

# PEP-SBF Awards 2022

Pro-Enterprise Initiative (PEI) Award - Silver



## Name of Initiative

Halal Application & Renewal – Making it Easy, Engaging and Exceptional

## Agency

Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS)



Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura  
(Islamic Religious Council of Singapore)

## Could you share briefly on what was the impetus that eventually led to the initiative, and how did you motivate yourself/your team to pursue it?

Businesses generally faced challenges meeting MUIS's Halal certification requirements, particularly among the smaller businesses as well as those with multiple chain outlets. This resulted in poor Halal certification compliance and late certification renewal causing the certification to lapse beyond the expiry date. Without their Halal certification, businesses lost a significant portion of their customers. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the situation was worsened.

It was during this time that we changed our perspective from the view that applying for Halal certification was merely a voluntary business decision to acknowledging that businesses are also critical in sustaining the Singapore's Halal ecosystem (e.g. providing Halal dining options, Halal food security, etc.). Thus, it is in MUIS's interest to facilitate and ensure that businesses can achieve Halal compliance and sustain their Halal certification. The MUIS Halal team decided to focus on rigorously engaging the Halal certificate holders and going deeper to understand their pain points and sought feedback on how MUIS can facilitate better.

## What were the challenges that you / your team encountered, and how did you / your team overcome them?

As MUIS is part of the whole of Government front-facing platform, GoBusiness Licensing (previously LicenseOne), MUIS had to ensure that the backend system would be complementary with the front-facing system, which is used by the Halal certificate holders and prospective Halal certificate applicants.

To create such a backend system required significant investment in financial resources and effort. During the development process, the team encountered certain system limitations such as mapping issues despite a lot of effort in conceptualising and doing many rounds of the User Acceptance Testing (UAT). The team continued to work closely with the vendors, IT support and the users to address the technical issues that arise from time to time before the eventual launch of the auto-renewal submission in March 2022.

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As a regulator, it is also a challenge for MUIS to balance meeting the needs of consumers—ensuring the Halal integrity is never compromised and at the same time, being pro-enterprise for the companies to grow their business further. Through regular engagements with internal and external stakeholders, the team has seen benefits in reaching a middle ground, where all parties are able to openly share their concerns and perspectives, appreciate alternative views and offer ideas and solutions to overcome challenges.

## What was the most memorable moment while working on this project?

The challenges, surprises – both good and bad are little elements that made the entire journey memorable. The COVID-19 pandemic has driven the team to find new ways to operate and make things work for both MUIS and businesses. The team recognised that the journey is never a short sprint, but a marathon to continually improve, so as to operate optimally, leveraging on the strengths of every member.

## Supporting Media/ Illustrations

**Key Changes of the Halal Certification Application System Enhancements**

**Key dates to take note**

- 11 Mar 2022 by 2100 hr**  
Submission of Halal certification applications with "Ready for Payment" status
- 12 Mar 2022 to 13 Mar 2022**  
Halal Certification Application system will be under maintenance
- 14 Mar 2022**  
Launch of the Halal Certification Application system

For more information, visit us at [halal.sg](http://halal.sg)

**How will the Enhancements Affect my Halal Application?**

- 1 System Maintenance**  
Down Period: 12 Mar 2022 to 13 Mar 2022  
All "Ready for Payment" status will be removed from the system. Draft applications have to be submitted by 11 Mar 2022, 2100hrs.
- 2 Revised GoBusiness Licensing Application Status**  
Additional GoBusiness Licensing application status introduced to reflect the progress of the application.
- 3 Auto-submission for Renewal Application**  
Renewal applications for Halal Schemes expiring 31 Apr 2022 onwards will be automatically submitted by the system.
- 4 Offline Payment**  
Offline payment details for multiple applications can be submitted via GoBusiness Licensing Portal.  
Video tutorial for offline payment can be viewed via link below: [www.muis.gov.sg/Halal-Certification/GoBusiness-Licensing](http://www.muis.gov.sg/Halal-Certification/GoBusiness-Licensing)
- 5 New Ingredient List Template**  
Revised ingredient list template provides better clarity to reduce the application processing time.
- 6 Virtual Branding**  
Virtual Brands are establishment names that only exist in online applications. Applicants for Eating Establishment and Food Preparation Area schemes can submit Virtual Brands in the online application form.
- 7 New Amendment Categories**  
**NEW** Add product or ingredient to existing records (Per Product and Whole Plant Scheme)  
**NEW** Amend name or ingredient for 2 or more outlets (Per Eating Establishment and Food Preparation Area Scheme)
- 8 Manufacturing Company Details**  
Brand Owners under Product Scheme to indicate contract manufacturer details to provide better clarity for more efficient processing.  
The certificate expiry date for Brand Owners will be streamlined with contract manufacturer certificate expiry date.

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