

For Immediate Release

## **SINGAPORE AND FRANCE LAUNCH YEAR OF INNOVATION 2018 TO ENHANCE BILATERAL COLLABORATION**

1. Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry) S Iswaran hosted French Minister for Higher Education, Research and Innovation, Dr Frederique Vidal to lunch today. During lunch, the two Ministers reaffirmed the warm bilateral relations between both countries and discussed ways Singapore and France could advance cooperation on innovation.
2. Minister Vidal is in Singapore from 21 to 23 January 2018 to launch the France-Singapore Year of Innovation (YOI) 2018 with a line-up of bilateral exchanges, aimed at strengthening innovation for economic and societal transformation. The YOI 2018 was first announced by then-French President François Hollande and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in March 2017 on the sidelines of then-President Hollande's State Visit to Singapore.
3. Minister Iswaran said, "Both Singapore and France recognise that innovation is a key growth strategy for our economies. There are many areas of synergy between both countries, with opportunities to collaborate in research, industry partnerships and talent exchange. Key platforms under the YOI include VivaTech in France and Singapore Week of Innovation and Technology (SWITCH) in Singapore, which provide startups and enterprises the opportunity to build partnerships, strengthen networks and also serve as key gateways for businesses and talents to expand into our respective regions."
4. Minister Vidal said, "France has a long and successful history of collaboration with Singapore in the research and science sectors, and we very much look forward to creating further interactions between our two innovation ecosystems as a result of the Year of Innovation. Singapore and France share a vision where a collaborative education, research and business ecosystem are the backbone to world-leading innovations."
5. Earlier today, Minister Vidal called on Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister-in-charge of the Smart Nation Initiative Dr Vivian Balakrishnan. They discussed Singapore's Smart Nation Initiative, ongoing bilateral collaborations and the challenges brought about by the digital revolution. Minister Balakrishnan welcomed the launch of the YOI 2018, noting that it would further strengthen the ties between Singapore and France.

6. On 23 January 2018, Minister Vidal and Senior Minister of State for Communications & Information and Education Dr Janil Puthuchearu, will officially launch the YOI 2018 with a roundtable themed “*From Research to Innovation*” hosted by the National University of Singapore (NUS). The roundtable will bring together senior Singaporean and French representatives from industry, academia and the government to exchange ideas on translating research efforts into impactful innovation for the economy and society. During the roundtable, Senior Minister of State Janil will also share initiatives that support our efforts to develop local capabilities.

7. One example of such an initiative is the DataCity Programme by the Infocommunications Media Development Authority of Singapore (IMDA), Impact Hub Singapore Pte Ltd and NUMA SAS, which aims to drive innovative solutions across cities through data and technology.

8. Minister Vidal’s visit to Singapore signals the strong bilateral relations between Singapore and France. Both countries established a strategic partnership in 2012. France is Singapore’s second largest trading partner in the European Union and 16<sup>th</sup> largest in the world, with total trade close to S\$17 billion.

*In the France-Singapore Year of Innovation 2018, France and Singapore will intensify exchanges and collaborations between relevant stakeholders in the domain of innovation. The line-up of events in Singapore and France during the course of the year will serve to encourage further reflection on how both countries could work together to mutually reinforce each other’s efforts to attain their innovation goals.*

*For more information on the France-Singapore Year of Innovation 2018, please visit [https://www.mti.gov.sg/MTIInsights/Pages/France-Singapore-Year-of-Innovation-\(YOI\)-2018.aspx](https://www.mti.gov.sg/MTIInsights/Pages/France-Singapore-Year-of-Innovation-(YOI)-2018.aspx) or <https://sg.ambafrance.org/-France-Singapore-YOI>.*

**Ministry of Trade and Industry**  
**22 January 2018**

**ANNEX A: Photos and captions**

**ANNEX B: Background information on VivaTech and SWITCH**

**ANNEX C: IMDA’s factsheet on DataCity Programme**

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**ANNEX A: Photos and captions**



Minister S Iswaran, Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry) and Minister Frederique Vidal, Minister for Higher Education, Research and Innovation reaffirmed warm bilateral relations and commitment to advance cooperation on innovation during the France-Singapore Year of Innovation 2018.

## **ANNEX B: Background information on VivaTech and SWITCH**

### **VivaTechnology**

VivaTechnology is the global leading innovation event in France. The three-day festival aims to convene 68,000 attendees, 6,000 start-ups and 500 speakers from innovative industries. Business networking sessions, seminars and other activities are expected to take place on the side-lines of the festival.

For more info: <https://vivatechnology.com/>

### **Singapore Week of Innovation and Technology (SWITCH)**

The Singapore Week of Innovation & Technology (SWITCH), held annually in September alongside the Singapore Grand Prix, is a leading “plug and play” platform in Asia that showcases the best ideas, technology and innovation from around the world. Organised by the National Research Foundation and SGInnovate, it convenes the best in the world in technology, innovation and enterprise development to participate in exhibitions, conferences, workshops and activities.

