

18 November 2020

MEDIA RELEASE

Singapore International Chamber of Commerce 2020 Awards: Celebrating Collaborative Innovation

5th annual awards to honour Singapore's champions of collaborative innovation

18 November 2020 – Singapore International Chamber of Commerce (SICC) today hosted its 5th annual Awards Gala virtually to celebrate, recognise and learn from Singapore's champions of collaborative innovation.

The 2020 SICC Awards were presented by Guest-of-Honour Mr. Chee Hong Tat, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Ministry of Transport, and officiated by SICC Chairman Mr. Per Magnusson. (Please refer to Annex A for the Minister's speech.)

Over 300 guests comprising award finalists, innovators, business leaders, Chamber members, Singapore government officials and members of the Diplomatic Corps attended the virtual gala.

The main highlight of the event was the announcement of the winners in each of the 4 award categories of the 2020 SICC Awards. They are:

- **Best Green Collaboration**

- Co-Innovating in Singapore – Infineon Technologies and Ampotech
By Infineon Technologies AP Pte Ltd and Ampotech Pte Ltd

- **Best Technological Collaboration**

- Wine-picking robot helps out at Changi's DFS
By Changi Airport Group, Temasek Polytechnic and Softbank Telecom Singapore Pte Ltd

- **Most Scalable Collaboration**

- Digital Transformation: Creating Connected Buildings with Conversational IoT
By Robert Bosch (SEA) Pte Ltd and UIB

- **Most Transformational Collaboration**

- Tru-Marine - Singapore Aero Engine Services (SAESL) Mentorship Programme
By Tru-Marine Pte Ltd and Singapore Aero Engine Services (SAESL) Pte Ltd

[Please refer to Appendix B for more details on the Winners of the 2020 SICC Awards]

Open to members and non-members, the SICC Awards provide an inclusive platform to recognise Singapore's champions of collaborative innovation. Continual innovation, or transformation, is key to the sustainability of every business and collaboration is very often the fastest way for a company to innovate. The Awards also aim to provide a learning and knowledge-sharing community for companies

irrespective of sector or size. Each year the Chamber hosts a televised programme with the winners of the Awards so that more people can benefit from the experiences of companies which collaborate to innovate, grow and thrive. This MediaCorp TV programme will be recorded with this year's winners in January 2021 and screened shortly thereafter.

SICC Chairman Per Magnusson said: "When I look around the world today I see so much division at a time of multiple challenges to our planet and our way of life. Solutions will only happen if people collaborate to innovate while they compete. This is precisely why the SICCA Awards are so meaningful."

SICC Chief Executive Victor Mills said: "Each of this year's winners exemplify the power of collaboration to innovate to address business needs and provide solutions to them. They are exemplars for all of us to learn from and respect."

Full details of the awards and this year's finalists are available on the 2020 SICCA Awards microsite www.siccardwards.com.sg.

About Singapore International Chamber of Commerce (SICC)

SICC has been helping businesses and Singapore since its foundation on 8 February 1837. The Chamber is Singapore's longest serving, independent business association. No other voluntary business association in Singapore has such a diverse membership base drawn from all sectors of the economy: 50% of member companies are Singaporean owned businesses and 50% foreign owned businesses. Half of member companies are large organizations including multinationals and half are medium, small and start-up companies. The Chamber's members form a network of purpose connecting people to expand business opportunities and while doing so to:-

Champion anti-ageism in the workforce, positive workplace culture and talent integration, Singapore's multiculturalism, leader and people skills development, collaborative innovation, digitalisation and transitioning to circular models of production and consumption to achieve true commercial and environmental sustainability.

www.sicc.com.sg www.siccardwards.com.sg

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Appendix A: Minister's Speech

**ADDRESS BY GUEST-OF-HONOUR MR CHEE HONG TAT
SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
AND MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (SICC)
VIRTUAL AWARDS GALA DINNER 2020
18 NOVEMBER 2020, 5.45PM**

Mr Per Magnusson, Chairman of SICC,
Mr Victor Mills, Chief Executive of SICC,
Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. Good evening. Thank you for inviting me to this year's SICC awards gala.
 - a. Today, we celebrate the efforts of our companies who have innovated and created new products and services.
 - b. Let me begin by congratulating all our finalists on your achievements!
 - c. Whether in good times or tough times, innovation is essential to a company's continued success.
 - d. This is because businesses need to differentiate themselves from the competition, by improving their product or service; reducing their operating costs; or strengthening their supply chain resilience.
2. The same is true for countries and cities when we compete in the global economy.
 - a. In the case of economies like Singapore, which have no natural resources or large domestic markets, it becomes even more critical to ensure that we are able to differentiate ourselves from our competitors.

b. As President Halimah Yacob said in her speech during the opening of Parliament in August, “we must do things that others cannot do, and do the things that others can do, even better”.

