

## PRESS RELEASE

# Inaugural Batch of SMEs Commit to Corporate Purpose as Graduates of Unilever x NVPC Purpose for Growth Programme

- *16 committed SMEs have completed the Unilever x NVPC Purpose for Growth Programme, where they embarked on a transformational journey of structured learning and mentorship to implement corporate purpose for sustainable business growth.*

**SINGAPORE, 21 February 2024** – The National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) announced the successful completion of the Purpose for Growth Programme, a strategic collaboration with Unilever Singapore. This joint effort is aimed at fostering corporate purpose among small-medium enterprises (SMEs) in Singapore, enabling them to drive sustained growth for business and society. NVPC believes that encouraging more companies to embark on a corporate purpose journey to give back to Singapore requires leading companies to show the way.

Attended by 90 participants and distinguished guests including **Mr Alvin Tan, Minister of State for the Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth, and the Ministry of Trade & Industry**, **Mr Tony Soh, CEO of NVPC**, **Ms Rebecca Marmot, Chief Sustainability Officer at Unilever**, and **Mr Samir Singh, Chair at Unilever Asia Pte Ltd**, the event celebrated the graduation of 16 SMEs who successfully completed the comprehensive programme, and marks a pivotal milestone for them to apply their acquired knowledge, enabling them to embark on the next phase of their corporate purpose journey.

A valuable takeaway from the programme centred around network expansion and knowledge exchange. **Mr Saurabh Sardana, Managing Partner & Founder, Urooj Insights**, shared, “As founders, we are idea-rich but time-poor, and have very limited opportunities to learn. Sessions like these helped to connect fellow entrepreneurs from different industries and backgrounds, giving me an opportunity to voice out my corporate purpose and get valuable feedback from my peers. Knowledge and learning never fail you—it’s an asset that you keep accumulating.”

Looking ahead, Mr Sardana already has an action plan for driving purpose in his company after the programme. “Purpose need not be a very serious or technical exercise. We plan to bring all our teams together and try to gamify the experience of finding purpose. The idea here is to have a lot of fun while responding to serious questions, so it doesn’t become daunting or overwhelming, and everybody contributes to our shared success and growth.”

In partnership with Unilever Singapore, the Purpose for Growth Programme is the first collaboration spearheaded by NVPC as part of its refreshed Company of Good strategy, aiming to equip SMEs with the knowledge and tools necessary to integrate and activate

corporate purpose as part of their organisational fabric. Corporate purpose can be a powerful driver for SMEs towards long-term business growth and building a sustainable business model that aligns with wider societal values. It not only enhances brand reputation and customer loyalty, but also provides a strategic framework to navigate challenges and contribute meaningfully to the communities they serve.

"At Unilever, we have seen how purpose and sustainability, when embedded into our brands and business models, contribute to the company's growth, reduce costs, lessen risks, and serve as a magnet for great talent," said **Mr Samir Singh, Chair, Unilever Asia Pte Ltd.** "It has been an honour to co-create with NVPC the 'Purpose for Growth' Programme. The platform gives Unilever an opportunity to share our experience, and inspire, train and empower SMEs to embrace corporate and brand purpose for business growth."

In Phase 1, launched in June 2023, over 50 SMEs attended a workshop session to understand the fundamentals of corporate purpose, delving into the "what," "how," and "why" of purpose-driven business practices.

Phase 2 involved a select group of 16 dedicated SMEs developing their corporate purpose under the mentorship of Unilever leaders. Over five months, participants engaged in learning sessions covering tangible and practical business topics, where they gained the know-how on drafting an impactful purpose statement, planning purpose-led stakeholder communications, developing purpose-driven initiatives, and implementing impact measurement. Each session also entailed small group discussions with the mentors, where participants continued to dig deep within their organisation to articulate and activate their corporate purpose.

The engagement in the programme is a testament to local SMEs demonstrating their eagerness to take action to further their business growth while prioritising societal and community advancement.

