

NextLevel CEO Programme 2026

Last updated: 13 May 2026

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

About the Programme

Q1: What is the NextLevel CEO Programme?

The NextLevel CEO Programme is a leadership development programme designed to equip CEOs and senior leaders of Malaysian SMEs with the strategic capabilities to drive business transformation, enhance competitiveness, and scale their organisations within High Growth High Value (HGHV) industries. The programme is powered by SME Corp. Malaysia and delivered by Asia School of Business (ASB).

Q2: What are the key benefits of participating?

- **Strategic Clarity:** Develop a robust 5-year business plan through structured coaching and a dedicated Capstone Strategy Project
- **Performance Benchmarking:** Identify operational gaps and growth opportunities via the SCORE rating assessment
- **Ecosystem Access:** Gain eligibility for SME Corp. Malaysia's events and specialised upscaling programmes within HGHV sectors
- **Strategic Networking:** Connect with visionary leaders and peers across various high-growth industries

Q3: How long is the programme and how is it structured?

The full programme runs from **1 July to 30 October 2026***. It comprises 15 sessions across approximately 4 months, including:

- **12 in-person sessions** (a mix of full-day and half-day) held at Asia School of Business in Kuala Lumpur, covering core teaching workshops, and peer reflection meetings, including **2 Coaching Sprint Sessions** (four-to-one sessions with assigned coaches to stress-test and strengthen your 5-year plan)
- **3 online sessions** including final reviews with coaches, and submission deadlines for the 5-Year Business Plan
- **A Capstone Strategy Project** running in parallel, culminating in a 5-Year Business Plan submission

Coaching begins from the second month. Programme completion is targeted for October 2026, with a graduation ceremony in November 2026.

Milestone	Target Date*
Core Teaching Workshops	July – September 2026 (3 months)
Sessions Begin	From 2nd month (July 2026)
Capstone Strategy Project	Runs in parallel with workshops
Programme Completion	October 2026
Graduation Ceremony	November 2026

**Note: Program schedule is tentative and subject to change. The programme team will confirm specific session dates with approved participants.*

Q4: What is the medium of instruction?

The programme is conducted in English.

Q5: Where will the programme be held?

In-person sessions will be held at Asia School of Business in Kuala Lumpur. The programme may also include online sessions where applicable.

Eligibility & Requirements

Q6: Who is eligible to apply?

The programme is open to CEOs and senior leaders of Malaysian SMEs. To be eligible, your company must meet the following criteria:

- Classified as a Small or Medium Enterprise (SME), with priority given to companies with annual revenue of at least RM5 million
- Registered under the Companies Act 1965/2016, Business Registration Act 1956, Limited Liability Partnership Act 2012, or equivalent (Sabah/Sarawak)
- Minimum 60% Malaysian equity ownership
- Operating from a legitimate business premises with a valid business licence from the local authority (PBT)
- Demonstrating a sound financial position with positive cash flow

Q7: Is there a minimum or maximum revenue requirement?

Priority is given to enterprises with annual revenue of at least RM5 million, as reported in the company's latest audited financial statements. There is no maximum revenue ceiling, provided the company meets the SME status definition.

Q8: What is the PMKS Certificate and do I need one?

Yes. The Sijil Perakuan Status PMKS (Certificate of MSME Acknowledgement) issued by SME Corp. Malaysia is **mandatory** for participation. If you do not yet have one, please apply via mybpi.smecorp.gov.my. Please note that the PMKS certificate takes approximately 10 working days to be issued. We recommend applying early.

Q9: What is the SCORE rating and is it required?

The SCORE assessment is **advisable** (not mandatory). It is an online business assessment conducted by SME Corp. Malaysia that rates your company from 1 to 5 stars. Results are available immediately upon completion. You can register for SCORE at the same portal: mybpi.smecorp.gov.my. If your company achieves a 4 or 5-star rating, a physical audit visit may be arranged by SME Corp. at a later date. The auditor will contact you directly.