3. So in the face of this unprecedented COVID-19 crisis, how has Singapore differentiated ourselves and what else can we do to strengthen our value proposition and competitiveness? I would like to offer some thoughts on 3 areas.

4. First, when others panicked and implemented measures that disrupted the flow of essential goods like food and medical products, Singapore has responded calmly and responsibly by keeping global supply chains open.

a. We must have the courage to uphold our principles and do the right thing; and also the ability to do things right.

b. I remember a story which Mr Lee Kuan Yew shared with the ExxonMobil Board when they held their meeting in Singapore some years ago. I was then serving as Mr Lee’s Principal Private Secretary.

c. He said that during the oil crisis, some countries would take over the oil stored within their borders by nationalising the assets of oil companies. Singapore did the opposite. We respected and protected their property rights.

d. This move gave the oil majors confidence to invest in Singapore when we developed Jurong Island to grow our petrochemical industry.

e. It also sent a positive signal to other investors of what we stand for, that Singapore is a trustworthy country which respects the sanctity of contracts and the rule of law.

f. So throughout the pandemic, even during the most difficult period when we had to impose the circuit breaker in Singapore, we kept our port open so that essential goods can continue to flow from Singapore and through Singapore.

5. It is in this spirit of “doing the right thing and doing things right” that we took steps to facilitate crew changes for ships in our port waters. There was a recent report on this issue in the Straits Times.

- a. As a result of the pandemic, hundreds of thousands of seafarers globally were stuck on board their vessels for many months. Some had been out at sea for more than a year. They could not come on shore and could not return home to their families, and new crew were unable to replace them due to travel restrictions.
 - b. Besides being a humanitarian crisis, this also compromised navigational safety and threatened the flow of essential goods.
 - c. As a maritime nation, Singapore had to do our part even though we knew the risks involved. We took the position that we must start by doing the right thing, and then work with partners to do things right by putting in place the necessary risk mitigation measures.
 - i. The Government worked with industry players and the unions to implement a crew change protocol which can keep seafarers and our community safe. This includes setting up a dedicated Crew Facilitation Centre at one of the floating hotels as a self-contained facility for the crew to stay during the changeover process.
 - ii. Since March, we have facilitated the change of more than 57,000 crew of different nationalities, from more than 3,500 ships belonging to 2,900 companies.
 - iii. We have also received endorsement from the International Maritime Organisation and International Labour Organisation to set up the Singapore Shipping Tripartite Alliance Resilience Fund (SG-STAR Fund), to support best practices in seafaring nations to promote safe crew change.
6. As a global hub port and international maritime centre, we will stand by our tripartite partners and do the right thing.
- a. These principles are important when the waters are calm, they are even more critical when we are sailing in stormy seas.
 - b. It is during a crisis that we can see clearly who our true friends are and which countries are reliable and can be counted upon. Conversely, it is also an opportunity to know who the fair-weather friends are.

- c. In a world with many disruptions and uncertainties, there is a premium for being an oasis of trust, stability and reliability.
 - d. When people are afraid and worried about the future, we can provide a beacon of hope for the way forward, like a lighthouse guiding ships into safe harbour.
 - e. This is one way for Singapore to remain relevant to the world, and continue to enhance our position as a trusted hub in Asia.
7. Moving on to my second area, when others pursue initiatives for short-term gain, sometimes even having knee-jerk reactions, Singapore remains committed to planning long-term and investing for the future.
- a. To achieve this outcome, we must first get our politics right, so that there is political stability to enable long-term policy planning. We have seen overseas examples of how decades of progress can be unravelled when governments succumb to populist pressures.
 - b. To paraphrase an industry executive who was commenting on an overseas country, when governments do not show leadership, when they do not protect what made their economy successful, when they are being led by populism, they are mortgaging the future of their country.
 - c. These are cautionary tales of how failure to change in good times could become failures to change in good time.
 - d. If we allow economic and social problems to build up and boil over, the situation becomes one of crisis management and damage control. And when people are emotionally agitated, they are unable to have a rational discussion on the policy options and trade-offs.
8. This is what we must avoid in Singapore.
- a. The Singapore government sees our role as custodians for this generation and also future generations of Singaporeans. Our actions today will affect our children and grandchildren in the years ahead.
 - b. Some of the decisions we take will require many years to implement, so we need to start now to be ready for the future.

