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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **LABOUR MOVEMENT GROWS THE U ASSOCIATE ECOSYSTEM IN THE ICT SECTOR AMIDST GROWING DEMAND FOR TALENT**

*NTUC also announces appointment of Dr Janil Puthucheary, Senior Minister of State, as an advisor to the U Associate Leaders Circle*

#### **Evolving Economy**

1. The employment landscape is undergoing profound shifts in the current digital revolution, in both advanced and emerging countries alike. While some jobs are disappearing, many jobs are being transformed and many new jobs are being created. With digital transformation happening at a rapid pace, there is a strong demand for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) professionals across key economic sectors, including ICT and non-ICT industries. According to the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)'s Annual Infocomm Media Professional survey in 2016, the number of infocomm professionals employed grew by 4.2% from 2015 to reach 180,000 in 2016. Together with 18,200 infocomm job vacancies, the total demand for infocomm professionals increased by 2.8% to reach 198,200 in 2016. Demand for infocomm professionals is projected to grow by another 42,300 in the next three years (2017 – 2019).

#### **Growing the U Associate Ecosystem in the ICT sector**

2. Recognising the importance of raising competencies and narrowing skills gaps in the fast-changing digital economy, the Labour Movement has been focusing on growing its outreach in emerging ICT areas, such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, immersive media and internet of things, to curate relevant programmes that meet the progression needs of our Professionals, Managers, and Executives.

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3. To achieve this, three new ICT associations signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to join the NTUC U Associate ecosystem on 12 March 2018. They are AI Singapore, (ISC)<sup>2</sup> Singapore Chapter and Tech Singapore Advocate. With the three new associations, the Labour Movement can reach out to about 40,000 professionals in the ICT sector.

4. The MOU signing ceremony was witnessed by Dr Janil Puthucheary, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Communications and Information and Ministry of Education. It was held at the NTUC Centre and was attended by about 40 guests including U Associate leaders from the ICT sector and representatives from government agencies, such as the Infocomm Media Development Authority, the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore and the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

5. With the new additions to the UA ICT cluster, the UA ecosystem now has 12 ICT associations, up from the five associations in 2017. Through its expanded ecosystem, the Labour movement, together with the ICT U Associates aims to co-develop sectoral programmes to upskill PMEs in the industry as well as grow a pipeline of industry professionals to meet the demand for skills in emerging ICT areas. Leveraging the community of industry practitioners within the U Associate ecosystem, the Labour Movement will play the crucial role of preparing PMEs to be more aware of what it takes to succeed in in-demand jobs, such as user interface user experience (UXUI) design, data science and cyber forensics investigation.

6. President of (ISC)<sup>2</sup> Singapore Chapter, Matthias Yeo said, “(ISC)<sup>2</sup> Singapore Chapter is excited to partner with NTUC U associates to promote and advance the education and professional development of information security professionals within Singapore. The partnership will further the mission of the chapter, create awareness about the benefits of information security to the community at large.”



### **Newly appointed Advisor to NTUC U Associate**

7. The Labour Movement also announced today that Dr Janil will become an advisor to the U Associate Leaders Circle, a group of key elected leaders from NTUC U Associate.

8. Dr Janil said, “We will help workers and businesses build strong digital capabilities to seize the opportunities created as we transform into a Smart Nation. There will be an increasing demand for ICT-skilled workers in all sectors.”

9. NTUC Assistant-Director-General and Director of U Associate, Vivek Kumar said, “The Labour Movement is keen to develop our talent to have a successful and rewarding career in the inter-connected emerging areas in the ICT sector, namely Data, Artificial Intelligence, and Cybersecurity. With the new U Associates joining today, we hope to speed-up the momentum of our collaborative efforts. We are also very pleased to have the guidance and counsel of Dr Janil as our advisor, as we seek to further our outreach across sectors and develop specific programs to help prepare our talent for jobs of the future.”

10. Prior to the MOU signing ceremony, Dr Janil had a closed-door discussion with the U Associate leaders on how the Labour Movement can work together with the U Associates and tripartite partners to grow the ICT workforce. Leaders brought up challenges such as shortage of skilled manpower in the ICT sector and shared suggestions to overcome this. Some of the suggestions raised included reviewing our tertiary curriculum to provide more specialised training and attracting our youth to join the sector through tie-ups with overseas companies.

