



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism

# LAUNCH OF COHORT 6 OF THE SCALE UP TT SCALERATOR

Remarks by  
**Mr. Neville Alexander**  
Deputy Permanent Secretary Designate  
Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism

Thursday June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026

## SALUTATIONS

- Mr. Nigel Edwards - Executive Director, Trinidad and Tobago Unit Trust Corporation
- Dr. Daniel Isenberg - Chief Executive Officer, Entrepreneurship Policy Advisors
- Members of the Selection Committee
- Members of Previous Cohorts
- Specially Invited Guests
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning,

It is a pleasure to join you on behalf of the Minister of Trade, Investment and Tourism, Senator the Honourable Satyakama Maharaj, for the launch of Cohort 6 of the Scale Up TT Scalerator.

I want to commend the Trinidad and Tobago Unit Trust Corporation, Entrepreneurship Policy Advisors, PriceWaterhouseCoopers Limited, the Selection Committee, the facilitators, mentors and alumni who continue to give life to this important national initiative.

When the Ministry first partnered with the Unit Trust Corporation on this initiative in 2021, we did so with a clear vision: to move beyond talking economic diversification, to achieving it. Scale Up TT Scalerator, we believe, is part of the solution to achieving this vision!

To achieve the economic transformation, and increased foreign exchange generation that is desired, focus must be given to scaling our existing businesses to be more competitive and export- oriented. The Ministry's involvement in today's launch of Cohort 6 is an affirmation of its commitment to supporting and scaling our Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

In Trinidad and Tobago, we have approximately 25,000 registered small businesses accounting for roughly 95 percent of all registered firms. These SMEs generate employment for nearly 200,000 citizens.

Our desire at the Ministry is to support as many of these SMEs as possible to scale into successful exporters. Why? Because our data shows that the top 50 exporters in T&T account for 80% of total non-energy exports. This means 80% of non-energy forex is generated by these 50 companies. We want to increase the number of companies to 60 or maybe over 100.

The Scale Up TT Scalerator's focus on business expansion supports this ambition and justifies the extension to a sixth cohort.

The Scalerator, to date, has supported 53 companies expand from several sectors including: manufacturing; information and communication technology; the creative industries; and professional services.

Collectively, these firms have generated over 600 million dollars in revenue and employ

nearly 2,000 people.

More than that, approximately 300 service professionals have been trained in the science of scaling up, with several participants realising increases in revenue ranging from 25 percent to upwards of 80 percent.

One success story of note, is a local automotive company, from an earlier cohort. That company was able to scale from a modest rental outfit into a multi-branch automotive powerhouse which eventually expanded its operations to West Africa following a Ministry-led trade mission to Ghana. That's the power of scaling in action!

Examples such as these are exactly the kind of results we expect from this Programme. Small companies growing and developing into exporters earning foreign exchange.

These are the results required to support the Ministry in its pursuit of its strategic goals to achieve an additional US\$2 Billion in non-energy exports by 2027, and US\$5 Billion by 2030.

The Scale Up TT Scalerator alone, however, is not the only way we are going to get us there. Several other initiatives are being pursued in support of businesses. For the companies that are ready, the Ministry will work directly with you on an individual basis to assist in addressing your needs, challenges and export targets.

For those in need of support to get over a hump. Information on the 56 export and other incentives available today has been sorted and verified and is now available on the Ministry's Trade and Business Information Portal. Next this information will be published for easy access.

To help businesses access export markets, we have developed an awareness campaign to provide detailed information on each of the 12 trade agreements we have. More than that, we will engage our trading partners to review existing trade agreements to renegotiate better terms and conditions for our exporters.

To widen your customer base and stimulate consumer demand, we will be rolling out our national Buy Local, Build Trinbago campaign to showcase our locally made goods and services. This is about highlighting that our businesses already produce quality goods and services. The campaign would allow them to be seen, trusted, better supported, and importantly scale.

In keeping with the campaign, the Ministry is also redefining the procurement process at the national level to prioritize local individuals and businesses over foreign suppliers, through a Local Business Development Policy. We want to support local businesses

first over foreign goods and services whenever possible.

Importantly, all of the above is being pursued in collaboration with the private sector through the Private Sector Organization of Trinidad and Tobago (PSOTT), comprised of all major business stakeholders, many of which are SMEs just like you. I highly encourage all of you present to become an active member of this new organization, ensuring your unique voices shape the policies driving our country forward.

To the business leaders and entrepreneurs, while we at the Ministry are developing the policy framework and setting the tone that Trinidad and Tobago is Open for Business, you are the primary catalysts for achieving these national milestones. Essentially, your performance is directly tied to our success.

As we embark on another instalment of the Scale Up TT Scalerator, the Ministry extends its appreciation to all stakeholders involved in the delivery of the Programme. In particular, we recognize Mr. Nigel Edwards and the Enterprise Leadership Team at the UTC for their management and coordination of the Programme.

We also acknowledge the expert facilitators at Entrepreneurship Policy Advisors (EPA) for the delivery of the Programme. The Ministry also acknowledges the partnership of PriceWaterhouseCoopers Limited in supporting this initiative. Mention must also be made of the dedicated Selection Committee Members for their involvement in selecting firms for the Programme.

In closing, the Ministry reaffirms its unwavering commitment to fostering a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem through meaningful collaboration with the private sector through the Scale Up TT Scalerator. We look forward to the official start of Cohort 6, the insightful workshops and the engaging discussions that will lead to the transformation of businesses through implementation of the respective scale plans.

I thank you.