Days)

Exhibition: Award-Winning Concepts in Eco-Design, Smart Packaging and Circular Innovation

For registration and inquiries, please contact Dr. Fiona at 017-306 6300

The forum aims to drive transformation across four critical areas and sets the stage for sustainable solutions.