11. Dr Janil highlighted that the Singapore education system is working on blurring the lines between education and industry so that the education system can remain relevant and up-to date with changes in the industry. However, he noted that education would not stop at school and that people would need to continually upgrade and upskill to remain relevant.



12. Leaders also highlighted the importance of raising awareness on the growing demand for ICT skills across all sectors. They also noted that there are many different specialisations within the ICT sector itself and that the tripartite partners and schools need to work together to identify the ICT needs in the different sectors to be able to train the future workforce to meet these demands.

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### **About National Trades Union Congress (NTUC)**

The National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) is a national confederation of trade unions as well as a network of professional associations and partners across all sectors in Singapore. NTUC's objectives are to help Singapore stay competitive and working people remain employable for life; to enhance the social status and wellbeing of our members and working people; and to build a strong, responsible and caring labour movement. NTUC's vision is to be an inclusive labour movement for all collars, ages and nationalities. NTUC is at the heart of the Labour Movement, which comprises 58 affiliated unions, two affiliated associations, 10 social enterprises, six related organisations as well as a growing ecosystem of U Associates and enterprise partners. For more details on NTUC, please visit our website at [www.ntuc.org.sg](http://www.ntuc.org.sg).

### **About NTUC U Associate**

U Associate is a network of professional guilds and associations by the Labour Movement to reach out to working professionals. Since its launch in March 2011, the U Associate ecosystem has grown; providing valuable networking opportunities across different sectors, creating avenues for cross-pollination of ideas and cross-application of skillsets for our working professionals. At the sectoral level, NTUC collaborates with U Associates to develop careers and skills progression plans for working professionals, so as to equip them with future-ready skills for the jobs of tomorrow. For more information, visit [www.ntuc.org.sg/uassociate](http://www.ntuc.org.sg/uassociate).



## **About AI Singapore**

AI Singapore is a national programme in artificial intelligence (AI) set up to enhance Singapore's AI capabilities to power our future digital economy. AI Singapore will bring together Singapore-based research institutions and AI start-ups and companies. These collaborations will grow the knowledge, tools and talent crucial to powering Singapore's AI efforts. AI Singapore is driven by a government-wide partnership involving the National Research Foundation (NRF), the Smart Nation and Digital Government Office (SMART), the Economic Development Board (EDB), the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA), SGInnovate, and Integrated Health Information Systems. NRF will invest up to \$150 million over five years in AI Singapore.

## **About (ISC)<sup>2</sup> Singapore Chapter**

Founded in 2012, (ISC)<sup>2</sup> Singapore Chapter is based out of Singapore and consists of (ISC)<sup>2</sup> credential holders throughout Singapore. Our chapter program provides members a forum to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and ideas, development of leadership and professional skills, and advancement of information systems security. We also provide our members with access to a variety of industry resource and educational programs to keep our members informed of the latest advances in technology and techniques. Our members consist of (ISC)<sup>2</sup> credentialed professionals who hold either a SSCP, CAP, CSSLP, and/or a CISSP or advanced concentration certification. Our chapter program is focused on sharing knowledge and exchanging ideas among security professionals in the local area. Ultimately, we want to advance the field of information security by educating practitioners and the public at large on how to protect and defend against security threats.

## **About Tech Singapore Advocates (TSA)**

Tech Singapore Advocates is a not-for-profit entity focused on the tech sector. Our mission is to foster, nurture and incubate and accelerate the growth of technology innovation and digital businesses in Singapore and across South East Asia. Tech Singapore Advocates has been incorporated along the lines of [Tech London Advocates](#) with the vision of creating a strong and vibrant tech corridor between London in the United Kingdom and Singapore Along with five other Southeast Asian countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam). [Tech London Advocates](#) is a private sector led coalition of over 5,000 experts, key opinion leaders and policy makers from the tech sector in over 50 countries, who have committed to championing London's potential as a world-class hub for tech and digital businesses. It strives to support London's tech start-ups and high-growth businesses in finding new investment, new talent and continued success. It also aims to connect London tech with other leading tech hubs around the world.