

Bringing Social Sustainability to the Fore:

Ngee Ann Polytechnic launches Centre for Organisational Resilience and Inclusion to develop healthier organisations and purpose-driven learners

NP partners And Pte. Ltd. to develop training programmes for corporates and adult learners on organisational design and sustainable culture

NP revamps curriculum and launches new internship and scholarship programmes to equip students with people and business lenses to help companies make social impact



L to R: Ms Wee Pek Ling, Dialogue in the Dark Guide, Mr Muhamad Imran Bin Mean, Student, Mr Lim Kok Kiang, Ngee Ann Polytechnic Principal & CEO, Minister for Education Mr Chan Chun Sing, Mr Abel Ariza, Managing Director, Sodexo Malaysia & Singapore, Ms Joanna Soh, Chief Operations Officer, Stewardship Asia Centre, Ms Shirley Lim, Regional Lead, Sustainability, Fullerton Health, and Mr Viktor Wahadaniah, Senior Lecturer, Ngee Ann Polytechnic

SINGAPORE, 1 August 2024 – Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) announced its plans to shine the spotlight on social sustainability, the 'S' in ESG, in response to the Forward Singapore (Forward SG) exercise to refresh the nation's social compact.

At an event graced by Minister for Education, Mr Chan Chun Sing, NP launched its new Centre for Organisational Resilience and Inclusion (CORI) – the first of its kind among Institutes of Higher Learning – to provide training, consultancy, and research in human system design. In the face of increasing diversity and disruption, CORI will help organisations and learners drive positive outcomes for business, its stakeholders, and the larger community. CORI's focus on organisational resilience and inclusion will equip learners with the practicable skills to build healthy systems that bring about positive and long-term social impact.

Unlocking the business value of sustainability

Focusing on sustainability – both social and environmental – makes business sense. Companies that invest in sustainability are more likely to establish a positive reputation and gain the trust of stakeholders. A Nielsen study¹ reported that 66% of customers would pay more for products and services from companies that are committed to making a positive social and environmental impact. A LinkedIn study² also found that 62% of professionals placed importance on a prospective employer's stance on sustainability, indicating that businesses that prioritise sustainability have a strategic advantage in attracting talent.

In light of these trends, coupled with the increasing demands by stakeholders for organisations to act on ESG issues, the timely launch of CORI will drive industry collaboration and education to elevate social sustainability for the benefit of both organisations and society.

Through an academic partnership with And Pte. Ltd., a leading Organisational Development (OD) consultancy, CORI will develop and deliver programmes to help businesses grow sustainably by addressing the needs of multiple and diverse stakeholders, including employees and the communities in which they operate in. CORI focuses on the emerging field of dialogic OD, which draws from various disciplines – including business management, communication studies, economics, psychology, and sociology – in developing its training, consultancy, and research programmes. Concepts from neuroscience and psychodynamics will further enrich these programmes' interdisciplinary foundation, providing deeper insights into the complexities of human interactions within systems and organisations.

For a start, CORI will launch its **Organisational Design and Sustainable Culture training programme**, which will be open to corporate participants and individual adult leaders for registration through NP's CET Academy from August 2024. This 300-hour programme focuses on the design of effective organisations that can withstand challenges and disruptions, as well as intervention strategies to manage resistance and anxiety among teams – key skills that will help HR, OD practitioners, people leaders and business owners create healthy work cultures. With the first run due to begin by October 2024, the programme is expected to train 240 professionals from over 30 companies in the next three years.

"Although social sustainability is an emerging field, it is already gaining traction among organisations and businesses that are seeking new strategies and solutions to address evolving workplace complexities. Indeed, the work of helping individuals and teams to understand and manage human systems for long-term growth is more pressing now than ever. At And, we share NP's vision of bringing social sustainability to the forefront and its commitment to deliver transformative programmes that will greatly enhance organisational health and individual resilience," said Mr Tong Yee, co-founder of And Pte. Ltd.

