JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

Singapore and Germany deepen collaboration to accelerate SMEs’ industrial and digital transformation, and deepen technical exchange in key sectors

MR No.: 079/20
Singapore, Thursday, 15 October 2020

1. Partnerships between Singapore and German companies are expected to grow as both countries deepen business ties through a suite of initiatives. In the last four years alone, the Germany Singapore Business Forum (GSBF)\(^1\) has brought together more than 400 German and Singapore companies. Platforms such as the GSBF have raised interest amongst Singapore companies to explore opportunities in Germany, as reflected in the number of business missions to Germany led by Enterprise Singapore which has almost doubled on a year-on-year basis\(^2\).

Expanding touchpoints for collaboration

2. To better leverage the complementary strengths of Singapore SMEs and German Mittelstand, Enterprise Singapore and the Asia-Pacific Committee of German Business (APA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support enterprise development through industrial and digital transformation in sectors of common interest, including advanced manufacturing, digitalisation and innovation, medical technology and healthcare, and future of mobility. This will be done via enhanced collaboration in open innovation, and by jointly accessing market opportunities in Southeast Asia and Europe.

3. Under the MOU, Enterprise Singapore and APA will co-organise the refreshed GSBF Connect which will feature sector-specific events held throughout the year to

---

\(^1\) These were held in 2016 in Singapore, and in 2018 in Germany.

\(^2\) The number of business missions to Germany increased from 13 in 2018 to 22 in 2019, benefitting over 150 companies in 2019, across sectors including advanced manufacturing, medical technology and healthcare, future of mobility, and e-sports.
facilitate more frequent collaborations between German and Singapore companies. The first edition of GSBF Connect, dedicated to the manufacturing sector, will be held virtually during Industrial Transformation ASIA-PACIFIC 2020\(^3\) on 21 October.

4. A second edition of GSBF Connect will be held during the Singapore Week of Innovation and Technology on 9 December 2020. (Refer to Annex A for background information and the list of companies and partners available for interview.)

Growing technology collaborations between Singapore and German companies

5. Singapore and German SMEs have collaborated in co-innovation projects under the Germany-Singapore SME Funding Programme, jointly managed by Enterprise Singapore, and AiF Projekt GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. An example is the partnership between Moveon Technologies Pte Ltd and Vanguard Automation GmbH in 2018\(^4\).

6. More recently, a new partnership between Singapore Polytechnic, German testing, inspection and certification company TÜV SÜD, industrial automation leader Delta Electronics and Singapore’s Smart I4.0 Transformation Alliance (SITA) was announced on 14 October 2020\(^5\). The Advanced Manufacturing Learning Journey at Singapore Polytechnic will guide Singapore SME manufacturers, starting with Smart Industry Readiness Index (SIRI) assessments by TÜV SÜD, to customised technology solutions from SiTA and Delta Electronics, as well as workforce upskilling programmes from Singapore Polytechnic.

7. **Mr Peter Ong, Chairman of Enterprise Singapore and Co-Chair of GSBF Connect**, said, “In this changing business environment, our enterprises need to connect with one another in more and better ways. Germany and Singapore are trusted partners who place a high emphasis on delivering quality and innovative products and services. The MOU between Enterprise Singapore and APA will cement this commitment to help our companies collaborate and leverage each other’s strengths. I look forward to forging new partnerships with Germany, and

---

\(^3\) Refer to [www.industrial-transformation.com](http://www.industrial-transformation.com) for more details of Industrial Transformation ASIA-PACIFIC 2020.

\(^4\) The latest call for proposals for the Germany-Singapore SME Funding Programme was launched on 29 June 2020 and will close on 4 December 2020. Interested German and Singapore companies can write in to [Germany_Singapore_SME_Funding@enterprisesg.gov.sg](mailto:Germany_Singapore_SME_Funding@enterprisesg.gov.sg) to request further information.

welcoming our German friends and partners to join us for the upcoming series of GSBF Connect events."

