

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GrowthLabs Acquires Startup Gate Nearing a 35 million Egyptian Pound Deal

The deal aims to Build MENA's First Unified Digital infrastructure for innovation, entrepreneurship, and startups

Ambitious expansion roadmap targeting 5 new countries by the end of 2026

Cairo, Egypt — May 18, 2025 — GrowthLabs, a leader in digital ecosystem building, today announced its acquisition of Startup Gate, a hub connecting founders, investors, and mentors. The acquisition aims to provide end-to-end digital solutions for entrepreneurs and startups throughout their lifecycle, including opportunity discovery, networking, and access to funding, as well as incubation, acceleration, and innovation support programs.

As a result, GrowthLabs establishes a first-of-its-kind entity combining community networks with advanced technology, strengthening its position to lead the regional innovation landscape and expand across the Gulf and Africa in 2026. It delivers real-time data and analytics across the full startup journey, creating a seamless pathway from company registration to investment readiness while enabling founders to accelerate growth.

The platform will also serve a broad ecosystem of stakeholders, including innovation-driven corporates, universities, angel investors, and venture capital firms. It positions GrowthLabs as a strategic partner for governments advancing digital transformation agendas and supporting entrepreneurship as a driver of economic growth. The new entity brings together a unified team with deep local expertise and a regional outlook, backed by a strong track record of supporting founders, investors, and development institutions across all stages of ecosystem growth.

This strategic acquisition was **orchestrated by M-Empire**, serving as a key milestone in their efforts to consolidate high-growth innovation infrastructure in the region. Through this acquisition, two strategic arms; Startup Gate, a hub connecting founders, investors, service providers, and mentors, and Catalyst OS, GrowthLabs' digital operating system for incubators, accelerators, and entrepreneurial programs to manage initiatives and measure impact with precision, will integrate under GrowthLabs' leadership. The integration creates a unified platform that redefines how startups are discovered and supported by connecting community, data, and execution.

Commenting on the acquisition, **Islam Mohamed, CEO of GrowthLabs**, said: "This acquisition embodies our vision to construct an integrated entrepreneurial infrastructure that yields a profound, far-reaching impact on the broader economy. We are establishing a unified digital infrastructure that empowers every stakeholder within the ecosystem to operate with heightened connectivity and efficiency. Our objective is to deliver a systematic and sustainable impact through an operating system that nurtures the journey of startups from

inception to expansion, ensuring they generate tangible market value. Fostering a transparent and supportive environment for startups is a direct catalyst for job creation, investment stimulation, and accelerating the engine of economic growth.”

He added: “By synergizing GrowthLabs’ technological strength with Startup Gate’s extensive network, we will deliver data-driven solutions anchored in real-time analytics. This will empower our partners in both government and the private sector to realize measurable outcomes and scale corporate innovation throughout the region.”

As part of its 2026 strategy, GrowthLabs plans to launch a suite of seven flagship corporate innovation programs and debut the first cross-border regional entrepreneurial community in the MENA region. This community aims to bridge gaps between diverse markets and facilitate the flow of investment opportunities and human capital, aligning with the company's vision to become the primary engine for startup ecosystems in high-growth markets.

Maged Ghoneima, Co-founder and Managing Partner of M-Empire, commented on the strategic orchestration of the deal: "This acquisition is a landmark move in our strategy to eliminate fragmentation within the MENA startup landscape. By architecting this deal, M-Empire connects the entrepreneurial community’s discovery of promising opportunities with data-driven execution. With our portfolio now spanning over 200 startups globally, we recognize that a unified digital infrastructure is the only way to accelerate investment readiness at scale. We are proud to have orchestrated this integration, which positions GrowthLabs as the definitive engine for innovation in the region."

Emmy Tawfik, Founder of Startup Gate and COO of GrowthLabs Holding, stated: “After a year of building and growing Startup Gate, we’re stepping into its next chapter. What began as a platform connecting founders to opportunities is now expanding into the first fully integrated digital infrastructure for entrepreneurship. Together with GrowthLabs and Catalyst OS, we are building a unified infrastructure that supports startups from the earliest stages to investment readiness and sustainable growth. This is not a new direction, it’s the natural scale of what we set out to build. Our ambition is to become a core pillar of entrepreneurship across the region.”

GrowthLabs boasts a distinguished track record of achievements, having successfully executed over 60 international programs and supported more than 5,000 startups across diverse markets, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan, Pakistan, and South America. Through its close partnerships with government agencies, academic institutions, and international development organizations, the company has demonstrated its ability to design cross-border initiatives that contribute to the growth of the digital economy.

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About GrowthLabs:

GrowthLabs was founded to be the driving force behind building and scaling startup ecosystems in emerging markets. The company provides integrated technical and advisory solutions, most notably "Catalyst OS," to support incubators and institutions in managing innovation programs. With a presence in over 5 countries and a history of supporting thousands of founders, the company seeks to build a digital infrastructure that makes entrepreneurship a connected and measurable process.

About Startup Gate:

Startup Gate is a leading platform in building entrepreneurial communities, serving as a central link between stakeholders in the innovation ecosystem. Originally initiated by Aria Ventures (a venture studio), the company was later spun off after attracting seed funding from M-Empire. Startup Gate specializes in creating networking opportunities between founders and investors and providing a supportive environment for early-stage startup growth.

About M-Empire:

M-Empire is a premier angel investment syndicate dedicated to fueling the next generation of global innovation. With nearly **\$40 million in assets under management (AUM)**, the syndicate has strategically built a powerhouse portfolio of **more than 200 technology startups**. Spanning **over 30 countries** and covering a vast array of market sectors, M-Empire acts as a bridge between capital and visionary execution, driving the digital transformation of high-growth economies worldwide.

For more information, please visit:

<https://growthlabs.app/>

<https://catalystos.net/>

<https://www.startup-gate.net/>

Media contact:

Abdelaziz Khalaf

Media Relations Executive

+201020639222

abdelaziz.khalaf@publicistinc.com