

SMF COLLABORATES WITH IE SINGAPORE AND IPI TO LAUNCH ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK SINGAPORE



Marking Singapore as a member of EEN, the largest business network in the world

Singapore firms can now leverage on the world's largest business and innovation support platform, Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), with its network spanning 64 countries, 600 organisations and several million enterprises.

The EEN Singapore Centre is a collaboration between International Enterprise (IE) Singapore, Singapore

Manufacturing Federation (SMF) and Intellectual Property Intermediary (IPI). It is set up under European Commission's Agency for Small and Medium Industries to promote two-way business between the EU and the rest of the world. EEN Singapore will give Singapore companies access to technology know-how, intellectual property and exclusive access to 10,000 business and technology partnership opportunities in Europe.



Singapore companies can leverage on EEN Singapore to help them make foray into the European markets

Under the tripartite partnership, IE Singapore will drive in-depth facilitation of business partnerships, SMF is the overall secretariat that will reach out to businesses and other trade associations and chambers, while IPI will lead technology and research partnerships. Together, this consortium aims to help Singapore companies establish their presence in the bigger overseas market by promoting and assisting business and technology partnerships between Singapore and European companies.

The EEN Singapore Centre was jointly launched by Mr S Iswaran, Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry) and Dr Michael Pulch, Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union in Singapore on 21 April 2016. Some 300 participants including chief executives of local firms, as well as representatives of trade associations and chambers attended the launch event.



Mr S Iswaran was received by Mr Sunny Koh, SMF's Deputy President (left), and Mr Douglas Foo (second from right)

Mr Iswaran said that the European Union accounts for 10 per cent of Singapore's total trade, with bilateral trade standing at about S\$91 billion in 2015. He emphasised that innovation and internationalisation are key drivers for Singapore, and the EEN platform will enable Singapore companies tap on the international network to drive innovation efforts.

Singapore enterprises, which face growing challenges such as high business costs, tight labour pool, and global economic slowdown, must actively seek the business opportunities beyond their existing markets and collaborate with each other to grow. The establishment of EEN Singapore is therefore timely for companies in Europe and Singapore to find business partners and leverage on each other's strengths to expand their business markets. EEN Singapore is supported under IE Singapore's Local Enterprise and Association Development (LEAD) programme.

Encouraging collaboration is also in line with SMF's strategy to help companies explore and establish their presence abroad, whether it is bringing companies out of Singapore or linking overseas businesses with Singapore companies.

SMF President Mr Douglas Foo said, "EEN Singapore is a key and practical platform that can assist Singapore companies to collaborate with EU companies on specific business projects and technology. Through the EEN Singapore database, we can actively assist companies in Singapore to find business partners with EU companies to form various business and technology collaborations."

He added that companies have to register their interest to collaborate on the EEN Singapore website. EEN Singapore will then help to identify potential businesses for companies to collaborate with.



More than 200 participants from businesses and associations witnessed the inauguration

As part of the launch event, a panel discussion titled "Europe-Singapore partnerships – creating growth opportunities for global markets" was held with participants sharing insights on the catalytic role of EEN Singapore. More than 200 companies from Singapore and Europe also took part in a networking brokerage event held during the launch.

Singapore firms can join the network for free. To date, over 200 companies have registered to be on the Singapore database. Almost 50 have been matched with business partners.