8. **Prof. Axel Stepken, Chairman of the Management Board TÜV SÜD AG and Co-Chair of GSBF Connect**, said, “Singapore is attractive to German companies in several ways – as a proven long-term partner with whom new technologies and innovative business models can be developed, but also as an experienced bridge builder into the emerging ASEAN region. Singapore has a strong record as a leading R&D hub and digital trendsetter, while German companies are known for their ability to manufacture state-of-the-art machinery and products. I still see many fields and sectors in which we can bring our specific strengths together. With the GSBF Connect, we want to make a relevant contribution to realize these untapped potentials.”

9. **Mr Leow Yong Peng, CEO of Akribis, a Singapore SME**, said, “High precision and high performance direct drive products and services of Akribis Systems fit nicely into countries with a strong engineering and/or manufacturing environment. With offices in USA, South Korea, Japan, Israel, Taiwan and part of ASEAN, when the decision for an office in Europe arose, Germany was the natural choice solely based on the large number of companies that need products that can offer precision and performance.”

10. **Dr.-Ing. Gunther Kegel, CEO of Pepperl+Fuchs SE, a German Mittelstand**, said, “Singapore is our South East Asian hub for procurement, manufacturing, distribution sales and R+D and has proven a very robust and reliable structure specifically during the Corona crises.”

11. Interested companies can register for GSBF Connect X Industrial Transformation ASIA-PACIFIC via the following link: [https://industrial-transformation.com/registration](https://industrial-transformation.com/registration). Representatives from Singapore or German companies attending GSBF Connect X Industrial Transformation ASIA-PACIFIC that would like to be matched with potential partners to explore business opportunities can contact GSBFconnect@enterprisesg.gov.sg.

-End-

For media enquiries, please contact:
About Enterprise Singapore

Enterprise Singapore is the Singapore government agency championing enterprise development. It also supports the growth of Singapore as a hub for global trading and startups.

The agency attracts global commodities traders to establish their global or Asian home base in Singapore. Today, Singapore is a leading global trading hub with a complete ecosystem for the energy, agri-commodities and metals & minerals trading clusters. Singapore is also home to many global enterprises, startups and investors that operate in its robust pro-enterprise environment.

Enterprise Singapore builds trust in Singapore’s products and services through quality and standards. Renowned for their dedication to quality and innovation, Singapore companies make ideal business partners.

With Enterprise Singapore’s global network in over 35 locations spanning many developed and emerging markets, it connects businesses with relevant Singapore companies for their business expansion.


About the Asia-Pacific Committee of German Business

The APA is a joint initiative and umbrella organization of leading business federations – the Federation of German Industries (BDI), the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK), the German Asia-Pacific Business Association (OAV), the Federation of German Wholesale, Foreign Trade and Services (BGA) and the Association of German Banks (Bankenverband). The APA pools the economic concerns of German businesses active in the Asia-Pacific region and is an agenda-setter for crucial economic issues regarding the future of our cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region. The APA supports high-level economic talks during visits of Asian government representatives to Germany and during visits of the German Federal Government to Asia. One of the main events is the bi-annual Asia-Pacific Conference of German Business, co-organized with the German Chambers of Commerce Abroad and the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. Joe Kaeser, President & Chief Executive Officer of Siemens AG, assumed the chairmanship of the APA in February 2019. The Chaiman is advised and supported by the APA Board.

Annex A
Background information

As an umbrella organisation of leading business federations, the APA will help open doors and build bridges between German and Singapore companies. Germany ranks among Singapore’s top trading partners in the European Union, with annual total trade in goods amounting to over S$21 billion in 2019 and annual total services trade amounting to over S$9 billion in 2018. Today, there are close to 2,000 German companies based in Singapore. Engagements and partnerships between German and Singapore companies are set to increase as companies diversify their supply chains and look for new markets in the changing business environment.

