

SPEECH BY MS SIM ANN, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTRY OF CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND YOUTH & MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY AT THE SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN ITE COLLEGE EAST AND INDUSTRY PARTNERS ON WEDNESDAY, 28 MARCH 2018, 2.00PM AT ITE COLLEGE EAST

Ms Low Khah Gek, Chief Executive Officer of the Institute of Technical Education

Dr Yek Tiew Ming, Principal of ITE College East

Mr Dominic Ng, Chief Executive Officer of FastFlex Pte Ltd

Industry partners

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Introduction

1. Food is an important component of Singaporean culture. The sheer diversity of cuisine and variety of dining options available shows how serious we are about food. The Food Services industry not only caters to Singaporeans' love for food, but also adds vibrancy to our community and supports our overall economy.
2. Since the launch of the Food Services Industry Transformation Map in 2016, the Government has been working with trade associations

and industry players to develop a vibrant and efficient F&B sector. A year on, we are starting to see more innovative and resource-efficient concepts such as ready-to-eat meals, productive coffee shops and food vending machines.

3. Today's MOU signing is the latest milestone in our Food Services industry transformation journey. This MOU will kickstart the collaboration between ITE College East students and industry players in the development of Food Vending products and services. My heartiest congratulations to ITE College East, FastFlex, Koufu, Papitto Gelato, Sakunthala's Restaurant, Hiap Giap Food Manufacture, DokiDoki, Kaldi's Berry and CoSpace Park.

Growth Opportunities through Food Vending

4. The advancement of food-vending technology has presented new growth opportunities for Food Services businesses. Vending uses 70 to 90 percent fewer workers than a typical food stall. Vending machine-based food outlets also have smaller physical footprints, which helps keep rental costs for businesses in check. These competitive advantages allow businesses to scale and easily deploy vending machines to meet new and even untested consumer demand.

5. To date, SPRING has worked with over 30 companies to build capability for food vending, undergirded by strong, industry-backed food safety and hygiene standards. Hundreds of food vending machines have been deployed island-wide, with more and more businesses keen to pilot the format.

Tapping On and Training Our Students to Seize Such Opportunities

6. To further unlock the potential of the ready meals market, businesses need to acquire knowledge about the latest technologies and logistics of vending. They also need the skills to develop new recipes that taste great and last long – not just on the lab bench, but also in mass production.
7. Food Technologists, R&D chefs, and Vending Technicians are invaluable in this regard. That is why I am happy that ITE College East and industry players are coming together to expose our students to various vital aspects of industry operations. For example, Sakunthala's Restaurant will be working with the students to promote vended food. Students will conduct field research and further R&D in the food portion, pricing model, and food menu. FastFlex will host students for 3 months, allowing them to acquire the skills to service vending machines. The other industry partners

will also engage students in the formulation of new food recipes, design of food packaging and research to extend food shelf-life.

8. I am equally pleased that CoSpace Park will be helping students with a more entrepreneurial streak develop their business plans and secure financial support. This is an excellent avenue to harness the creativity and energy that our young bring to the table. I hope that through this collaboration, industry partners will also be able to spot and hire the right talent from this promising pool.

Conclusion

9. In closing, let me once again congratulate ITE College East and the industry partners on this MOU signing. I am confident that with more of such collaborations between industry players and our institutes of higher learning, we can train our students to be industry-ready, strengthen our enterprise capabilities and sustain the growth and vibrancy of our Food Services industry.

10. Thank you.