



MEDIA RELEASE

SFIC Institute and WSG Unveil Third Professional Conversion Programme to Upskill Workforce for Advanced Manufacturing Opportunities

SINGAPORE – 2 June 2021 – SFIC Institute, the training and skills development arm of Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC), today unveiled its latest Professional Conversion Programme (PCP) in collaboration with Workforce Singapore (WSG) to nurture a new generation of talents for advanced manufacturing opportunities in the furniture and built environment sectors.

The PCP for Interior Fit-Out Specialist aims to nurture a pool of highly skilled local specialists to provide project management and interior fit-out services such as customising and installing furniture on-site at commercial projects like hotels, offices and retail stores as well as private and public residential projects. This new training programme is expected to meet growing demands of the domestic interior fit-out business segment in the residential, office and retail sectors valued by SFIC at approximately \$3 billion a year, and aims to place 70 trainees over two years with the first batch by July 2021.

Currently, the role of an installer is to assist in residential and commercial installation projects, by ensuring that the area is prepared before the actual installation, fitting out the cabinets and wardrobe. The Interior Fit-out Specialist role will be an enhancement to the job role of an Installer. This role would entail performing higher value tasks like client and project management, onsite supervisory, providing advisory on design and materials selection, as well as interpreting design works and translating them into production. These participants will also acquire knowledge in new construction technology, use advance construction methods in furniture making, which include CNC machines and Edge Bending Machines.

With access to a targeted database of more than 350 manufacturers, retailers as well as partnerships with the associations in the furniture industry, SFIC Institute aims to do a close matching for jobseekers with hiring employers.

Ms Sim Ann, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Ministry of National Development and SFIC Patron, said: "We are cognizant that the furniture and furnishings industry has been impacted by the ongoing pandemic, with the fit-out sector facing a lack in skilled manpower resources. By retraining and upskilling our local talent with specific skillsets in interior fit-out, enterprises can address the talent gap and build a pipeline of specialists who can support their growth aspirations. I encourage our furniture companies to participate actively in this PCP led and facilitated by SFIC Institute. This is a positive step

EMBARGOED TILL 2 JUNE 2021, 12PM

towards transforming the fit-out industry and making it a more attractive career option for the younger generation.”

Endorsing the new initiative, 10 Singapore companies together with SFIC Institute have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to take on new hires of the programme. [\[See Appendix A for details\]](#)

WSG Chief Executive Mr Tan Choon Shian said, “Technology has accelerated the business transformation of this traditionally labour-intensive sector. Companies are using the opportunity to plug the manpower gap by offering better career opportunities. This PCP allows the next generation of installers to take on higher value roles in using advanced technology, and skillsets in client and project management . We appreciate the strong collaboration with our tripartite partners to help our workers with meaningful careers in the industry.”

SFIC President Mr Phua Boon Huat said: “The furniture industry has progressed from warm sawdust-filled woodworking environments to one that embraces automation and digitalisation. SFIC has been helping local players ride the digital wave and sharpen their overall competitiveness across all segments of their supply chain. Today's move is another step further towards injecting greater automation and expertise at the installation point of the supply chain. The programme is aligned with SFIC's industry roadmap to establish Singapore as the Asian Hub influencing tomorrow's sustainable urban living.”

SFIC Institute Chairman Mr Steven Chew said: “This latest PCP initiative will be part of an existing suite of holistic training and manpower programmes where companies can tap on to upskill their staff and help in their business transformations. Through tripartite efforts, SFIC Institute has received exceptional support from industry players and will continue working closely with them to facilitate the training and mentorship of more industry professionals in Singapore.”

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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 product design

and development, retail, digital marketing and analytics, human resources, sales and marketing, production technology, customised programmes and consultancy services, logistics, and sustainability.

Distinctive offerings such as its manpower training and placement programmes for interior fit-out specialists, digital operations talent, designers and matured 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 Benel, Catalyste, Cellini, Commune, Elmich, Facility Link, Falcon, First Sight International, Grafunkt, Grandwork, House of Teak, IDV Concepts, In-Expat, P5, Picket & Rail, Redwood Interior, Scene Shang, Sitra Global, Star Furniture, Sunjoy and Superstructure.

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

Visit www.sficinstitute.com for more information.

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 materials/components/services providers. 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.

As an aggregator and multiplier in the furniture eco-system, the SFIC plays an active role to grow and transform companies and the industry. For over 39 years, SFIC has helped its members to adapt to changes in the business environment by introducing trade, talent, design development and business innovation activities, upgrading business capabilities and a focus on sustainability. Collectively, these programmes aim at supporting the SFIC's vision for Singapore's furniture industry – "To be the Asian Hub Influencing Tomorrow's Sustainable Urban Living".

Visit www.singaporefurniture.com for more information.

About Workforce Singapore

Workforce Singapore promotes the development, competitiveness, inclusiveness, and employability of all levels of the workforce. Its key mission is to enable Singaporeans to meet their career aspirations, take on quality jobs at different stages of life, and help enterprises be competitive and manpower lean. Workforce Singapore's focus is on strengthening the Singaporean core and ensuring that Singaporeans are able to have better jobs and careers. Workforce Singapore, in partnership with key stakeholders, also provides support to business owners and companies to enable them to transform and grow, while building a future-ready workforce.

Visit www.wsg.gov.sg for more information.

