

MEDIA RELEASE

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A*STAR'S GET-UP PROGRAMME MARKS 10 YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP WITH SMES

Survey indicates participating companies enjoy increased sales revenue, employment growth

1. **Singapore, 14 May 2013**—A*STAR's Growing Enterprises through Technology Upgrade (GET-Up) programme today marked its 10-year milestone of strategic partnership with local Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to upgrade their technological capabilities. Since its launch in 2003, the initiative has benefited over 400 companies across the electronic, infocomm, chemical, and biomedical science clusters.
2. GET-Up's flagship technical assistance initiative is its expert secondment scheme, called "T-Up". To date, 413 researchers have been seconded to more than 240 companies under the T-Up scheme, providing a broad range of R&D and technology expertise to develop and innovate products and business processes.
3. In a recent GET-Up survey of T-Up companies, respondents that participated in the T-Up scheme reported that they experienced a 7 percent increase in sales revenue growth and a 15 percent increase in employment growth in the last three years.
4. The survey also revealed that 79 percent of T-Up respondents had launched new products in the last three years, with 52 percent launching two or more new products in this time.
5. Said Dr. Raj Thampuran, Managing Director of A*STAR, "GET-Up successfully bridges the gap from research to commercialisation. It is incredibly rewarding to see how our researchers have helped SMEs grow and profit. We are committed to offer a broad set of capabilities and provide platforms for our researchers to work with SMEs raise their competitiveness and productivity through technology."

Researchers Awarded for Contributions to SMEs

6. Minister S. Iswaran, Minister In Prime Minister's Office, Second Minister For Home Affairs, Second Minister For Trade And Industry was the Guest of Honour at the event, which saw more than 700 representatives from Singapore's SME community.
7. Three researchers were also honoured with the T-Up Excellence Award 2013, in recognition of their exceptional R&D contributions to local enterprises:
 - *Dr Eu Zhi Ang, Institute for Infocomms Research (I²R), A*STAR: seconded to Hoiio, which specialises in the R&D of IP network-based unified communication systems.*

- *Dr Li Hao, Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech), A*STAR: seconded to HistoIndex*, which specialises in stain-free, three-dimensional, quantitative imaging solutions for visualizing and staging fibrosis.
- *Dr Sandor Nemeth, Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech), A*STAR: seconded to PJI Contract*, which specialises in industrial flooring, waterproofing and surface protection

8. Further details of the T-Up Excellence Award Winners are available in Annex A.

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About the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR)

The Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) is the lead agency for fostering world-class scientific research and talent for a vibrant knowledge-based and innovation-driven Singapore. A*STAR oversees 14 biomedical sciences and physical sciences and engineering research institutes, and six consortia and centres, located in Biopolis and Fusionopolis as well as their immediate vicinity.

A*STAR supports Singapore's key economic clusters by providing intellectual, human and industrial capital to its partners in industry. It also supports extramural research in the universities, and with other local and international partners.

Enclosed:

Annex A – T-Up Excellence Award Winners

Annex B – GET-Up milestones

For more information about A*STAR, please visit www.a-star.edu.sg.

ANNEX A

2013 T-UP EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

Dr. Eu Zhi Ang Institute of Infocomm Research (I2R)	Nominated by Hoiio Pte Ltd
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Dr Eu was seconded to Hoiio Pte Ltd, a company that specialises in the R&D of IP network-based unified communication systems. Dr Eu has helped Hoiio to improve its key products which include Hoiio Phone, Hoiio API and Hoiio Cloud Applications Platform. For all of these products, Dr Eu has helped Hoiio to build critical in-house R&D capabilities to improve, test and validate that the apps are robust and met industry standards. These products are used by over 100 companies and 5,000 individual customers. Through this T-Up project, Hoiio has widened its product offerings through providing high quality, innovative and low-cost communication apps using Hoiio's cloud communication solutions.

Hoiio started on 18th April 2007 as a System Integrator for Mobile Operators and Internet Telephony Service Providers. The company tapped on SPRING's TECS-POV grant in 2009 for product development and the project was completed in 2010. In 2012, Hoiio won the SITF Gold and Judge's Choice Awards, and Demo Asia People's Choice Award. .

