TRANSCRIPT OF CLOSING REMARKS BY MS RAHAYU MAHZAM, PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION AT BYTE.SG'S VOID DECK TECHNOLOGY LABS DIGITAL LITERACY WORKSHOP ON THURSDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2022

A very good evening to all. Very pleased to join and see all of you at BYTE.sg's "Void Deck Technology Labs" (VDTL) programme tonight.

2.   The creatures we saw reminded me of time during diving where I had a lot of fun. Did you have a lot of fun? Yes? Hence you must be thankful to the organisers and teachers. I really enjoyed myself and this is something very meaningful. I hope that you will have the opportunity to learn more new things, to have a chance to make new friends and share what you learn to the people around you. I am sure we know a lot more about fish and animals after this very meaningful exercise.

3.   I would like to thank Mr Ang Wei Neng for hosting this programme. I am from the Ministry of Communications and Information. We hope to bring together partners so that we can organise interesting programmes like this, as it allows for interesting ideas and fun things to be learnt outside the classroom in a fun way. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Ang and his team from the Youth Network for hosting this programme, and also to the co-founders of BYTE.sg – Maria, Jin and Shaikh – and all the volunteers for the effort that you put in.

4.   Indeed, this programme is so interesting and meaningful for many reasons. Firstly, it's interesting because it is different. We learn new things and information in a new way using technology, and you get to explore and find things that are not in your textbooks. When I learnt science last time, I enjoyed it too. But this is way more fun than how I used to learn. The concept of "Void Deck Technology Labs" where you can use the void deck spaces, community centres to learn is very interesting. I am really thankful to BYTE.sg for organising this.
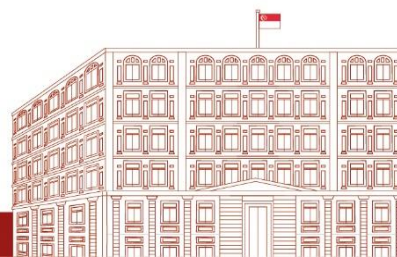
5.   Secondly, it is also an opportunity to create accessibility to information as this programme was created for children ages 7 to 12, living in rental flats. You can learn many different things and get to know many friends from different backgrounds. You get to learn from your facilitators, the volunteers, and from each other. Also, the modular programmes allow you to choose things that you are interested in.

6.   More importantly, when people and partners and community come together, fantastic and interesting partnerships and projects happen. This is part of our Digital for Life effort, which was launched by President Halimah Yacob last year. It is an effort to try and bring in partners that will create these meaningful programmes.

7.   To-date, $4.9 million of the Digital for Life Fund has been earmarked to support 22 new ground-up community projects and are expected to benefit over 100,000 individuals across society.

8.   As a result, BYTE.sg's VDTL will be able to provide opportunities for 100 children from various communities across Singapore, such as in Jurong West, Yishun and Chai Chee. I hope that we can continue to build this community. We want Singaporeans to embrace digital, enjoy and enrich their lives through digital and learn in a fun and interesting way.

9.   We can do this because partners come on board and work together with us to create programmes that are interesting for people of different ages, especially for children like you. I hope that many more partners will come on board this meaningful effort to bring digital learning to

Singaporeans of all ages, from all backgrounds, because together we can build an inclusive digital society for everyone.

10.   Thank you very much for this opportunity to join you. Have a great evening.