

Now Everyone Can Build: Vibe Coding and the Future of Software Creation



A cardiologist built a complex app to generate patient consultation summaries in just seven days¹. A group of high schoolers devised a program to turn texts into printable, tactile Braille models². A 13-year old built a full 3D game in one week on his own³ – something that would have taken a full team of software developers and a substantial budget in the 1990s.

Each of these things happened because the cost and complexity of building software has fundamentally changed. For policymakers, founders and investors in Southeast Asia, that shift has concrete implications for where the next set of opportunities concentrate and who gets to access them.

Vibe coding is a form of AI-assisted development where programmers describe what they want in natural language and AI systems generate the underlying code. The term was coined by AI researcher Andrej Karpathy in February 2025 to describe a workflow where the developer defines intent and iterates through conversation, rather than writing code line by line.

The concept resonated because it named a behaviour that was already emerging as large language models became capable of producing entire features, files, and applications from simple language prompts.

For experienced engineers, vibe coding also changes productivity dynamics. Developers spend less time on boilerplate and debugging. More time can be spent on system design and product thinking.

The same dynamic compresses competitive barriers. When any founder can build a working prototype in a weekend, the ability to build is no longer a differentiator.

The Difference Between Traditional and Vibe Coding

In enterprise settings, AI-assisted coding environments are already responsible for a substantial share of new code written, signalling a structural shift in how software is produced. For individuals with limited resources, vibe coding can turn an idea into a working product within days.

The difference between traditional and vibe coding is not a matter of workflow preference. It is a difference in risk profile. Traditional development prioritises correctness, long-term stability and maintainability. Vibe coding prioritises speed, with higher risk and less predictable outputs.

Aspect	Normal Coding	Vibe Coding
Primary goal	Correctness, maintainability, and long-term robustness	Momentum, creativity, and getting something working <i>now</i>
Planning style	Detailed upfront planning (design docs, specs, tickets)	Minimal planning; ideas evolve while coding
Code structure	Clean, consistent, and intentionally organized	Can be messy or uneven, refined later if needed
Speed	Slower upfront, faster over the long run	Very fast upfront, can slow dramatically later
Who it suits best	Teams, large codebases, long-lived systems	Solo developers, hackathons, early exploration

Popular tools associated with vibe coding include:

- **Cursor** – An AI-native code editor that integrates deep context awareness and conversational coding directly into the integrated development environment (IDE).
- **Devin** – An autonomous AI “software engineer” capable of completing multistep development tasks end-to-end.

- **Lovable** – A vibe-coding platform aimed at non-technical users, enabling full app creation through text prompts alone.
- **Replit** – A collaborative, browser-based development environment that integrates AI-driven code generation and deployment.

Together, these tools illustrate how vibe coding spans both professional engineering workflows and mass-market software creation.

Venture capital has moved quickly into the space. Cursor, the AI-native code editor built by Anysphere, closed a \$2.3 billion funding round in November 2025 at a \$29.3 billion valuation and was reportedly in discussions for a further raise at \$50 billion by April 2026. Lovable, the European market leader for non-developer vibe coding, closed at a \$6.6 billion valuation by the end of 2025. Cognition Labs, creator of autonomous coding agent Devin, reached a \$10 billion valuation following successive rounds from 2024.

Just like in now-ubiquitous large language models as well as [agentic AI](#), the intense competition among top-tier investors for stakes in vibe coding leaders suggests a strong belief that AI-native software creation is already redefining how digital products are built.

What This Means for Southeast Asia

As vibe coding has illustrated, lower development costs will bring new business propositions and different kinds of expectations for founders seeking early-stage capital.

When building is no longer the primary constraint, investors ask questions that are more specific: whether the team can reach markets with fragmented infrastructure, whether they hold sector-level data that a global entrant would not have access to, and whether the product is embedded in local workflows in a way that is genuinely difficult to displace.

Malaysia's venture activity in 2025 reflected this kind of selectivity. Total equity funding reached \$257 million from 40 deals, up from \$141 million across 58 deals in 2024⁴. Fewer deals, larger cheques and higher conviction per investment. [Capital is concentrated in companies with structural advantages](#), not just those that could move fast.

Lower development costs make it cheaper to enter a market, but they do not address the harder question of building a position that is difficult to displace.

VC is the Key to Unlocking Frontier Technologies

The scale and speed of investment into vibe coding tools highlights a broader truth about VC. It continues to play a central role in backing transformative technologies before their full economic impact is visible.

Vibe coding sits at the intersection of artificial intelligence, developer infrastructure, and labour transformation. It is exactly the kind of platform shift that VC has historically sought to underwrite, and that early-stage fund managers in Southeast Asia are now positioned to back in sectors where global capital has yet to focus.

By providing risk capital alongside networks, governance support and sector knowledge, venture firms including those backed by Jelawang Capital help founders translate building speed into durable competitive positions in markets that global platforms have not yet prioritised.

Vibe coding represents the next step toward a world where software is limited less by who write code and more by who understands the problem deeply enough to build the right solution. In Malaysia, it presents a valuable opportunity for founders. And identifying trends early is what venture capital is for.

Sources:

1. [*“Doctor builds an AI app for medical documentation without writing code and finishes top three at Anthropic’s hackathon”*](#), Times of India
2. [*“These fifth graders vibe coded a real-world Braille tool”*](#) Geekwire
3. [Vibe Coding for Kids](#)
4. DealStreetAsia, 2025 SEA Startup Funding Report