Dr Li Hao Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech)	Nominated by HistoIndex Pte Ltd
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Dr Li was seconded to HistoIndex Pte Ltd, a company that specialises in stain-free, three-dimensional, quantitative imaging solutions for visualizing and staging fibrosis. Dr Li organised a R&D team with expertise on optics, mechanics, electronics and software programming, and built a new R&D unit for nonlinear endoscopy technology targeted for in-vivo and real-time diagnosis in clinic operation. As a result of T-Up, HistoIndex products have improved in functionality and applications. For example, HistoIndex was able to produce more than twenty fibrosis related disease diagnosis on multiple human organs when it was only able to create single liver fibrosis in the past. This allowed the company to expand its spectrum of services from liver fibrosis imaging to: kidney fibrosis, heart, skin, bone and cervical cancer tissue.

HistoIndex's solutions provide critical information currently not available to pathologists with existing imaging techniques. The technology will reduce the time for clinical examination by 10 times and sample preparation by 120 times. HistoIndex have received awards from the BioSpectrum Asia Emerging Company of the Year Award in recognition for their R&D contribution in the biomed space and emerged a winner in the IBM Smartcamp Beijing Regional Final 2012.

Dr Sandor Nemeth Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech)	Nominated by PJI Contract Pte Ltd
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Dr Nemeth was seconded to PJI Contract Pte Ltd, which specialises in industrial flooring, waterproofing and surface protection. With the help of T-Up, PJI's in-house innovation and R&D activity intensified with new product development that includes improved surface treatment methods to improve walkway safety, formulation and development of improved, innovative floor coatings and material. In addition to its industrial client base, the company developed and introduced a new product, an anti-microbial spray can product for the consumer market. Dr Nemeth's expertise enabled the company to better understand customers' technical needs and respond faster to their requests.

In 2007, PJI Contract successfully developed a high chemical-resistant coating and an anti-microbial coating. In 2010, the company licensed the photo-catalytic self-cleaning nanotechnology from A*STAR, and established a manufacturing facility to produce the 20nm-size self-cleaning solution for building exteriors.

National Archives of Singapore

ANNEX B

FACT SHEET ON GET-UP

Growing Enterprises through Technology Upgrade (GET-Up) is a joint initiative by A*STAR, the Economic Development Board, IE Singapore and SPRING Singapore to partner SMEs in research and development, to boost their efforts to grow their businesses & create future industries. The four initiatives under GET-Up include:

Technology for Enterprise Capability Upgrading (T-Up) scheme:

A*STAR researchers are seconded to SMEs for up to two years to provide them with R&D and technology expertise to help them improve their production process or develop products

Operation & Technology Roadmapping (OTR) scheme:

A*STAR researchers work with SMEs to help them develop their long-term plan to provide or enhance its products or services to meet the needs of businesses and markets

Technical Advisors (TA) Support scheme:

A*STAR researchers provide in-depth technical consultancy to SMEs on technology related matters and other business challenges

Facilities Sharing Programme:

A*STAR provides SMEs with access to its world-class laboratories and facilities to help SMEs intensify their R&D activities

Milestones:

2003	Launch of GET-Up initiative by A*STAR, EDB, IE Singapore and SPRING Singapore
2004	First batch of 8 T-Up researcher secondments to 7 local companies
2006	100 th T-Up researcher is seconded to industry
2009	200 th T-Up researcher is seconded to industry
2010	Local polytechnics join the GET-Up initiative
2011	Launch of T-Up Excellence Awards to recognise outstanding contributions in research and development to industry
2011	300 th T-Up researcher is seconded to industry
2012	A*STAR's Biomedical Research Institutes join the GET-Up initiative
2013	To date, 502 companies have benefited from GET-Up

Figures on GET-Up (as of 31 Mar 2013):

- **T-Up:** 415 researchers were seconded to 244 companies
- **OTR:** 190 technology road maps have been developed for 164 companies
- **TA:** 141 researchers have provided technical advisory services to 94 companies