



EMBARGOED TILL April 16, 3.00 pm

**3M and Science Centre Singapore launches
Inaugural 3M Tinkering Headstart @ South West program**

*The year-long program aims to engage 600 beneficiaries
from underprivileged families to nurture a passion for science*

Singapore, April 16, 2021 – 3M and Science Centre Singapore (SCS) today announced the launch of the inaugural 3M Tinkering Headstart @ South West program, a year-long science outreach program targeted at underprivileged children aged seven to 12 and their parents. Close to 600 beneficiaries are expected to benefit from the initiative, with 200 from the South West District. The program aims to improve their access to science education whilst nurturing their passion for the discipline.

Comprising up to 15 tinkering workshops to be held over the year, the program encourages learning through play, exploration and experimentation – with the end goal of highlighting the importance of science in their daily lives. This approach also supports Singapore’s shift from an exam-based to applied learning education. In addition, the program will equip participating parents with tips to continue their children’s science learning journey at home.

Held at Big Heart Student Care Centre @ Teck Whye Primary School with social distancing measures in place, 14 students took part in the inaugural 3M Tinkering Headstart @ South West program today. With assistance from 3M volunteers, participants built their own solar-powered vehicles with recycled materials, a motor and a solar panel to learn about renewable energy and energy efficiency. Also present were representatives from 3M Singapore and South West Community Development Council (CDC).

Guest-of-Honor and Mayor of South West District Ms Low Yen Ling underscored how South West CDC was very happy to partner 3M and Science Centre Singapore. She added, “This outreach aims to spark and capture the students’ interest in STEM-related fields early. Strong capabilities in these areas will help our young generation thrive in a post-pandemic world. We hope this opportunity will bring them from just tinkering to thinking positively about Science and arm them with a headstart to explore and access the fields of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) with confidence.”

The initiative is the outcome of key insights gathered from the [2020 3M State of Science Index](#), an annual independent survey that explores the world’s attitudes toward science.

With increased spotlight on science and scientists amidst the global pandemic, results from 1,000 respondents in Singapore (14,000 worldwide) showed a rise in recognition for STEM education. However, some Singaporeans are still being discouraged from pursuing science in school. Following the pandemic, 79% of Singaporeans are more likely to agree that strong STEM education for students is crucial. Yet, 17% of Singaporeans reported being discouraged from pursuing the subject while in school (not including university), and this is only intensifying over time (Gen Z (18+)/Millennials: 23% vs. Gen X/Boomers: 13%). Amongst those discouraged, 40% cited “being told not smart enough” as the main reason.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for science to solve the world’s biggest problems. Our annual State of Science Index shows that despite increased recognition in 2020, we need to rethink STEM education and make it more accessible,” said Mr. Kevin McGuigan, Managing Director, 3M South East Asia Region and Country Leader, Singapore, “Quality science education equips children with skills that will be



invaluable in their future studies and careers. Supporting this program is 3M’s way of doing our part to champion science in Singapore, especially amongst the underprivileged.”

Associate Professor Lim Tit Meng, Chief Executive of SCS, also said: “Children are natural scientists. Our purpose in partnering 3M on this very meaningful program is to create a learning platform where curious and inquisitive young minds can come together, learn and be inspired. So many developments and solutions in today’s society are fueled by science and technology. We hope that the program will stimulate passion for science among the participants and empower them to look at the world through a different lens.”

Made possible through funding from 3Mgives

The 3M Tinkering Headstart @ South West program is organized by SCS and fully funded by 3Mgives, the social investment arm of 3M. 3Mgives supports initiatives in education, environment and community vibrancy to improve lives and provide solutions to some of the world’s most pressing challenges.

Besides this program, 3M has a diverse ecosystem of partnerships to advance STEM education in Singapore. These include the non-profit United Women Singapore and educational institutions such as the Ministry of Education’s Innovation Program and the School of Science and Technology.

Expanding on a long and fruitful collaboration

The 3M Tinkering Headstart @ South West program is the latest addition to the longstanding collaboration between 3M and SCS. Since 2017, 3M Singapore has participated in the SCS’s applied learning programs and supported the annual Singapore Science Festival co-organized by SCS, among other initiatives. Both organizations also collaborated on the 2020 3M State of Science Panel Discussion.

