

## TONY FERNANDES



### Entrepreneur and Founder of Air Asia

One of Asia's most recognisable entrepreneurs, Tony Fernandes is best known for co-founding AirAsia with Datuk Kamarudin Meranun and democratising air travel in the region. Fernandes and Datuk Kamarudin famously bought the ailing airline for a token MYR1 (approximately USD0.25) and MYR40 million in debt, turning it around within two years and growing it from a Malaysian domestic carrier into Asia's largest low-cost carrier by passengers carried.

Since 2018, Fernandes has been spearheading a digital transformation of his businesses, launching AirAsia's superapp (now airasia MOVE) in October 2020, a comprehensive travel platform which offers flights, hotels, and e-hailing services. He is currently the CEO of Capital A, an investment holding company with a diverse portfolio of synergistic businesses, including AirAsia, aviation services, fintech BigPay and logistics venture Teleport. He studied in the UK, and qualified as an Associate Member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants in 1991 and Fellow Member in 1996. An accountant by training, Fernandes began his career in Richard Branson's Virgin Group before returning to Malaysia as Warner Music Group's Vice President for Southeast Asia before venturing into the airline business.

He has received numerous honours and awards over the course of his career, including the Honour of the Commander of the Order of the British Empire, conferred by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 2011, and the Commander of the Legion d'Honneur, awarded by the French government for his outstanding contributions towards the aviation industry.

Recognised for his unique leadership and entrepreneurial skills, Tony speaks on the growing business market in Asean and beyond with his belief that people are the first priority, and that creativity and innovation in business are crucial.

#### Topics (Selection):

- Customer Service
- Entrepreneur
- HR
- Leadership
- Performance