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Title:	Khazanah unit gives George Town 18 grants		

By Marina Emmanuel

KHAZANAH Nasional Bhd's wholly-owned unit Think City Sdn Bhd has approved 18 grants worth RM1.84 million under its George Town Grants Programme (GTGP) for Penang.

The move is set to help the state maintain George Town's status as a Unesco World Heritage site, while promoting urban rejuvenation of the heritage-rich inner city.

In a statement issued yesterday, Think City said of the total 18 grants, 11 are for physical conservation projects in both the Unesco buffer and core zones.

George Town's historic city, which was nominated by the government for world heritage listing together with Malacca, covers 109.38ha on the island's north-east and is known as the core zone. Surrounding the core zone is a 150.04ha band referred to as the buffer zone.

"The remaining seven approved grants are for documentation projects related to physical conservation and urban rejuvenation with the George Town heritage site," Think City said.

The 18 approved grants are the first batch of applications to be approved by the Think City board. The grants application received a good response from Penangites, with a total of 44 applications received.

"The board will meet again in May to decide on applications which have been kept-in-view, owing to a lack of information and proper documentation," Think City said.

Think City is a special purpose vehicle set up to implement and manage the GTGP.

The programme is designed to stimulate urban regeneration and rejuvenation within the George Town world heritage site by encouraging projects that promote George Town's outstanding universal values between residents, businesses and visitors alike.

The GTGP will be implemented for a period of two years and the second round of grants applications will begin from April 26.

Think City said that all conservation projects have been reviewed by its technical advisory panel, which is made up of subject experts.