

MEDIA RELEASE

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New Specialist Diploma to power up Furniture Industry

New Specialist Diploma aims to deepen skillsets and groom post-diploma graduates to meet the industry's rising demand

Singapore, June 5, 2017 – The Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC), SFIC Institute (the training arm of the SFIC) and Nanyang Polytechnic's (NYP) School of Design have jointly launched a new Specialist Diploma course under the SkillsFuture Earn & Learn Programme (ELP). Participants of this course will receive the NYP Specialist Diploma in Design & Make.

This is the first time a polytechnic is co-developing and co-delivering an ELP with a trade association. The strategic intent is to keep the industry vitalized with talented and qualified manpower.

Those taking up the course will be eligible for course-fee subsidies of up to 90% of the total course fees.

Mr Albert Lim, Director, School of Design, Nanyang Polytechnic, explained: "This is very significant because the trade association is focused on attracting young talents for the growth and future of the industry. So the joint programme perfectly fits the growth strategy for the entire sector."

There are now 2,000 companies in the Singapore furniture industry, with a global footprint in over 80 countries and generating revenues exceeding S\$6 billion.

Mr Jake Tan, Chairman of SFIC Institute said: "The launch of this course is part of SFIC's new initiatives to make the overall furniture industry more productive, more innovative and more manpower-smart. It is part of our capabilities-building road map, which will help to identify future markets, and develop capabilities to tap new technologies and materials to grow the industry's revenues and raise professional standards."

The ELP, which was officially launched by Ms Low Yen Ling, Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Ministry of Education and Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) today, already has 10 participating companies. There are currently 15 applicants who are in the process of being matched to these firms.

The 300-hour course, which will commence later this year, will help them gain more in-depth knowledge about the various aspects of furniture and furnishings design industry. This includes studies in lifestyle objects and furnishing, problem-solving with design thinking approach, immersing in the business of design and strategic understanding of the industry. Participants will also learn about the practical aspect of furniture design industry, for example, the latest materials, construction and production methods. In addition, they will hone skills in client management, business development and marketing capabilities through on-the-job training. The programme complements the current courses provided in industrial, product, interior and experience design.

One of the participating employers, Mr Jay Chiu, Founder and CEO of Grandwork Interior Pte Ltd, said: "We are an avid supporter of such training programmes. Design never comes to a stop – it is an ongoing occupation which involves constant research and new knowledge to keep pace with industry development, new technology and innovative concepts. So such specialist diploma courses are useful to attract more people into the industry and train design professionals to have a sound business mind on their creative shoulders. They will be more industry-ready and hence, contribute more readily and positively to employers like us."

Teo Min Zhen, a recent graduate from the Diploma in Industrial Design, Nanyang Polytechnic who is one of the applicants for the new course shared: "The designer's job today is not just about designing a spectacular piece of furniture. It involves all aspects, from client management, needs analysis to project management. This programme will help me develop these skills for a more rewarding career."

The NYP-SFIC SkillsFuture Earn & Learn Programme (ELP) will start running in September 2017. More information on the programme can be found on <http://www.nyp.edu.sg/schools/sdn/lifelong-learning/specialist-diploma-in-design-and-make.html>

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About Nanyang Polytechnic

Established in 1992, Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) is a premier institution of higher learning that offers quality education in Engineering, Information Technology, Design, Interactive & Digital Media, Chemical & Life Sciences, Business Management and Health Sciences. It offers 47 full-time diploma courses and a suite of post-diploma and customised courses for continuing education.

The Polytechnic's industry-relevant and real world-based training equips students to become employment-ready upon graduation. It aims to nurture students into innovative and enterprising individuals, capable of succeeding in any path they choose to take, be it a career or in further studies.

Nanyang Polytechnic is also the proud recipient of the prestigious Singapore Quality Award, the Innovation Excellence Award and the People Excellence Award. This makes NYP the first education institution in Singapore to receive these three top organisational and business excellence awards.

About Singapore Furniture Industries Council

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 36 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 of the Council's programmes aim to grow the local furniture and furnishings industry and ultimately, to strengthen the 'Singapore brand' globally.

About SFIC Institute

SFIC Institute, a subsidiary of the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC), was initially formed as a training and development initiative for the furniture industry in 2004. Privatised in October 2010, SFIC Institute offers a holistic range of offerings comprising creative craftsmanship (carpentry), product design and development, retail, human resources, sales and marketing, production technology, customised programmes and consultancy services, logistics, and green initiatives.

Distinctive offerings such as its manpower training and placement programmes for creative craftsmen, designers and mature workers are preparing workers for ever-changing socio-economic landscape and helping employers redesign key roles. Through such initiatives, the Institute continues helping the industry attract, groom and grow a pool of local workforce.

SFIC Institute brings valuable resources and exceptional service to each and every one of its clients in or beyond the furniture industry. Some of its clients include Admira, Akati, Benel, Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC), Four Star, Furniture Club, Getz Singapore, Home-Fix, Institute of Technical Education (ITE), Lorenzo, the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF), Singapore Polytechnic (SP), Star Furniture, SITRA and TAK.

SFIC Institute also partners various governmental agencies such as NTUC's e2i, SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), SPRING Singapore and the Workforce Singapore (WSG) for funding support and to ensure that the Institute offers valuable, relevant programmes and initiatives to clients.

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