



## PRESS RELEASE

### **NParks announces \$5.6 million boost to landscape sector**

*More landscape companies to benefit from tripled funding cap for Landscape Productivity Grant (LPG) and other measures*

Singapore, 24 September 2016 – Singapore’s landscape industry is set to benefit from a funding boost of \$5.6 million over the next four years, and other supporting measures to further drive productivity, and raise capabilities and professionalism of the sector. The Landscape Productivity Roadmap - first announced in 2011 with a pool of \$12 million - has received a second tranche of \$5.6 million which includes \$3 million for the Landscape Productivity Grant (LPG) to help landscape companies and nurseries defray the cost of purchasing equipment. The remaining funding of \$2.6 million will go towards supply chain and skills studies, as well as manpower and industry surveys to prepare the sector for the future.

The announcement was made by Mr Desmond Lee, Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development, at Green Thumbs 2016, held at Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park. Speaking at the event, Mr Lee said, “As we strengthen the professionalism and capability of our landscaping workforce, we also need to evolve and transform the way we green. The world is going to be quite different in the next 50 years. New technologies are on the market; new business models and innovative ideas will change how things are done. So the challenge for us is how to green more productively - that is, do more with less and maximise the use of smaller spaces.” *(Please check against delivery)*

Today, Mr Lee also shared that land will be set aside for new nursery plots. To reduce start-up costs for the companies, NParks will develop the land parcels and provide connections to utilities such as potable water, electricity and tele-communications cables, sewage pipes and roadways<sup>1</sup>. These plots will be released progressively in phases from mid-2018. The leases of nurseries in Sungei Tengah will be extended until the first quarter of 2019. This extension will also be granted to the nurseries in Neo Tiew Crescent.

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<sup>1</sup> Up to the front gate of land parcels.

### Enhanced Landscape Productivity Grant

The Landscape Productivity Grant is a co-funding scheme that helps companies defray the cost of purchasing equipment. Since it was first announced in 2013, \$3.6 million has been committed to support more than 50 companies under the first tranche. Companies have seen significant productivity improvements through the use of technology e.g. 77% savings in man-hours as a result of using wood chippers; 60% savings in man-hours after switching to the use of ride-on mowers, and 50% savings in man-hours using tractor-mounted hedge-trimmers. Ho Eng Huat Construction Pte Ltd, for instance, had enjoyed an 80% productivity savings in man-hours as a result of deploying a wireless remote mower for greenery maintenance. Funded under the LPG, the machine is remotely controlled by a trained operator and its use has also enhanced workplace safety by allowing the operator to work from a distance.

To provide more support for landscape businesses investing in innovation and productivity, the second Landscape Productivity Grant was also announced with several enhancements. Under the enhanced LPG, eligible companies can receive up to \$300,000 in funding, triple the \$100,000 cap allocated under the first scheme. This comprises funding for mechanisation and technology capped at \$200,000, and a new funding category of \$100,000 for innovation projects undertaken with Institutes of Higher Learning or equipment companies to develop, adopt and implement innovative solutions.

### Landscape Productivity Roadmap

In 2011, NParks had announced initiatives under the \$12 million Landscape Productivity Roadmap to develop a comprehensive and holistic approach to improving productivity across the landscape industry. Some of the initiatives which included the Nursery Accreditation Scheme, Publication of Guide Book on Landscape Design Guidelines, Landscape Apprenticeship Programme and Landscape Productivity Grant, were implemented progressively from 2011 to 2016.

### Positive take-up of the Landscape PWM

Following the implementation of the Landscape Progressive Wage Model (PWM) under the Landscape Company Register (LCR) in June 2016, 250 companies, comprising 97% of companies registered on LCR, have sent their workforce for skills upgrading in order to meet the PWM requirement. The Progressive Wage Model (PWM) for the landscape industry had been developed by the Tripartite Cluster for Landscape Industry (TCL) to uplift the industry's image by providing a clear training and career progression pathway for resident landscape workers to earn higher wages as they obtain better skills and become more productive.