- c. This governance philosophy has strong support from our people. It is very much ingrained in Singapore's societal DNA, that when the previous or current generation plants trees, our purpose is for future generations to enjoy the shade.
9. One example is how we deal with climate change. Singapore has developed our Climate Action Plan with a target for emissions to peak at around 2030.
 - a. Since the early 2000s, we have gradually switched to natural gas to generate electricity. Natural gas is not zero carbon, but it is the cleanest fossil fuel.
 - b. At the same time, we are maximising the use of solar energy, including floating solar panels and importing renewable energy from Malaysia.
 - c. We are also the first country in Southeast Asia to implement a carbon tax across our economy, to incentivise energy efficiency and carbon reduction.
10. In the maritime sector, we are actively looking at ways to decarbonise via a 3R strategy: by reducing energy usage where possible; by replacing existing fuels with cleaner alternatives; and by researching new technologies and processes that can enhance the sector's productivity and lower its overall carbon emissions.
 - a. Our future Tuas Port, which will be completed in the 2040s, will have a capacity of up to 65 million TEUs annually, almost twice of what we handle today. But it will have only half the carbon emissions intensity compared to 2005 levels.
 - b. We plan to achieve this goal by deploying green technologies, including fully-electric automated guiding vehicles to transport containers within the port and the use of electric harbour craft.
 - c. We are also actively encouraging vessels which call at our port to use cleaner fuels such as liquefied natural gas (LNG).
 - d. To nudge the industry to move in this direction, MPA has been providing port dues concessions and co-funding the construction of LNG-fuelled vessels and LNG bunker tankers.

- e. MPA has also launched a Maritime GreenFuture Fund to spur efforts in research, test-bedding and adoption of low-carbon technologies.

11. I am heartened that some of our finalists this evening have responded to the call for sustainability.

- a. For example, Dow and Sport Singapore are recycling donated used shoes into granules, which can then become the base layer of running tracks.
- b. Other finalists in this category include collaboration projects undertaken by companies such as the Bosch Intelligent Microgrid Controller by Bosch and Airetec;
- c. The next generation Ampohub product jointly developed by Infineon Technologies and Ampotech; and
- d. The highly energy-efficient mill by Kimberly Clark and Sunseap Engineering.

12. Our belief is that if we continually plan ahead and consistently focus on investing for the future, we can create an economy which is both green and competitive.

- a. One which is both good for business and good for the environment.
- b. This is the future that we want to create for our children and grandchildren.

13. This brings me to the third area of my speech this evening.

- a. When others turn inwards and erect barriers in response to populist pressures, we must stay the course and ensure that Singapore remains open to talent and connected to the world.
- b. Victor wrote about this in a Business Times op-ed in September, where he called upon the “silent majority” of Singaporeans to speak up against anti-foreigner sentiments.
- c. He also highlighted the importance for companies to integrate their local and foreign workforce, so that they can learn from one another and contribute to the company’s success.

14. I agree with Victor and thank him for his courage to speak up. Indeed, it is this openness and diversity in our society that creates the conditions for innovation to thrive, whether it is in the area of food, culture or business.

- a. We know this from our own history and looking at how other countries have either prospered or declined.
- b. Innovation is most likely to happen at the intersection of different ideas and perspectives, when these come together to create something new.
- c. We see such examples among our list of finalists. The SME Go Automation Project by Schneider Electric Singapore and ServoConnect System Asia is a collaboration between an MNC and a local SME.
- d. There are other such partnerships, including companies from different industry sectors.
- e. Yesterday, I was at the finals of Smart Port Challenge 2020. The winning team BeeX is a local start-up specialising in underwater robots. I spoke to its co-founder Ms Grace Chia. She told me that her team comprises local and international talent, and they derive strength from their diversity.
- f. Another finalist was Dr Marcus Chen, an expert in signal processing. He came to Singapore as a teenager from Fujian Province in China, studied here, did his National Service, became a Singaporean and worked at DSO National Lab as a defence scientist before venturing out to start his own company. Like Grace, he has a team of local and international colleagues and their technology solutions have been adopted in Singapore and overseas.

