

SGTech Partners with digitalswitzerland and Swiss Digital Initiative to Build Digital Trust Economies in Asia and Europe

The three tech organisations signed a Memorandum-of-Understanding to develop long-term strategic partnership and drive global initiatives in connection, knowledge exchange and trust.

SINGAPORE — 1 March 2023 — SGTech, the premier trade association for the tech industry in Singapore, committed to a long-term collaboration with digitalswitzerland and the Swiss Digital Initiative (SDI) by signing a Memorandum-of-Understanding (MOU) today, designed to strengthen the connection, promote dialogue, and accelerate impactful tech initiatives between the parties, particularly in the area of Digital Trust.

Under the MOU, SGTech, digitalswitzerland, and SDI have agreed to pursue a partnership under the three thematic areas of Connection, Knowledge Exchange and Trust. The MOU is the first partnership agreement between Singapore and Switzerland's leading tech industry Associations, which aligns with national-level efforts to work together towards greater innovation and sustainability in the sector.

The tech organisations will promote mutually beneficial bilateral connections by facilitating industry-to-industry partnerships between their respective tech ecosystems. This will be done through reciprocal invitations to relevant G2B and B2B engagements and public events, such as digitalswitzerland's annual #herHACK female-led hackathon events and SGTech's annual Global Future Series conference.

In addition, the organisations have committed to working together towards building and exchanging knowledge in various areas of the digital economy, including digital trust, diversity and inclusion in tech, and tech sustainability. This will be done by contributing expert interviewees and commentary on each other's research efforts. Furthermore, they will share original thought leadership through their public communication channels.

SGTech has been actively growing awareness and spearheading initiatives through its dedicated Digital Trust Committee in the area of digital trust. In this regard, SGTech and SDI will collaborate closely to explore the possibility of extending and applying SDI's "Digital Trust Label" in Singapore and Asia-Pacific markets. The Digital Trust Label is a way to denote the trustworthiness of a digital service in clear language which can be easily understood by everyone. This label can help to assure consumers of the trustworthiness of the digital services they consume. To date, 14 companies have embarked on the Digital Trust Label process, and nine digital services have successfully been awarded the Label which is now available globally, promoting digital trust from Switzerland to the world. As a priority focus of their partnership, SGTech and SDI will be working together to help Singapore enterprises adopt the label in the near future.

During the ceremony, Ms Yean Cheong, Executive Director of SGTech, Mr Stefan Metzger, Managing Director of digitalswitzerland, and Mr Fathi Derder, Managing Director of Swiss Digital Initiative, all expressed their excitement towards the partnership and the potential impact it could make on the digital ecosystems of Singapore and Switzerland.

SGTech Executive Director, Yean Cheong, said: *“It gives me great pleasure to sign this MOU today and formalise our long-term partnership with digitalswitzerland and the Swiss Digital Initiative. Switzerland and Singapore are often compared as small states known for their economic strength and spirit of openness and innovation. This MOU is another example of our shared commitment towards driving digital transformation with trust at the heart of it. SGTech and our more than 1,000 member companies look forward to strengthening our partnership and working together to create a meaningful, beneficial impact on the digital economies of both Singapore and Switzerland.”*

digitalswitzerland Managing Director, Stefan Metzger, said: *“Singapore and Switzerland have already maintained good relations for several years and work together closely, especially in the financial and education sectors. The alliance signed today between the two Associations SGTech and digitalswitzerland is a natural development of this strong basis. We aim to establish closer connections and foster greater knowledge exchange between our countries' digital ecosystems. By leveraging each other's strengths, expertise, and experiences, we can accelerate our digital transformation efforts and create new opportunities for innovation and growth. We are excited about the potential of this collaboration to drive meaningful impact and bring lasting benefits to our societies.”*

Swiss Digital Initiative Managing Director, Fathi Derder, said SDI is looking forward to collaborating with SGTech on Digital Trust-related issues: *“We are thrilled to collaborate with SGTech. By launching the Digital Trust Label, SDI has developed unique expertise in putting the fundamental principles of digital trust into practice. This expertise can only benefit from collaboration with SGTech: Switzerland and Singapore are both world innovation leaders. Close collaboration will enable us to actively contribute to a secure and ethical digital world by jointly promoting the Digital Trust Label in Europe and Asia. Putting together SDI and SGTech synergies is the first step towards a global movement for digital trust.”*

The MOU signing was held at the office of Enterprise Singapore, which led a mission trip to Switzerland and Finland in October 2022, where the parties met. The MOU was signed by Ms Yean Cheong, Executive Director, SGTech; Ms Diana Engetschwiler, Senior Advisor, digitalswitzerland; and Mr Fathi Derder, Managing Director, SDI (who signed virtually). The ceremony was also observed by Mr Stefan Metzger, Managing Director, digitalswitzerland; Mr Gavin Chua, Vice-Chair, SGTech; Mr Philip Heah, Chair of the Digital Trust Committee, SGTech; and Mr Jeffrey Siow, Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer of Enterprise Singapore.

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About SGTech

SGTech is the leading trade association for Singapore's tech industry. Representing over 1,000 member companies ranging from top multinational corporations, large local enterprises, vibrant small and medium-sized enterprises, and innovative start-ups, it is the largest community in Singapore where companies converge to advocate for change and drive what enables tech innovation and accelerate tech adoption to spur greater sustainability in the sector. SGTech's mission is to catalyse a thriving ecosystem that powers Singapore as a global tech powerhouse.

About digitalswitzerland

digitalswitzerland is a Swiss-wide, cross-sector initiative that aims to strengthen and make Switzerland a leading digital nation. Under the umbrella of digitalswitzerland, more than 200 organisations comprising Association members and politically neutral Foundation partners work together across the board. digitalswitzerland is the point of contact for all digitalisation issues and is committed to solving a wide range of challenges.

About the Swiss Digital Initiative

The Swiss Digital Initiative (SDI) is an independent, non-profit foundation based in Geneva, founded in 2019 by digitalswitzerland and under the patronage of Federal Councillor Ueli Maurer. The SDI pursues concrete projects with the aim of securing ethical standards and promoting responsible conduct in the digital world. It brings together academia, government, civil society and business to find solutions to strengthen trust in digital technologies and in the actors involved in ongoing digital transformation.