

## **FACT SHEET** **(February 2014)**

### **Encouraging New Ways of Work in Singapore**

The enhancement in infocomm infrastructure and ensuing services, as well as the widespread use of computers and broadband<sup>1</sup> are now making the possibility of flexible work arrangements more viable than before. The deployment of Next Generation Nationwide Broadband Network (Next Gen NBN) also makes implementing Home-Based Work and Smart Work Centres more attractive as the network offers pervasive, affordable broadband connection that supports major office functions such as high quality video-conferencing and cloud computing.

By suitably digitising work processes, employers can leverage on technology to enable their employees to have more flexibility in when and where they work. These New Ways of Work go beyond occasional flexible work arrangements (such as telecommuting) to enable employees to work from home (i.e. Home-Based Work<sup>2</sup>) or a location near home (e.g. Smart Work Centres<sup>3</sup>) on a longer-term basis.

#### *Call-for-Collaboration (CFC) to Conduct Pilots*

In a move towards encouraging employers to adopt New Ways of Work through the use of infocomm technology, IDA launched a Call-for-Collaboration (CFC) in April 2012 to invite industry players to collaborate and conduct pilots on new work practices.

Comprising two tracks, Home-Based Work and Smart Work Centres (SWC), the CFC was launched in consultation with then-Ministry of Community, Youth and Sports (MCYS), Ministry of Manpower (MOM), Employer Alliance, National Trades Union Congress (NTUC)-Women's Development Secretariat, and the Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF).

The CFC arises from one of the key recommendations by the Tripartite Workgroup on ICT-enabled Home-Based Jobs – comprising representatives from IDA, MOM and the industry – to set up a dedicated workspace at home to ensure that home-based employees have a professional work environment to be productive. An alternative option is to enable employees to work at Smart Work Centres (SWCs) near their homes if a dedicated workspace is not available or viable at home.

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<sup>1</sup> According to IDA's 2011 Annual Survey on Infocomm Usage in Households and by Individuals, 86% of households have access to at least one computer at home while 85% have access to broadband.

<sup>2</sup> In Home-Based Work, an employee's home is the primary location of work, and returning to office is required occasionally only. This arrangement is different from telecommuting where the office remains the primary work location.

<sup>3</sup> Smart Work Centres (SWCs) provide professional working spaces close to residential areas, and are accessible to employees from different employers.

### *Award of CFC for Home-Based Work*

The CFC garnered strong interest from the industry and at the close of the CFC in June 2012, 14 proposals were received. In January 2013, two proposals, led by SingTel and Business Gateway Asia, were awarded under a Call-for-Collaboration (CFC) to encourage employers to adopt New Ways of Work through the use of ICT.

Pilots were carried out in a variety of industries such as telecommunications and education, and involved job functions such as business consultants, designers, call-centre agents and tutors. The pilots, running for six months to a year, are enabled by ICT services developed specifically for the respective pilots. Productivity and employee satisfaction will be used as proxy measures for the success of these pilots.

### *Award of Call For Proposal (CFP) for Smart Work Centres*

While no award was made in the CFC launched in April 2012, the proposals from this CFC provided valuable insights on the various commercial and operational aspects for SWC models in Singapore.

With the new insights, IDA, together with NLB and PA, identified community spaces in residential areas that are easily accessible by public transport as possible locations for the set up of SWCs.

In May 2013, IDA called for potential operators to submit proposals to operate SWCs within or near residential areas. At the close of the CFP in July 2013, nine proposals were received. The proposal by Regus, a company that provides flexible workspaces worldwide, was selected in January 2014 to set up SWCs in the libraries. The first SWCs will be set up at Jurong Regional Library, Geylang East Public Library and Toa Payoh Public Library. The SWCs will offer access to print and copy facilities, video- conferencing services as well as high speed internet access.

The public can look forward to subscribing to the SWC services by second quarter of 2014.

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ISSUED BY CORPORATE AND MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION  
INFOCOMM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE

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### **About Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore**

The mission of the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA) is to develop information technology and telecommunications within Singapore with a view to serve citizens of all ages and companies of all sizes. IDA does this by actively supporting the growth of innovative technology companies and start-ups in Singapore, working with leading global IT companies as well as developing excellent information technology and telecommunications infrastructure, policies and capabilities for Singapore. For more news and information, visit [www.ida.gov.sg](http://www.ida.gov.sg)

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