How to Register

Q10: How do I apply for the programme?

To apply, please follow these steps:

- a. Visit the NextLevel CEO Programme page on the ASB website and complete the online registration form.
- b. Compile and attach all required supporting documents (see Q11 below).
- c. Submit the completed form.
- d. You will receive an acknowledgement of receipt from the ASB team.

For enquiries, please email: NextLevelCEO@asb.edu.my

Q11: What documents do I need to submit with my application?

i	Application / Registration Form	MANDATORY
ii	SSM Business Registration Document (or PBT equivalent for Sabah/Sarawak)	MANDATORY
iii	Audited Financial Statements (3 most recent years – full statements)	MANDATORY
iv	Business Licence from Local Authority (PBT)	MANDATORY
v	Company Profile	MANDATORY
vi	Sijil Perakuan Status PMKS (MSME Acknowledgement Certificate)	MANDATORY
vii	Sijil / Surat Keputusan SCORE	ADVISABLE

If any documents are incomplete or require updating, the ASB team will contact you to request the necessary items before your application can proceed.

Q12: What happens after I submit my application?

After you submit your registration form and supporting documents:

- e. The ASB NextLevel team will conduct a first-level screening of your application against the eligibility criteria.
- f. If additional documents are required, you will be contacted to provide them.
- g. Your complete application will be submitted to SME Corp. Malaysia for verification and approval.
- h. Once approved by SME Corp., you will receive an official notification letter (“Surat Makluman”) confirming your place in the programme.
- i. An invoice for the participant fee will be issued after approval.

Fees & Payment

Q13: How much does the programme cost?

The programme is substantially funded by SME Corp. Malaysia. Approved participants are required to self-fund 20% of the total programme cost. The exact fee amount will be confirmed in your invoice upon approval.

Q14: How do I make payment?

Payment is via **Telegraphic Transfer (TT) only**. Instant card payments are not available for this programme, as payment is processed only after your application has been verified and approved by SME Corp. Malaysia.

Payment details will be included in the invoice issued by ASB.

Q15: When will I receive my invoice?

Your invoice will be issued only after SME Corp. Malaysia has verified and approved your participation. No payment is required before approval.

Q16: Is the programme claimable under HRD Corp?

Yes, the programme is registered with HRD Corp. Participants employed by HRD Corp-registered employers may apply for the HRD Corp Claimable Course scheme. Participants should submit their claim applications in accordance with HRD Corp’s guidelines and requirements.

Please note: In the event that HRD Corp rejects, delays, or does not release payment, you will be fully liable to settle the programme fee directly with ASB.

Attendance & Programme Completion

Q17: What is the attendance requirement?

A minimum of **80% attendance** is required for all programme sessions. Participants who fail to meet this requirement may be disqualified from the programme without a refund.

Q18: What if I need to miss a session?

If you are unable to attend a session, you must provide a written justification letter to the programme team. Depending on the circumstances, online replacement sessions may be arranged.

Q19: What do I need to complete to finish the programme?

To successfully complete the programme, participants must:

- Achieve a minimum of 80% attendance across all sessions
- Complete all core teaching workshop modules
- Submit a Capstone Strategy Project (5-year business plan)

Q20: Will there be coaching included in the programme?

Yes. Structured coaching sessions are included and will begin from the second month of the programme, running in parallel with the teaching workshops and Capstone Strategy Project.

Contact & Enquiries

Q21: Who do I contact for further information?

For all enquiries related to the NextLevel CEO Programme, please contact:

Email: NextLevelCEO@asb.edu.my

Asia School of Business (ASB)

Iclif Executive Education Center

Level 1, Sasana Kijang, 11 Jalan Dato Onn,

50480 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Disclaimer: This FAQ is provided for general guidance purposes. All programme details, eligibility criteria, fees, and timelines are subject to confirmation and may be updated. Please refer to the latest communications from ASB and SME Corp. Malaysia for the most up-to-date information.