

[For Immediate Release]

# Media Release



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4 November 2024

News Editor

**FORMALISING A COLLABORATIVE ECO-SYSTEM BETWEEN SOUTH WEST CDC AND INSTITUTES OF HIGHER LEARNING (ITE COLLEGE, POLYTECHNICS AND UNIVERSITIES) TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY NEEDS IN THE SOUTH WEST DISTRICT**

- **Memorandum of Understanding between South West CDC and nine Institutes of Higher Learning**
- **South West Community Inno Lab provides a platform for youth from different Institutes of Higher Learning to team up to come up with innovative solutions to tackle community problems and help residents at the district level**

On 5 November 2024, Mr Desmond Lee, Minister for National Development, Minister-in-Charge of Social Services Integration and Adviser to West Coast GRC Grassroots Organisations (GROs), witnessed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the South West Community Development Council and nine Institutes of Higher Learning<sup>1</sup> (IHLs) to mark the launch of South West Community Inno Lab, alongside Ms Low Yen Ling, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Trade and Industry & Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, and Mayor of South West District.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer Annex for list of IHLs

2 A first of its kind in the district, the South West Community Inno Lab serves as a dynamic incubator for social innovation, facilitating synergy and encouraging co-solutioning among youth to address community needs at the district level. For the first time, youth from participating IHLs will collaborate in inter-IHL teams, fostering inclusive and impactful learning opportunities on community-centric projects. By working with grassroots organisations, social service agencies, government agencies, hospitals, family service centres, and other partners, students will co-create practical solutions to address on-the-ground issues identified by the community partners centred around the themes of Economy, Health, Social, Sustainability, Infrastructure and Design, Disability and Mental Wellness. Through structured brainstorming sessions, mentorship guidance, and funding support, students will have the opportunity to develop, prototype, and test solutions that are specifically tailored to meet the needs of residents.

3 The South West Community Inno Lab also provides students with invaluable experiential learning opportunities beyond the classroom, offering them a platform to apply their creativity and innovation to real-world problems. It aims to foster a more caring and inclusive community by empowering students to hone their problem-solving skills and witness the positive effort of their innovations on the lives of residents.

4 “As our society evolves and matures, we will have to grapple with more complex challenges that require multi-disciplinary responses. Through the South West Community Inno Lab, we will develop a comprehensive network that facilitates deeper collaboration and exchange of ideas between IHLs, community groups and government agencies. The South West District will serve as an open classroom and living laboratory for students to test creative and practical solutions to address needs and gaps in the community. By pooling together our collective ideas, resources and relationships, we can better catalyse changes to address challenges in the community,” said Minister Desmond Lee.

5 “The South West CDC works closely with our IHLs to co-create initiatives and solutions for the larger good. In a first-ever, we are bringing nine IHL partners to collaborate and co-create solutions together with community stakeholders to address the needs of society and vulnerable residents in our district. The South West

Community Inno Lab will empower youths from IHLs to apply their knowledge in tackling real-world issues. It also aims to nurture empathetic and resilient young leaders who impact meaningful change on the ground. This multi-party collaboration to establish a social innovation incubator in our community will nurture and deepen an inclusive and caring culture in the South West District,” said Mayor Low.

6 Details of the event are as follows:

Event : Launch of South West Community Inno Lab

Date : Tuesday, 5 November 2024

Time : 10.00 am to 11.00am **(Media is invited at 9.30am)**

Venue : NUS College of Design and Engineering

Block E7, Level 3, Seminar Room 4

15 Kent Ridge Crescent, Singapore 119276

Guest of Honour : Mr Desmond Lee

Honour Minister for National Development &

Minister-in-Charge of Social Services Integration and

Adviser to West Coast GRC Grassroots Organisations

(GROs)

Host : Ms Low Yen Ling

Mayor of South West District

7 Photos for the **Launch of South West Community Inno Lab** may be downloaded from the following [link](#). For more information, please contact our Media Liaison Officers below.

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Minister Desmond Lee, Mayor Low Yen Ling and key representatives from nine Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) – including ITE College West, Nanyang

Technological University, National University of Singapore, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore Management University, Singapore Polytechnic, Singapore University of Social Sciences, Singapore University of Technology and Design, and University of the Arts Singapore at the signing of Memorandum of Understanding.



Minister Desmond Lee, Mayor Low Yen Ling, key representatives from nine IHLs, grassroots leaders, staff and students at the launch of South West Community Inno Lab.



Students from Singapore Management University, Singapore University of Social Sciences, and Singapore University of Technology and Design shared about their community engagement projects at the launch of South West Community Inno Lab.

(Photo credit: South West Community Development Council)

### **Media Liaison Officers**

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### **About the South West Community Development Council (CDC)**

The South West Community Development Council (CDC) was formed on 24 November 2001.

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".

Ms Low Yen Ling was appointed the Mayor of South West District on 27 May 2014. Ms Low is also Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) & Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) & Adviser to Chua Chu Kang GRC.