Nurturing purpose-driven learners with social impact skills

NP is also committed to nurturing graduates who can enact change in society while helping the economy thrive sustainably. Leveraging on the expertise of CORI, NP will enhance its Social Sustainability Learning Framework – an overarching framework that inculcates social sustainability into

¹ Study published in Mar 2023 by Forlance: "[Why investing in sustainability is a smart business move](#)"

² Study published in Nov 2023 by LinkedIn: "[Sustainability is the strongest talent magnet - but beware of greenwashing](#)"

curriculum – to introduce new initiatives aimed at equipping full-time diploma students with the competencies to tap growing career opportunities offered by companies with ESG priorities³.

NP is the first polytechnic to launch a **Corporate Purpose Internship (CPI)** programme, open to Year 3 students across all 36 diplomas. Students will apply their domain skills and knowledge to social impact projects relevant to the business strategy of their internship company, learning that doing good can help companies do well. NP piloted the CPI from September 2023, developed in collaboration with corporate partners Capella Hotels & Resorts, ofi and Sodexo. (Refer to Annex.) NP's CPI will be fully rolled out in September 2024 with additional partners from a range of MNCs, SMEs and non-profit organisations including Fullerton Health and Stewardship Asia Centre.

With support from Lien Foundation, NP also launched a new **Social Impact Scholarship** to recognise students who are passionate about social causes and nurture them to be future change leaders. Upon selection, scholars will undertake the CPI and shadow C-Suite representatives to understand how businesses embody purpose to do good, do right and do well.

In addition, NP unveiled its revamped **Diploma in Psychology & Community Development** (formerly known as Diploma in Community Development), which will have a sharpened focus in equipping learners with the skills and knowledge to enact social impact by harnessing public-private-people relationships. New modules⁴ will feature real-world projects and case studies from corporate and community partners including Metropolitan YMCA, SAP, Singtel, Sodexo and UOB. Over the next three years, more than 200 students will build capabilities beyond the traditional social service sector to more holistically address increasingly complex societal challenges, such as workplace inclusivity and sustained community engagement.

"We are proud to partner with Ngee Ann Polytechnic in advancing social sustainability by offering opportunities for students to gain insights into how a company implements its corporate purpose in operations. Having been the first partner to pilot NP's Corporate Purpose Internship programme and part of the industry panel that helped shape curriculum, our collaboration underscores our shared commitment to nurture purpose-driven leaders. At Sodexo, we believe that empowering students to create social impact and drive change is pivotal in shaping a sustainable and inclusive future for all," said Mr Abel Arizo, Managing Director of Sodexo Malaysia & Singapore.

"Amid increasingly complex challenges that our society is facing, it is more important now than ever to invest in building a truly resilient society. NP seeks to be a first mover and an agent for social impact to support Singapore in shaping communities through education, industry collaboration, research, and consultancy. We are committed to developing purpose-driven leaders who have the agency to drive social change at work and in life. Ultimately, our nation can only reap the full rewards of our sustainability drive when we successfully navigate the 3Ps of people, planet and profits," said Mr Lim Kok Kiang, Principal and CEO of Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

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³ According to a [HSBC survey](#), 96% of businesses expressed that their workforce played an important role in the strengthening of their overall sustainability credentials; and one in three business leaders sought to hire personnel with specific experience in sustainability.

⁴ New modules include 'Foundations of Corporate Social Sustainability', 'Psychology in Group Dynamics & Facilitation', and "Social Innovation & Sustainable Business Practices".

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About Ngee Ann Polytechnic

Ngee Ann Polytechnic started in 1963 and is today one of Singapore's leading institutions of higher learning with over 13,000 enrolled students in close to 40 disciplines. It seeks to develop students with a passion for learning, values for life, and competencies to thrive in a global workplace. The polytechnic also supports Continuing Education and Training (CET) through its CET Academy, which offers a wide range of part-time programmes and short courses. It works closely with industry partners to curate programmes for emerging skills, develop talent pipeline for the industries and help adult learners stay agile in today's rapidly changing global economy.