At SWITCH, interactions are the catalyst for change—this is where great minds meet and work together to shape our future. Topics of discussion at the event include open innovation and technology transfer, technopreneurship, and venture funding and talent development.

For more info: <http://switchsg.org/>

## **ANNEX C: IMDA's Factsheet on DataCity Programme**

The Infocommunications Media Development Authority of Singapore (IMDA) partnered Impact Hub Singapore Pte. Ltd. (IMPACT) and NUMA SAS to launch the DataCity Programme in Singapore in November 2017.

In partnership with the France-Singapore Year of Innovation (YOI) 2018, the DataCity Programme seeks to enable innovative solutions across cities by leveraging data and technology to address urban challenges by bringing together governments, corporations and tech startups. IMDA is coordinating the support required from the public sector to facilitate project trials.

The YOI 2018 was first announced by then-French President François Hollande and Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in March 2017 on the sidelines of then-President Hollande's State Visit to Singapore. It will be launched by Singapore Senior Minister of State for Communications and Information; and for Education, Janil Puthuchery, and French Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation Frederique Vidal on 23 January, 2018.

### ***Solving Problems Through the Use of Data***

Data is a key asset for Singapore, and initiatives such as DataCity support our efforts to develop our local capabilities in data innovation for a Digital Economy. DataCity is unique in that it tackles local problems through a global approach - companies with tech solutions from around the world are invited to participate in each city's set of challenges.

Through joining the DataCity programme, Singapore can:

- Enable local enterprises to tap into innovation from different cities and learn how cities manage data flows and exchanges between private and public sectors;
- Gain insights to the challenges and solutions in planning urban infrastructure to develop data ecosystems;
- Develop and test innovative solutions that are suitable for either local or global operating environments;
- Develop an ecosystem of local companies and talent with capabilities in data innovation and Artificial Intelligence; and
- Improve the robustness of local datasets through validation across and against global datasets.

DataCity works by developing and trialling innovative solutions to build sustainable and efficient cities. Participants will go through a 6-month programme comprising the following three phases:

- Define:** Corporate partners would define the challenge statements through workshops.
- Select:** An international call for applications through DataCity's network of startups, after which the most relevant startups are identified who could help to address the challenge statements.

- iii. **Experiment:** Corporate partners, city authorities and the selected startups will collectively develop a model to validate its effectiveness in addressing the challenge statements.

At the end of the programme, paired corporates and startups could choose to scale up the solution or design further experiments to refine their findings. Of over 23 experiments conducted to date, more than half have resulted in further collaboration between participants.

DataCity was first launched in 2015 in Paris by NUMA, and has since attracted over 20 partners. It now spans five global cities: Paris, Barcelona, Bangalore, Casablanca and Singapore. Interested parties may find out more or sign up at [datacity.numa.co](http://datacity.numa.co)

### **Corporate Partners and Challenge Areas**

For a start, Singapore will focus on the following smart city challenge areas of: Green energy, logistics, transportation, urban planning and waste & resource management. More areas could be added as more corporate partners come on board.

Our first set of corporate sponsors include ENGIE, a global energy leader, and Goldbell Group, a leading regional industrial vehicles and transport solutions company.

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### **About Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)**

*The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) will develop a vibrant, world-class infocomm media sector that drives the economy, connects people, bonds communities and powers Singapore's Smart Nation vision. IMDA does this by developing talent, strengthening business capabilities, and enhancing Singapore's ICT and media infrastructure. IMDA also regulates the telecommunications and media sectors to safeguard consumer interests while fostering a pro-business environment. IMDA also enhances Singapore's data protection regime through the Personal Data Protection Commission. For more news and information, visit [www.imda.gov.sg](http://www.imda.gov.sg) or follow IMDA on Facebook [IMDASg](https://www.facebook.com/IMDASg) and Twitter [@IMDASg](https://twitter.com/IMDASg).*

### **About Impact Hub Singapore**

*Impact Hub Singapore is a coworking community comprising of over 700 members, from ideation stage startups to billion-dollar 'Unicorn' ventures. Impact Hub Singapore is supported by Google for Entrepreneurs; and is Singapore's largest coworking community of techies, entrepreneurs, and creatives. Members get access to funding, capacity building, community connections, and international networks – making Impact Hub Singapore a coworking community that grows entrepreneurs. Through its multi-stakeholder ecosystem consisting of corporates, the government, and the startup community, Impact Hub Singapore*

*has established itself as the go-to place for entrepreneurs and their collaborators who seek a platform for partnerships and innovation.*

**About NUMA**

*During the last sixteen years, NUMA has been developing integrated services for entrepreneurs, innovators as well as corporate support such as co-working, community events, experimentation of digital products, training for entrepreneurship, open innovation between major companies and digital players and start-up acceleration. Numa full-service innovation model allows all the actors within the ecosystem – including start-ups, communities and larger companies – to collaborate, meet and grow. This unique ecosystem is growing stronger every day in conjunction with the growth of the network of alumni and partners of NUMA, both in France and abroad. DataCity is an open innovation programme designed and lead globally by NUMA.*