Companies and partners available for interview

These companies and partners are all participating in the GSBF Connect X Industrial Transformation ASIA-PACIFIC on 21 October.

Companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nanofilm</th>
<th>Feinmetall Singapore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NanoFilm is Asia’s nanotechnology solutions leader with strong innovation DNA, headquartered in Singapore. Founded in 1999 as a high-tech spinoff from Nanyang Technological University, it specialises in advanced materials and nano-products. Examples are functional coatings or optomechanics for sensors. NanoFilm’s proprietary materials with unique properties have redrawn market boundaries with limitless potential for mission-critical applications in multiple industries.</td>
<td>A German-Singapore joint venture and precision engineering firm, Feinmetall is a one stop service provider for the design, manufacturing, and testing of wafer probe cards for the semiconductor industry. Since its establishment in 2007, the company has been recognised as one of the leading “future of manufacturing” precision engineering firms in Singapore, contributing to one of the country’s economy main pillars, namely the manufacturing sector. Striving to remain as a leader in the technology forefront, it invested S$6M in its digital manufacturing facility in 2017. This 6,700 square feet new facility is the first-of-its-kind digital manufacturing facility, equipped for advanced probe card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanofilm participated in past editions of GSBF and found sales opportunities in Germany through Enterprise Singapore’s missions. Nanofilm has representatives in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

6 The APA has five constituent associations, namely the Association of German Banks (Bankenverband), the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK), the Federation of German Industries (BDI), the Federation of German Wholesale, Foreign Trade and Services (BGA), and the German Asia-Pacific Business Association (OAV).

7 Germany is Singapore’s second largest goods trading partner in the European Union in 2019, after France. As for services trade, Germany is Singapore’s third largest partner in the European Union in 2018, after Ireland and Netherlands. Source: Enterprise Singapore, Department of Statistics
Germany and plans for a production site in Germany to serve the European market.

For more information, kindly contact:
Mr Lars Lieberwirth
CTO
E: LarsLieberwirth@nanofilm.com.sg
T: +49-151-11848449

manufacturing and repairing capabilities. Moving forward, the company is poised to exploit the benefits of its technological leaderships continually and embark on the Industry 4.0 journey to enhance its competitive position. Feinmetall Singapore Pte Ltd strives to become the most respectable probe card solution provider in South East Asia.

For more information, kindly contact:
Mr Louis Choo
Senior Sales Manager
E: louis@sg.feinmetall.com

Partners

**Food Innovation and Resource Centre (FIRC)**

A joint initiative between Singapore Polytechnic and Enterprise Singapore, FIRC provides food enterprises with technical expertise in new product and process development including packaging, shelf life evaluation, market testing and automation. FIRC is keen to share about how they have supported and will continue to help Singapore SMEs with I4.0 transformation in the area of food manufacturing, and explore how they can work with and cross share experiences and ideas with their German counterparts.

For more information, kindly contact:
Mr Frank Chua
Assistant Manager, Communications
Singapore Polytechnic
E: frank_chua@sp.edu.sg
M: +65 9771 7871

**German Asia-Pacific Business Association (OAV)**

OAV is the largest German association for the promotion of German-Asian business relationships. It has partnered Enterprise Singapore in co-organising past editions of GSBF since 2012.

For more information, kindly contact:
Mr Felix Rust
PR Manager
E: rust@oav.de

**Smart i4.0 Transformation Alliance (SiTA)**

A Singapore consortium formed in 2018, SiTA comprises of 8 local companies and 12 MNCs with best-in-class, end to end technology solutions in Precision Engineering Industry. ASTech Pte Ltd, an automation solution provider, i4.0 integrator and founding champion of SiTA, was part of the GSBF 2018 mission to Hannover,
Germany, participating both as exhibitor and delegate.

For more information, kindly contact:
Mr Mun Kok Woh
Chairman, SiTA
Founder & Managing Director, ASTech Pte Ltd
E: mun.kw@astech.com.sg
T: +65 6556 2890