### Green Thumbs 2016

Green Thumbs is organised by the Landscape Industry Association Singapore (LIAS) and supported by National Parks Board (NParks), Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology (CUGE), Employment and Employability Institute (e2i) and Workplace Safety and Health Council (WSHC) to celebrate the development journey of Singapore's landscape industry. More than 2,000 guests comprising industry partners, students and landscape workers were present for the festivities.

A highlight of Green Thumbs 2016 was the Skills Championships. As in previous years, the Championships showcased various competencies of the landscape workers, such as tree climbing, landscape design and implementation, and excavator operations. About 200 workers and students participated in 10 Skills Championships.

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## **About LIAS**

The Landscape Industry Association Singapore (LIAS) (formerly known as LCAS) was incorporated on 11th May 2001. The mission of LIAS is to develop and promote professionalism and quality in landscape products and services to fulfill Singapore's vision of being a City in a Garden.

LIAS provides a forum for members to foster better networking, encourage industry discussions and maximise trade opportunities. The Association disseminates updates on industry information, organises trade programmes and promotions as well as activities relating to landscaping. Members stand to enjoy discounts and privileges on programmes and activities organised by LIAS. For more information, visit: [www.lias.org.sg](http://www.lias.org.sg)

## **About National Parks Board (NParks)**

National Parks Board (NParks) is responsible for providing and enhancing the greenery of our City in a Garden. Beyond building green infrastructure, NParks is actively engaging the community to enhance the quality of our living environment.

NParks manages over 350 parks and 4 nature reserves. Adding to this is the extensive streetscape, or roadside greenery, that forms the backbone of our City in a Garden. An island-wide Park Connector Network is also being developed to link major parks, nature areas and residential estates.

As the lead agency on biodiversity conservation, NParks has developed an urban biodiversity conservation model, which aims to conserve representative eco-systems in land-scarce Singapore. NParks also monitors and coordinates measures to enhance the presence of biodiversity in our urban landscape.

NParks is working closely with partners in the landscape and horticulture industry to increase productivity, and provide training for all levels of the workforce. Enhancing competencies of the industry will support Singapore's vision of being a City in a Garden.

For more information, visit [www.nparks.gov.sg](http://www.nparks.gov.sg) and [www.facebook.com/nparksbuzz](https://www.facebook.com/nparksbuzz)

## **About CUGE**

The Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology, or CUGE in short, is jointly established by the National Parks Board and the Singapore Workforce Development Agency. CUGE has a critical mass of knowledge to share and advance expertise on urban greenery and ecology. CUGE provides professional skills training programmes for all levels of professionals and is a national training institution of the Landscape Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ). CUGE serves as a regional repository of best practices to advance urban and green living environment. CUGE will serve as the lead training provider for all levels of the landscape industry workforce. It will use the Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) System to train and certify skills training and facilitate career development in the landscape industry.

## **About e2i**

As THE leading organisation to create solutions for better employment and employability, e2i (The Employment and Employability Institute) exists to create better jobs and better lives for working people. Since 2008, e2i has helped more than 470,000 working people through developing better skills, job matching, and improving productivity with companies. An initiative of the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), supported by the Workforce Development Agency (WDA), the Singapore Labour Foundation (SLF), and the Singapore

National Employers' Federation (SNEF), e2i serves all segments of working people, from rank and file to professionals, managers, executives and technicians.

### **About WSHC**

The Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Council was established on 1 Apr 2008. It comprises 17 leaders from the major industries (including construction, manufacturing, marine industries, petrochemicals, and logistics), the government, unions as well as professionals from the legal, insurance, and academic fields.

WSH Council works closely with the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and other government agencies, the industry, unions, and professional associations to develop strategies to raise WSH standards in Singapore and realise the national WSH 2018 vision.

For more information on WSH Council, you may refer to [www.wshc.sg](http://www.wshc.sg)