For more information, please visit: [southwest.cdc.gov.sg](http://southwest.cdc.gov.sg)

## Programme

Time	Administrative Programme
9.55 am	Arrival of Mayor Ms Low Yen Ling Senior Minister of State Ministry of Trade and Industry Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth Mayor of South West District
10.00 am	Arrival of Guest of Honour Mr Desmond Lee Minister for National Development Minister-in-Charge of Social Services Integration Adviser to West Coast GRC Grassroots Organisations (GROs)
10.05 am	Photo/Video Opportunity 1: Mass Photo-Taking with All Guests
10.10 am	Sharing of Projects by IHL Students
10.40 am	Welcome Address by Mayor
10.45 am	Address by Minister
10.50 am	Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
10.55 am	Photo/Video Opportunity 2: Group Photo-Taking with Key Representatives on Stage
11.00 am	Lunch Reception
11.00 am	Departure of Minister and Mayor <i>*Media doorstop to be arranged, subject to media request.</i>
11.00 am	End of programme

## Annex A – List of Institutes of Higher Learning

1. ITE College West
2. Nanyang Technological University
3. National University of Singapore
4. Ngee Ann Polytechnic
5. Singapore Management University
6. Singapore Polytechnic
7. Singapore University of Social Sciences
8. Singapore University of Technology and Design
9. University of the Arts Singapore

## Annex B – List of Programmes by IHLS

S/N	Name of IHL	Programme Name	Programme Description
1	ITE College West	Active Futures: Empowering Health and Wellness in our Communities	<p>The Active Futures: Empowering Health and Wellness in our Communities is a 24-month programme that aims to achieve the following outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved Health Outcomes: Increase overall health and wellness, reducing the incidence of chronic diseases among older adults. (Health &amp; Wellness Program)</li> <li>2. Enhanced Quality of Life: Promote a greater sense of purpose and fulfilment among seniors, leading to higher life satisfaction. (Intergeneration Info-Literacy Program &amp; Story Telling Circles)</li> <li>3. Increased Social Cohesion: Strengthen community ties, leading to a supportive network for older individuals. (Safe Home)</li> <li>4. Greater Accessibility to Services: Enhancing seniors' health and wellness with an AI-Powered Elderly-Friendly Cycling Exercise Monitor. (Enhance senior fitness via technology)</li> <li>5. Empowered Older Adults: Encourage seniors to take an active role in their health and well-being, leading to more informed lifestyle choices. (Programmes on Nutrition and Food)</li> </ol>
2	Nanyang Technological University	NTU Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Programme (SIE)	<p>The SIE Programme is designed to foster meaningful social impact solutions, providing students and graduates from various Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs) with the support needed in their social enterprises or social impact solutions. Through experiential learning, the programme encourages creativity,</p>

S/N	Name of IHL	Programme Name	Programme Description
			interdisciplinary collaboration, and systemic change to address the root causes of social problems. By offering initial guidance on creating social impact solutions, the SIE programme provides the students with the foundation to launch social enterprises that drive lasting, positive impact.
3	Singapore Polytechnic	MOE Adopt-a-block (AAB) initiative with Dover Community	<p>The "Adopt-a-Block" (AAB) programme, developed by MOE, empower youth to become change-makers in their communities, working towards a more sustainable future for Singapore. Students will focus on sustainability outreach and initiatives to encourage both residents and students to adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives.</p> <p>In Singapore Polytechnic (SP), the AAB initiative is integrated into the Sustainable Innovation Project (SIP) core module, training around 100 students each semester in Design Thinking to engage Dover residents in sustainability practices.</p> <p>In its first implementation, SP students adopted four blocks in Dover Crescent – blocks 28A to 28D, positively impacting more than 3000 residents in Dover Crescent by addressing community-specific sustainability challenges.</p>
4	Singapore University of Social Sciences	Bloom and Social Sustainability Leadership Forum (SSLF)	<p>Bloom, an annual event by SUSS Student Life, promotes positive mental health and well-being through workshops and activities. Each October, Bloom supports more than 200 students with mindfulness practices, self-care techniques, and resilience-building exercises that help manage stress and improve emotional well-being. In 2023, 245 students participated, reflecting SUSS' commitment to a supportive campus focused on mental health.</p> <p>Launched in 2024, SSLF is an international forum by SUSS to advance social sustainability among university student leaders. With a focus on resilience and inclusivity, the forum enables participants to exchange best practices and develop action plans addressing social sustainability themes. SSLF 2025, co-hosted in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, will focus on Active Aging, fostering advocacy and solution-building for age-inclusive, resilient communities. The forum is expected to engage 100 student leaders from ASEAN, China and India.</p>



S/N	Name of IHL	Programme Name	Programme Description
5	Singapore University of Technology and Design	STEAMunity	<p>STEAMunity is a community-centric national programme and a joint project by the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) and the Science Centre Singapore (SCS), supported by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and National Research Foundation (NRF). It hopes to inspire students to solve actual community problems by combining Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) with Design and Artificial Intelligence (DAI). Open to students from different schools and backgrounds, STEAMunity encourages students to break out of their comfort zones to become the next generation of design and technology innovators.</p> <p>Through STEAMunity, an inclusive and novel learning opportunity has been created for students across different educational institutions, including secondary schools, junior colleges and polytechnics. By working with South West CDC, STEAMunity will be the first time offering community projects that could impact a whole District. Apart from SUTD and Science Centre, all five polytechnics – Temasek Polytechnic, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Nanyang Polytechnic, Republic Polytechnic and Singapore Polytechnic – will be involved in the second run of STEAMunity that is taking place in mid-December 2024.</p>