15. So we need to ask ourselves if Singapore will become better off or worse off if we close our doors and turn inwards, if we build walls instead of bridges, and if our politics become populist and xenophobic like what we see in some countries.

- a. I have no doubt we will be worse off. It is a fallacy, and an irresponsible falsehood propagated by some people, that chasing away foreign workers means their jobs will go to Singaporeans.
- b. What will happen in practice is that the companies will likely relocate to other countries in such a situation, and more Singaporeans will end up losing their jobs.

- c. And our children and grandchildren will also be worse off, if we are unable to attract investments and create jobs. Instead of having good jobs here in Singapore, they will have to work as foreign workers in another country to have access to these jobs.
- d. They will also have to bear an increasingly heavy financial burden when our society ages rapidly and there are fewer workers supporting a larger number of retired seniors.

16. Many Singaporeans know these trade-offs. They do not want Singapore to turn inwards or become anti-foreigner, because they understand we will end up harming ourselves if we go down this path.

- a. But what Singaporeans want to see is fairness in recruitment and career progression within our companies. And for such decisions to be made based on merit and skills.
- b. The Government agrees with this position, and so do our unions and many of our companies.
- c. For the small minority of enterprises who flout our rules, we will take action against them.
- d. But let's be clear that the large majority of companies are not misbehaving. As Victor wrote in his article, "most businesses are doing the right thing by their Singaporean talent and will continue to do right by them".
- e. As the Chinese saying goes, we should not hit a whole boat-load of people with a long bamboo pole and cause everyone to fall into the water. That will be unwise and counter-productive.
- f. It will affect our ability to get out of the current economic crisis by growing Singapore's economy and creating more jobs for our people.

17. Recently, I came across a 2003 video of Mr Lee Kuan Yew having a dialogue with workers just after the SARS crisis. Like now, our economy in 2003 had taken a big hit.

- a. A participant at the dialogue asked why companies continued to employ foreigners, when some Singaporean workers were losing their jobs.

- b. Mr Lee replied that companies hired employees – Singaporeans or foreigners – so that they could produce results.
 - c. He said: “This is a bad period... we’ll go through it and we’ll come out on top. But we do things in a sensible way. Don’t let the economy go down. Whatever else we do, our companies must be competitive and stay competitive. If they are dead, there are no jobs for anybody.”
18. That was a different time and a different crisis, but Mr Lee’s advice remains valid.
19. The anxiety that Singaporeans feel about the economy and jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic is understandable. The Government is doing all we can to take care of our people and to find new ways to grow the economy, so that we can create more jobs for our people. But we cannot achieve this by closing our doors and turning inwards. No matter what we do, we must not affect Singapore’s competitiveness and our standing as a trusted business hub.
20. For a small and open economy like Singapore, we have to generate growth to get ourselves out of this crisis, and not wrongly assume that we can bounce back by erecting protectionist barriers or building walls to shield our workers from global competition.
- a. Pursuing the latter path will only erode investor confidence and worsen our situation.
 - b. We need to have a realistic assessment of our options because we are operating in the real world with real competition from other countries.
21. Compared to 2003, we now have a stronger system to support lifelong learning and job matching for Singaporeans. This is what we must continue to focus on, under the SkillsFuture movement:
- a. Investing in the lifelong education, training and skills upgrading of our people; and
 - b. Making sure that Singaporeans can take on the good jobs we are creating from the new investments we have landed, and from the business expansion of existing companies.

- c. Many of these new jobs require new skills, and it is critical to equip our workers with such skills.
- d. Last month, I announced that the government, industry, and institutes of higher learning had banded together to offer 1,000 training, traineeship and attachment opportunities in the maritime sector.
- e. Trainees will learn skills that are in-demand and transferrable, which can be used across many sectors.
- f. Indeed, across different industries, we have started SGUnited programmes to help Singaporeans upskill and reskill.
- g. And to match them to job openings in growth sectors which are still expanding and hiring.
- h. I am glad to learn about the collaboration between Aegis Building & Engineering, ASTONS Specialities, and the Association of Persons with Special Needs (APSN).
- i. These three partners are offering a specialised training environment for trainees with mild intellectual disability to gain employment in the service industry, by creating a person-centred customised training environment and an apprenticeship system.

