

MEDIA RELEASE

Launch of the Manpower for Strategic Economic Priorities (M-SEP) scheme to support firms' expansion plans

1. The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI), together with the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and participating economic agencies, has launched the Manpower for Strategic Economic Priorities (M-SEP) scheme.
2. The M-SEP scheme was first announced by Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr Tan See Leng, in his MOM Committee of Supply 2022 speech on 4 March 2022. The scheme complements the changes that MOM is making to Singapore's work pass framework, by supporting the growth of businesses that contribute to Singapore's strategic economic priorities through ambitious investment, innovation, or internationalisation activities.
3. Designed to support firms that are needle-movers for Singapore's economic priorities and competitiveness, M-SEP will help these firms seize opportunities to grow in Singapore successfully, while securing jobs and training opportunities for Singaporeans in the process.
4. The scheme gives qualifying firms the flexibility to temporarily hire S Pass and Work Permit holders above the prevailing Dependency Ratio Ceiling (DRC) and S Pass sub-DRC. To qualify, firms must also commit to employ and/or train locals. Eligible firms can obtain additional S Pass and Work Permit quotas of up to 5% above their base workforce headcount, subject to a cap of 50 workers per firm. Such additional flexibilities accorded under the M-SEP scheme will last for 2 years upon enrolment, and may be renewed thereafter, subject to meeting renewal conditions.
5. To qualify for the scheme, firms must satisfy both of the following conditions:

- a. Condition 1 - Participate in programmes or activities in line with one of the following key economic priorities:
 - a. Investments which support Singapore's hub strategy
 - b. Innovation or Research & Development (R&D)
 - c. Internationalisation

(Please refer to the details in Annex A.)

- b. Condition 2 - Commit to hiring and/or training locals.

(Please refer to the details in Annex B.)

6. To be eligible for M-SEP renewal, firms will also have to show that they have met both commitments by the end of the M-SEP support period. Firms will also have to maintain their local workforce share during this period. Those that fail to do so will be suspended from M-SEP for 2 years.

7. The M-SEP scheme signals Singapore's commitment to remain open and connected, and the Government's continued support for our businesses to amplify economic growth and the creation of more good jobs for Singaporeans. Applications are now open. More details can be found on MOM's [website](#).

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Annex A – Details of Condition 1

To fulfil Condition 1, firms must participate in at least one of the following initiatives by economic agencies, or meet any of the economic criteria below:

S/N	Qualifying Firms	Supporting Agency
1	Recipients of Development and Expansion Incentive (DEI) , including International Headquarters-DEI	Economic Development Board (EDB)
2	Pioneer Certificate Incentive (PC) recipients	EDB
3	Research and Innovation Scheme for Companies (RIS(C)) participants	EDB
4	Manufacturers with significant activities in Singapore (i.e. hire at least 500 locals)	EDB
5	Global Trader Programme (GTP) participants	Enterprise Singapore (EnterpriseSG)
6	Scale-Up SG participants	EnterpriseSG
7	Singapore Global Executive Programme (SGEP) participants	EnterpriseSG
8	High-growth startups that are incorporated in Singapore with minimum investment amount of USD\$10 million over the past 36 months, and have received funding from EDBI, SEEDS Capital or other recognised investment firms. ¹	EDB/EnterpriseSG
9	Accreditation@SG Digital recipients	Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)
10	SG:D Spark participants	IMDA
11	Maritime Sector Incentive – Approved International Shipping Enterprise (MSI-AIS) Award recipients	Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)
12	Maritime Sector Incentive – Shipping-related Support Services (MSI-SSS) Award recipients	MPA
13	Maritime Sector Incentive – Maritime Leasing (ML) Award recipients	MPA
14	Maritime Cluster Fund – Business Development (MCF-BD) recipients	MPA
15	Selected Business Improvement Fund (BIF) grantees with innovative projects that bring about substantial transformation and/or productivity savings	Singapore Tourism Board (STB)
16	Selected Singapore Tourism Accelerator (STA) participants with innovative projects that bring about substantial transformation and/or productivity savings	STB

¹ This criteria is the same as the Tech@SG criteria. See [link](#) for more details on Tech@SG.

Annex B – Details of Condition 2

To fulfil Condition 2, firms must commit to one of the following:

S/N	Condition	Description	Whitelisted Programmes
Either or both:			
2a	Increase in net hiring of locals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the overall <u>local workforce</u> size, i.e. those earning a monthly salary of at least \$1,400. 	NA
2b	Workforce training resulting in job enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send local workers to one of the whitelisted training programmes. These training programmes will require companies to demonstrate sufficient effort in directly training the individual (e.g. structured on-the-job training, assigning dedicated mentors), and will result in job enhancements. Job enhancements could include promotion with wage increment, expanded job scope or higher-level responsibilities. Trainees can be a new entrant into the company or an existing worker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerated Pathways for Technicians & Assistant Engineers (Manufacturing) Grant Work-Study Degree in-employment upgraders Work-Study Diploma Work-Study Post-Diploma Work-Study Certificates Redeployment/ Job Redesign Reskilling Career Conversion Programmes Capability Transfer Programme Maritime Leadership Programme Global Talent Programme (by MPA) Maritime Cluster Fund – Manpower Development (Management Associate)
Or:			
2c	Be an industry leader with training excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benefits the sector at significant scale, such as in filling critical skill gaps or manpower shortages for the sector. Has been recognised for having excellent established workplace learning structures to support business growth and strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Centre of Excellence for Workplace Learning Platinum/Gold-certified companies SkillsFuture Queen Bees

Annex C – Transcript of Media Soundbite Delivered by Minister for Manpower and Second Minister for Trade and Industry Dr Tan See Leng on 13 December 2022, Tuesday, on the Launch of Manpower for Strategic Economic Priorities (M-SEP) Scheme

I am announcing the launch of M-SEP, the Manpower for Strategic Economic Priorities scheme. It is a very targeted, very focused scheme which aims at helping needle-moving enterprises; those enterprises and companies that are very innovative, that have put in significant investments and that are also ramping up to internationalise. Because we believe that Singapore being a very small market, internationalisation is the way to go.

Our policies are moving in tandem, also, with the reduction in DRC (Dependency Ratio Ceiling) quotas and the sub-DRC quotas that would come in next year. We wanted to provide enterprises that are very innovative, that have made significant investments and that have also very firm and very aggressive internationalisation plans, the complementary foreign manpower to help them. We will work very closely with the companies to make sure that they have the requisite Work Permits, S Passes, depending on the sectors that they are in, so that they can continue to grow and to grow very aggressively. And that would then translate into a lot more opportunities for our local Singaporeans to move up the career path and at the same time, allow firms to get the type of technical expertise and talent needed.

At the same time, because this is coming in alongside the new refinements in our Employment Pass framework, and the launch of the new Overseas Networks and Expertise Pass, we believe that this would actually provide a very firm, reinforced and also strategic plan forward for enterprises to remain competitive, and put ourselves on the world map.

我们今天很高兴宣布我们另外一个新的计划 - 经济战略人力计划 (M-SEP)。这计划将帮助推动新加坡经济战略的企业，能够国际化 - 通过投资、创新或国际化的项目增长。这个计划提供有针对性的外国劳动力灵活性，以帮助这些企业的人源。这计划配合我们工作准证 (e-pass) 和顶级专才准证 (ONE pass) 的框架。我希望这计划能够帮助我们新加坡的企业促进他们的发展。这也能够给我们本地的金英更加多的机会，并且提高他们的技能，是一个双赢的计划。