For more information, please visit www.np.edu.sg

Ngee Ann Polytechnic's Corporate Purpose Internship (CPI) Profiles

"As Sodexo is in the food services business, the company wanted to create social impact in this area. When we learnt that low-income families struggled with meal preparation, often resulting in meals that lacked essential nutrients, we decided to create the "Taste of Home" cookbook. Tapping the expertise of our chefs and nutritionists, the cookbook featured a series of recipes that used inexpensive but wholesome ingredients. In line with Sodexo's priority to provide clients with culinary excellence and nutrition, it was heartwarming to see the cookbooks distributed to households who benefitted from these meals."

Khin Ingyin Lae

Diploma in Community Development, Class of 2024

Ingyin was a Responsibility, DE&I and Marketing Intern at Sodexo Singapore Pte Ltd during her Corporate Purpose Internship

"Interning as a Front Office Trainee at Capella Singapore allowed me to balance guest services with impactful community projects. I worked on social sustainability initiatives, organising events to strengthen community partnerships and support the less fortunate. For instance, during Capella's Mid-Autumn Festival campaign in partnership with a social service agency, I was tasked with developing marketing strategies and logistics plans to promote inclusivity and community engagement."

Evangeline Neo En Xin

Year 3, Diploma in Tourism & Resort Management

Evangeline was a Front Office Trainee at Capella Singapore during her Corporate Purpose Internship

"I am keen to work in an organisation that prioritises social sustainability and giving back to society. By taking on a CPI, I hope to immerse myself in an environment where profitable organisations actively foster 'do good' practices. As a Marketing Specialist intern with the largest children's furniture store in Singapore, I look forward to utilising my marketing and event planning skills to enhance Kids Haven's publicity and manage campaigns and workshops for children, thereby contributing to a positive social impact while making a profit."

Shermaine Cheang

Year 3, Diploma in Chinese Studies

Shermaine will be embarking on her Corporate Purpose Internship in September as a Marketing Specialist Intern with Kids Haven, a company that specialises in children's furniture

NP'S SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY DRIVE DOING WELL BY DOING GOOD AND DOING RIGHT

2009

Dialogue in the Dark Singapore

Launched DIDSG, an experiential learning centre that promotes social inclusion and builds empathy by allowing participants to experience the world of the blind. To-date, over 200,000 have experienced the world of the blind.

2016

Service-Learning Pedagogy

First poly to launch a signature pedagogy to foster a sense of social responsibility. All students take at least one Service-Learning (S-L) module to apply their skills to address community needs.

2019

Civic Internships

Civic Internships (CI) were introduced to allow students with a strong sense of civic-mindedness to experience working in socially responsible organisations by applying their skills to promote social good. 365 students to date have embarked on CIs and today, we have over 100 CI partners.

2020

Lauded for Global Citizenship

Our S-L success gained wide recognition and won us the prestigious MacJannet Prize for Global Citizenship Award for exemplary student civic engagement. To-date, over 31,000 NP students have been impacted by S-L.

2021

Personalised Learning Pathway

We launched two minors (Sustainability and Social Leadership) to empower students to create a positive impact while gaining relevant skills and experience in adding value to businesses and communities through sustainable solutions and practices for social good.

2024

Champion of Good Award

NP was conferred the Champion of Good Award by the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre - the top honour in the 2024 Company of Good national recognition system.

Social Sustainability Learning Framework

Expanding our impact and influence, NP set up a Social Sustainability Learning Framework to develop social capital through research, training and consultancy, starting with a Centre for Organisational Resilience and Inclusion (CORI) to build healthier and resilient human systems. This includes a revamped curriculum and launching new internship and scholarship programmes to equip students with people and business lenses to help companies make social impact.