22. Ladies and gentlemen, please allow me to conclude by summarising the 3 areas which I touched on in my speech, on how we could differentiate ourselves during this crisis to enhance our competitiveness, and position Singapore as a trusted and business-friendly hub in Asia.

- a. First, whether in good times or tough times, we must have the courage to do the right thing and also the ability to do things right.
- b. Second, we must retain our focus on planning for the long-term and investing for the future.
- c. And last but not least, we must keep Singapore open to talent and remain connected to the world, because this is still the best way to ensure our survival and create a brighter future for our children and grandchildren.

23. We know people are now more worried about jobs because of the crisis.
- a. The government will do what it takes to support Singaporeans during this period, and ensure that Singaporean workers are fairly treated.
 - b. We will continue to invest in SkillsFuture to support lifelong learning and skills upgrading.
 - c. And we are working with our tripartite partners to prepare for the recovery by attracting new investments, growing stronger enterprises and creating more good jobs for our people.
24. Congratulations once again to all our finalists. Please keep up the good work, and continue to push the boundaries as you sail into uncharted waters and discover new lands.
25. Thank you.

Appendix B: Winners of the 2020 SICC Awards

1) Best Green Collaboration

Co-Innovating in Singapore – Infineon Technologies and Ampotech

By Infineon Technologies AP Pte Ltd & Ampotech Pte Ltd

Infineon has hosted Ampotech at its Co-Innovation Space (COINS) for one year, and they have jointly developed the next generation Ampohub product. This product is used in buildings to measure electricity and energy consumption which is then logged and analysed. This process makes it easier to control consumption and proactively avoid unnecessary consumption. Data security is a big topic and is the main reason driving the collaboration between Ampotech and Infineon. The Ampohub uses the OPTIGA™ TPM from Infineon to guarantee data security.

2) Best Technological Collaboration

Wine-picking robot helps out at Changi's DFS

By Changi Airport Group, Temasek Polytechnic & Softbank Telecom Singapore Pte Ltd

Through observations, on-ground feedback and surveys, Changi Airport Group found that many arriving passengers would like to purchase duty-free wine but do not know where to start, given the large selection available. Hence, the idea of an intelligent wine recommendation assistant which leverages on Pepper, the social robot, was born.

Capitalising on Temasek Polytechnic's deep wine knowledge and SoftBank Telecom Singapore's social robotics capabilities, the collaboration aims to make the wine selection process hassle-free and intuitive for passengers. Passengers are required to answer four simple non-intrusive and everyday questions about food preferences to understand their palate for wine. Once completed, Pepper will recommend a personalised list of wines that are tailored to their individual preferences.

3) Most Scalable Collaboration

Digital Transformation: Creating Connected Buildings with Conversational IoT

By Robert Bosch (SEA) Pte Ltd & UIB

Bosch and UIB saw a gap in the Facilities Management market in Singapore and internationally. While there is no shortage of standalone hardware that system integrators can pull together for property owners who want the benefits of digital transformation, there was no single "smart building" solution that offered best-in-class hardware, platform, interoperability with multiple manufacturers' products (as every building has sensors, systems, equipment, and software from many different vendors). There is also a lack of a single, conversational interface that works with any connected device or system with an API, any communications channel (including WhatsApp), any language, voice and text, and with any Natural Language Processor Artificial Intelligence (AI).

4) Most Transformational Collaboration

Tru-Marine - Singapore Aero Engine Services (SAESL) Mentorship Programme

By Tru-Marine Pte Ltd & Singapore Aero Engine Services (SAESL) Pte Ltd

The Tru-Marine-SAESL Mentorship Programme is a structured learning journey comprising of regular contact time between mentor and mentee. The substantial learning will allow Tru-Marine to gain comprehension of SAESL's operational excellence and progressively deliver better value through increased efficiencies.

With Tru-Marine's reclamation technologies mirroring those of SAESL's engine overhaul and component repair for the aerospace industry, the Mentorship allows the mentee to cross reference more stringent quality benchmarks to elevate its service delivery and exceed current industry expectations.

-END-