

**EMBARGOED TILL 23 APR 2023**

**SFIC Delegation to Embark on Sustainability Business Model Transformation Mission  
Trip to Tokyo, Japan**



*Tokyo Tower by Louie Martinez (Photo: Unsplash)*

**SINGAPORE, 23 APR 2023** — SFIC, with the support of Enterprise Singapore (EnterpriseSG), will be leading 18 delegates from 14 organisations on a Sustainability Business Model Transformation Mission to Tokyo, Japan from the 23rd to 29th of April 2023.

Since the launch of its Furniture Sustainability Programme in 2022, SFIC has been consistently promoting sustainable practices in the Singapore furniture industry, with various initiatives such as the Sustainability Leaders Programme (SLP) and Sustainability Leaders Recognition (SLR), that spotlights first movers in the industry that have displayed exemplary sustainable practices.



The trade association has also embarked on international learning journeys to help furniture companies look at ways to transform their business models and build capabilities to capture new opportunities that the sustainability agenda brings. Last year, SFIC embarked on its inaugural mission to Denmark in June, and the upcoming Tokyo mission will be another step towards achieving SFIC's sustainability goals and building a more sustainable future for the furniture industry. Through the exchange of information and experiences of global trends and best practices with related experts and leaders in the markets, such mission trips also aim to help companies build new knowledge and foster potential partnerships with relevant stakeholders. This is in line with the SFIC 2025 Roadmap to position the Singapore furniture industry as the nexus of tomorrow's work-life integration for sustainable urban living.

### **Japan identified as a sustainability leader from SFIC's Sustainability Blueprint research**

Japan leads Asia on the 2021 Sustainable Development Report, ranking 18th globally and is committed to achieving a circular economy and net-zero emissions by 2050. The Japanese furniture industry is a significant part of the country's economy, with a focus on high-quality and innovative designs. Traditional Japanese furniture is known for its minimalist style and use of natural materials. In recent years, there has been a trend towards sustainable and eco-friendly materials as well as production. The Japanese government's support for the industry includes initiatives such as funding for research and development, tax incentives for eco-friendly production and overseas business expansion.

With Singapore and Japan facing similar urban challenges and demographics, Japan has been highlighted in SFIC's Sustainability Blueprint as a potential country of interest to take reference from for learning.

During the mission, the Singapore delegation will visit various sustainable furniture companies such as Okamura Corporation and Kokuyo Co Ltd, two reputable TYO-listed office furniture manufacturers in Japan, attend sharing sessions on sustainable business practices from organisations like Zero Waste Japan, and meet with multiple Japanese furniture industry leaders to learn more about their sustainability initiatives, amongst them relevant associations such as the Japan Office Furniture Association (JOIFA) and the Japan Furniture Industry Development Association (JFA). The delegation will also be visiting the Singapore Pavilion exhibiting at ORGATEC Tokyo, a furniture fair dedicated to the commercial and home office industries for the Asia-Pacific market.

The objectives of the Tokyo mission include:

- Understanding more about the philosophy, production/design process and business case behind more sustainable Japanese furniture and furnishings



- Gain inspiration and garner best practices for how companies might work more constructively towards becoming the nexus of tomorrow's work-life integration for sustainable urban living -- in line with the SFIC Vision for 2025
- Explore potential partnerships with Japanese furniture industry players that are sustainability leaders in the region.

"Our Sustainability Business Model Transformation Mission to Japan is a testament to our commitment to promoting sustainable practices and driving positive change within our industry. Japan is globally renowned to be one of Asia's sustainability leaders in the furniture space. We hope to enable our members to learn the unique approaches to sustainability by Japanese industry leaders and at the same time, share our insights and foster collaboration between Singapore and Japanese companies and organisations," said Mr. Phua Boon Huat, President of SFIC.

Said Ms. Sarah Ler, Director for Retail and Design, EnterpriseSG, "In order to drive its circular economy, Japan has implemented a Public-Private Partnership approach, particularly for initiatives that have significant potential for development impact but may face funding challenges from traditional financial institutions. Japan's approach to sustainable development, technological advancements, certification standards, and cross-sector partnerships are great learning opportunities for Singapore furniture companies to adopt sustainable practices and transform their business models. This will enable them to build a sharper competitive edge that allows them to capture new trends in the furniture space."



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For more information about the speakers and companies being visited during the trip, please visit <https://bit.ly/missionitinerary> for more information.

For the Sustainability Business Model Transformation Mission E-brochure, please visit <https://bit.ly/missionbrochure> for more information.

**About SFIC**

The Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) has been established since 1981 as the official representative body of Singapore's furniture and furnishings industry. It has a membership of over 360 companies, spanning five key industry clusters: furniture manufacturers, interior fit-out specialists, retailers, designers, as well as materials/components/services providers. Collectively, our industry players have a global footprint in over 80 countries to date.

Currently, the council represents 95 per cent of established furniture manufacturers in Singapore, of whom 65 per cent 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 ecosystem, the SFIC's vision is to position the Singapore furniture industry as the nexus of tomorrow's work-life integration for sustainable urban living. In essence, the Council aims to pursue the three key pillars of market agility, urbanite-centricity and enterprise adeptness for its members in order to drive the industry further.

SFIC's priority initiatives include internationalisation, design development, business innovation, digitalisation, and sustainability to enable members to stay future-ready and competitive while upgrading enterprise and human capital capabilities within the industry.



The SFIC also helms the ASEAN Furniture Industries Council (AFIC) as its Chairman, with the aim of further strengthening intra-ASEAN trade and its competitive advantage in the global market.

Visit [www.singaporefurniture.com](http://www.singaporefurniture.com) for more information.

### **About Enterprise Singapore (EnterpriseSG)**

Enterprise Singapore is the government agency championing enterprise development. Enterprise SG works with committed companies to build capabilities, innovate, and internationalise, as well as supporting the growth of Singapore as a hub for global trading and startups. As the national standards and accreditation body, Enterprise SG continues to build trust in Singapore's products and services through quality and standards.

Visit <https://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/> for more information.



## **Fact Sheet**

### **SFIC**

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