"This graduation ceremony is not the end, but rather it is an exciting beginning of the journey for our SMEs. NVPC values its strategic partnership with Unilever, recognising the pivotal role of such collaborations with 'queen bees' in driving ecosystem-level change. SMEs, as critical players of our societal and economic ecosystem, have the potential to be a powerful force for good in society. NVPC is committed to nurturing SMEs and enabling them to amplify their impact. We look forward to seeing how these purpose-driven SMEs will lead change and become trailblazers for a better shared future," said **Mr Tony Soh, CEO of NVPC.**

By April 2024, the participants are expected to kickstart specific initiatives relating to their corporate purpose, tapping into the organisation's strategic assets and contributing to one or more impact areas under the Corporate Purpose framework. Their efforts will be

supported by ongoing mentorship from NVPC and Unilever as they sustain and deepen their commitment in their corporate purpose.

For the full list of participating SMEs, please refer to **Annex A**.

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### **About National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC)**

Through its Company of Good strategy, the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) engages organisations to adopt corporate purpose and demonstrate impact across the people, society, governance, environment and economic dimensions.

NVPC is the steward of the City of Good vision for Singapore, where individuals, organisations, communities and leaders come together to give their best to build a more caring, inclusive and compassionate society.

Learn more at [thecompanyofgood.sg](https://thecompanyofgood.sg)

### **About Unilever**

Unilever is one of the world's leading suppliers of Beauty & Wellbeing, Personal Care, Home Care, Nutrition and Ice Cream products, with sales in over 190 countries and products used by 3.4 billion people every day. We have 127,000 employees and generated sales of €59.6 billion in 2023.

For more information about Unilever and our brands, please visit [www.unilever.com](https://www.unilever.com).

### **For media enquiries, please contact:**

<b>Garrick Lee</b>	<a href="mailto:garricklee@nvpc.org.sg">garricklee@nvpc.org.sg</a>	+65 9711 9331
<b>Ruder Finn Team</b>	<a href="mailto:RFSingapore_NVPC@RuderFinnAsia.com">RFSingapore_NVPC@RuderFinnAsia.com</a>	+65 8522 6508

## **ANNEX A**

### **List of participating SMEs**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Company</b>
1	Adriana Lim	Director	Abry Pte. Ltd.
2	Joalin Lim	CEO	Agape-Life MedTech & Healthcare Group

3	Cheryl Wee	Founder	Cheryl W Pte. Ltd.
	Yuen Wan Jin	Nutritionist & Project Manager	
4	John Ong	Executive Chairman	FT Consulting Pte. Ltd.
5	Hidekatsu Shigekawa	Director	H.A.M. Creations Pte. Ltd.
6	Donovan Tan	Founder & CEO	Loupe Asia Pte. Ltd.
7	Michelle Lim	CEO, Co-founder	Make The Change Pte. Ltd.
	Pedro Aguirre	Co-founder	
8	Beatrice Tan	Co-founder	Mykilio Pte. Ltd.
9	James Wu	Managing Director	Preschool Market Pte. Ltd.
	Leo Pei Yu	Community and Partnerships Development Assistant	
10	Greg Tan	Co-founder	SG Assist Pte. Ltd.
	Jarvis Sha	Community Partnerships Lead	
11	Sho Nan Fang	Director	Tembusu CSR Pte. Ltd.
12	Karyn Lee	Admin & Operations Manager	The Therapy Room Pte. Ltd.
	Olivia Ong	Psychologist	
13	Kenneth Chia	Managing Director	TheSeafoodCompany Pte. Ltd.
14	Jennifer Lim	Director	Thy Dreams Matter Pte. Ltd.
15	Low Eng Choon	Founder	Unit Wealth Asia Pacific Pte. Ltd.
	Ng Seo Ping	Senior Advisor, Corporate Strategy and Operational Planning	
16	Saurabh Sardana	Managing Partner	Urooj Insights Pte. Ltd.