APPENDIX A: SFIC MEMBERS SIGNING MOU

1	Mark Yong	Immediate Past President & MOU Signatory	Ewins Pte Ltd	Executive Director
2	Kaden Choa	MOU Signatory; SFIC Member	Excel Hardware Pte Ltd	Marketing Director
3	Melvin Chong	MOU Signatory; SFIC Member	Koncept Kreation Pte Ltd	Business Development Director
4	Kelvin Kwek	MOU Signatory; SFIC Member	Sungei Emas Pte Ltd	Director
5	Michael Soh	MOU Signatory; SFIC Member	Redwood Interior Pte Ltd	Managing Director
6	Vincent Chew	MOU Signatory; SFIC Member	IDV Concepts Asia Pte Ltd	CEO
7	Alan Toh	MOU Signatory; SFIC Member	Fresh Look Construction Pte Ltd	Managing Director
8	Andrew Lim	MOU Signatory; SFIC Member	4plus8 Pte Ltd	Principal & Founder
9	Don Lim	MOU Signatory; SFIC Member	RH Design & Build Pte Ltd	Director
10	Zak Lo	MOU Signatory; SFIC Member	First Sight International Pte Ltd	CEO

SFIC Member Participant	Profile
Ewins Pte Ltd	Ewins, a Singapore-based company founded in 1967, is a leading distributor of fine furniture components, quality architectural hardware and innovative surface materials. From high performance natural wood veneer panels for outdoor facade application to space-saving solutions for homes, Ewins constantly grows its product offerings to meet the changing needs of both trade partners and end-consumers.
Excel Hardware Pte Ltd	Excel Hardware, founded in 1998, is a premium furniture hardware fixtures & fittings manufacturer and wholesale distributor focussed on residential projects. Excel, a Singapore

	<p>brand, prides itself in top-notch quality products fit for all discerning renovations demands regionally. Founded by Mr Kevin Choa, it started out as a hardware supplier in Singapore with humble offerings. Today, Excel is a large business that strives to meet and go beyond all their clients' needs.</p>
First Sight International Pte Ltd	<p>Established in 1999, First Sight Group manufactures and distributes high-quality school supplies, functional furniture, interactive playground, and child-safe protection solutions. With more than 80 in-house industry experts, it provides cutting-edge commercial design and build services to create learning and lifestyle environments for customers in the education and lifestyle industries. The Group practices 360 degrees of customer attention through its facilities maintenance division. Headquartered in Singapore, it operates in major Asian cities of Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Shenzhen.</p>
Fresh Look Construction Pte Ltd	<p>Fresh Look, established in 1990, is a trusted brand and reliable contractor. Over the years, it has built itself as a one-stop provider in the design, renovation, construction, maintenance industry, with almost 90% of the work being done by in-house skilled workers. The work involves the gathering of clients' briefs and concepts, designing, consultation, and delivering the artwork.</p>
IDV Concepts Asia Pte Ltd	<p>A Singapore brand, IDV Asia is a full-service luxury retail and commercial interior fit-out firm, with a presence in Asia Pacific region & beyond.</p> <p>IDV Asia serves innovators – those ready to transform their interior space and explore customer-centric designs.</p> <p>As a dynamic innovative team, IDV Asia leads its clients through full design transformation, immersive & technology-based manufacturing and final delivery of the transformed space. Its services include design consultation, technology-based fabrication and project management engagements.</p> <p>IDV Asia's end goal is to give its customers memorable – even delightful – moments as they venture into the interior space.</p>
Koncept Kreation Pte Ltd	<p>KKPL is a Singapore-based wardrobe and cabinet fittings curator, moving quietly to deliver comfort to every home. KKPL supports its clients in creating new solutions with a wide range of products, concise advice and a well thought out approach. The goal is for clients to have functional and personalised furniture. KKPL strives to remain in its highest quality standards by observing clients' requirements and identifying their needs.</p>
Redwood Interior Pte Ltd	<p>Redwood, incorporated in 1992, is a world- renowned contract manufacturer delivering high-quality interior fittings for the retail stores of the world's top luxury brands. As a preferred interior-fittings manufacturer, it specialises in creating beautifully-built store interiors through industry-best practices, which help transform clients' stores into elegant and magnificent interiors. Led by a team with highly experienced staff, it sets out to maximize productivity and efficiency through constant R&D, engineering process, and level of automation so as to</p>

	<p>continuously improve product quality and service to bring the company to the next level of advanced fittings manufacturing.</p>
RH Design & Build Pte Ltd	<p>RHDB is one of Singapore's top commercial interior design and renovation firms. It specialises in the conceptualisation of business brands. RHDB cares most about its client's business and brand, with its irreplaceable profession, dedication and enthusiasm towards business brand conceptualisation. The company produces only the best commercial interior designs and renovation for the office and HORECA (Hotel, Restaurant & Catering) segments. With the belief that "renovation is the first step of business branding", RH is dedicated to a customised, more efficient and sustainable commercial renovation. It provides branded conceptualised interior design with swift service, care and responsibility.</p>
Sungei Emas Pte Ltd	<p>Sungei Emas Pte Ltd has been a manufacturer since 1999, securing several trademarks over the years. One of its leading brands, OPSH®, has its own market presence in Singapore and Malaysia and it is looking to expand to other regional countries. Its in-house and overseas manufacturing facilities have given it a competitive advantage to be able to deliver on projects with greater volumes. Sungei Emas strongly believes in functional, and yet innovative products. In a dynamic global environment, it hopes to work closely with our trusted partners to establish a stronger foothold in regional markets as well as to make OPSH® a global brand.</p>
4plus8 Pte Ltd	<p>4plus8 is a multi-disciplinary studio specialising in architectural woodwork, made-to-measure furniture and end-to-end consultation & execution for interior design services. 4plus8 has its name from Principal, Andrew Lim starting out with a lean team of 4 staff and 8 artisanal crew members. With great passion in architectural woodwork, depth of experience and detailed industry knowledge, 4plus8 consistently sets new standards for luxury and highly personalised cabinetry solutions for their esteemed clients.</p>