SCS, who organized the program, worked with South West CDC to gather beneficiaries for the 3M Tinkering Headstart program. This partnership deepens the program’s outreach and engagement at the community level to encourage interest and participation from families. SCS also looks to expand this program nationwide, so more underprivileged children can benefit from it.

3M Sets New STEM Goal to Empower Underrepresented Individuals

As part of 3M’s overall commitment to creating greater equity in communities, business practices and workplaces, the company is setting a new global, education-focused goal. 3M will advance economic equity by creating five million unique STEM and Skilled Trades learning experiences for underrepresented individuals¹ by the end of 2025.

Experiences being tracked toward 3M’s new goal include scholarships, internships and robust student services, varying experiential learning opportunities, 3Mgives monetary investments, and volunteerism. More information can be found in the press release [here](#).

¹ *3M defines underrepresented individuals in the United States using National Science Foundation research – focused on Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, gender and people with disabilities. For global definitions, we rely on gender diversity and local context for marginalized populations.



Mr. Kevin McGuigan concluded: “As a thought leader in the global science discussion, we remain committed to removing barriers to STEM, renew our commitment to collaboration, and reinforce demand for science-based, sustainable solutions. To that end, we have many initiatives planned throughout 2021 to use science to drive sustainable development across the globe, build stronger communities, and unite people that dare to solve them.”

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About 3M Singapore

3M has been improving lives in Singapore for more than 50 years. Since its founding in 1966, 3M Singapore has grown from its humble beginnings with only 8 employees, to a company with more than 1,600 employees and established local capabilities to serve the needs of local, regional and global customers. 3M’s presence in Singapore includes two manufacturing plants at Woodlands and Tuas, an R&D Center at Woodlands, and a Customer Technical Center, supply chain and business operations based at Ang Mo Kio. For more information on 3M, please visit www.3M.com.sg.

About 3M

At 3M, we apply science in collaborative ways to improve lives daily. With \$32 billion in sales, our 96,000 employees connect with customers all around the world. Learn more about 3M’s creative solutions to the world’s problems at www.3M.com or on Twitter @3M or @3MNews.

About Science Centre Singapore

Science Centre Singapore, a non-formal educational institution and leading regional Science Centre, along with its group of attractions, brings out the wonders of science, technology, engineering and mathematics through its unique blend of exhibitions, educational programs and events. A custodian of creativity and innovation, Science Centre Singapore has captured the evolution of scientific developments for nearly four decades.

The Centre and its partners have played a pivotal role in transforming the way students and the public interact with and learn about science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Since 1977, the Centre has welcomed over 30 million visitors and inspired them with more than 1,000 exhibits spread across 14 exhibition galleries and outdoor exhibition spaces.

The Centre’s group of attractions include Omni-Theatre, Snow City and KidsSTOP™. The Omni-Theatre is an immersive dual-technology edutainment destination fitted with Southeast Asia’s largest seamless dome screen and featuring the latest and brightest 8k digital fulldome system in the world. Snow City is Singapore’s only permanent indoor snow center offering an Arctic inspired experience at Singapore’s first ice gallery and snow chamber. KidsSTOP™ - Where every child gets to Imagine, Experience, Discover and Dream - is Singapore’s first children’s science Center offering an enriching experience through purposeful play for children aged 18 months to 8 years old. For more information, please visit www.science.edu.sg.

About South West Community Development Council



The South West Community Development Council (CDC) was formed on 24 November 2001, with the mission to Assist the Needy, Bond the People and Connect the Community.

Through local help programmes, the South West CDC provides assistance to help the less fortunate in our community. The South West CDC also organises projects and programmes to promote community bonding and social cohesion. The South West CDC adopts the "Many Helping Hands" approach to encourage community ownership among residents, community partners and corporations to realise its vision of "Owning Your Community".

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For media enquiries and images, please contact:

Ruder Finn Asia

Eugene Chuang/ Crystal Tan

tanc@ruderfinnasia.com

81288268

3M Singapore

Flora Ang

Senior Brand & Communications Specialist

fang3.cw@mmm.com

9125 3914