



SFIC appoints new President; unveils new corporate rebranding

- **Launches new digital strategy – Smart SFIC – to enable its members and the industry to leverage on disruptive innovations and drive new growth**
- **Targets membership growth via Total Lifestyle Ecosystem**

Singapore, 11 November 2016 – The Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) is making new strides as it celebrates its 35th anniversary – with the appointment of a new President and new strategic directions under a brand new corporate logo.

This was announced at the annual SFIC Gala Dinner held today at Mandarin Orchard Hotel.

The new President, Mr Mark Yong, together with outgoing President Mr Ernie Koh and Guest of Honour, Dr Koh Poh Koon, Minister of State, Ministry of National Development & Ministry of Trade and Industry unveiled the new SFIC logo, witnessed by an audience of over 400 SFIC members, business partners, associates and government agencies.

On accepting his new role as SFIC's 10th SFIC President, Mr Yong said: "Our industry requires an innovative approach and a fundamentally different way of operating. Our transformation strategy will be focused on leveraging digital disruptions and innovative learning to improve capability development, boost productivity, growth trajectories and most importantly, create new products to drive value for all our stakeholders."

"Our rebranding also represents our way forward where we will utilise technology and design to transform while at the same time, capitalise on the strong solid foundation on which industry members and stakeholders have built over the years to expand connections, ideas, strategies and capture new opportunities amidst rapidly shifting global market trends," said Mr Yong

On handing over the reins of SFIC to his successor, Mr Ernie Koh, the current SFIC President said, "The past four years have been an exhilarating experience for me as we have achieved several milestones which saw numerous local companies gain greater exposure to the global market via exhibitions, conferences and overseas missions as well as many initiatives in design and workforce development. We are very pleased to welcome, Mr Mark Yong to be our new President. We will benefit from his entrepreneurial spirit and strong passion for technology and design as we look to implement the changes necessary to help our members ride the next wave of growth."

"Smart SFIC" initiative

In response to the rapid rise of the digital economy, SFIC will pursue a new "digital" strategy to help its members embrace the digital transformation to scout new market opportunities and grow their businesses.



This strategic initiative is called “Smart SFIC:” it will include plans such as establishing new online platforms for e-commerce, big data for market intelligence and analysis, and using Internet of Things (IOT) to help SMEs take advantage of new opportunities in the digital economy.

“Smart SFIC is not just about technology. It is also about Smart Design – where we will encourage industry players to deploy design innovation as a key competitive edge for growth. Consumers today are not only tech-savvy but also design-savvy and living in “Smart Cities” of the future. So, we must accelerate transformation from a design perspective where we will work with companies to enhance design content in their work to create superior value,” said Mr Yong, who has been heading SingaPlural, the anchor event of the annual Singapore Design Week, since 2015. Mr Yong will start his new term as SFIC President on 11 November 2016.

Membership Growth via New Blood and Innovative Lifestyle Ecosystem

Strengthening membership is also a cornerstone of SFIC’s growth strategy.

It will reorganise and expand its membership under 5 clusters encompassing:

- Contract Manufacturers
- Furniture Manufacturers
- Retailers/Wholesalers
- Designers/Design Studios
- Materials and Equipment Suppliers

Said Mr Yong “SFIC is rebranding itself to become more of an eco-system which encompasses a larger community of lifestyle players that will serve a more sophisticated consumer generation. We will need to take a more collaborative approach with partners from different adjacent sectors to promote the interests of our members and grow their businesses. By offering total lifestyle concepts (beyond just furniture), we will help our members increase their portfolio of offerings and expand their customer base.”

SFIC will accelerate its efforts to engage the younger generation to join its ranks. It will work closely with related government agencies to provide new training programmes to create new higher value employment opportunities as well as to create long-term sustainability and vitality.

“Going forward, we want to rejuvenate and bring fresh perspectives to confront new challenges. Hence, we will bring more 2nd and 3rd generation leaders on-board; grow the SFIC’s Youth Furniture Committee (YFC) and create more opportunities for regional networking through our ASEAN Youth Entrepreneurs Exchange Programme,” said Mr Yong.



New Home for the Furniture Industry

Under the new President's term in office, SFIC will also be moving to the new JTC Furniture Hub at Sungei Kadut, an eight-storey Furniture Hub that will be built by end-2018. SFIC's Furniture and Furnishings Experience Centre will be housed within the Hub to support an ecosystem covering the gamut: production, trade, design, training to foster closer collaboration and synergies among local companies.

About Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC)

Singapore Furniture Industries Council was established in 1981 as the official representative body of Singapore's furniture and furnishings industry. Its membership comprises furniture manufacturers, interior fit-out specialists, retailers, designers, as well as furnishings and materials suppliers. Currently, the council represents 95% of established furniture manufacturers in Singapore, of whom 65% have subsidiary manufacturing plants in various countries across the region, including China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

SFIC's primary role is to promote the interests of its members and of the Singapore furniture and furnishings industry. For 35 years, SFIC has helped its members to adapt to changes in the business environment by introducing trade, talent, design development and business innovation activities, as well as upgrading business capabilities. Revolving around SFIC's 3i strategic framework – Improve, Innovate, and Integrate, all the Council's programmes aim to grow the local furniture and furnishings industry – to strengthen the 'Singapore brand' globally.

Visit www.singaporefurniture.com for more information.

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