

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

NEW DIGITAL INITIATIVES OFFER FRESH AND EXCITING WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH HERITAGE

NHB is working with IMDA to harness technology and transform the heritage sector with innovative and immersive experiences

Singapore, 22 November 2021 – Get ready for more exciting and immersive heritage encounters – both online and through ‘phygital’ experiences – as part of the National Heritage Board’s (NHB) efforts to reshape the heritage sector in Singapore by increasing the number and quality of digital touchpoints, in order to expand the reach of heritage content.

2 NHB has been working closely with the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) to facilitate this transformation by tapping on their *Open Innovation Platform* (OIP) – a virtual crowd-sourcing platform that connects tech companies with organisations with digital needs; and *Accreditation@SGD* – a programme that supports local-based, innovative and high-performing infocomm media product companies to build an innovative technopreneur ecosystem. Highlights that have resulted from this collaboration include enhanced guided tours of 360-degree virtual galleries with a Virtual Museum Host; and utilising facial recognition technology for personalised recommendations on artefacts to view in museum galleries.

3 Mr Mohamed Hardi, Chief Information Officer, NHB, explained, “The digitalisation of the heritage sector has always been a priority for the National Heritage Board. This is especially pertinent in recent years as exhibitions, programmes, festivals and other content shift online, or are offered as ‘phygital’ experiences to increase access to and enhance heritage interactions. Digitalisation increases our reach beyond the physical boundaries of our museums and heritage institutions, and also makes our content more meaningful for and approachable to a broader demographic. Working with IMDA and tapping on the wider technology sector has allowed us to scale-up and accelerate these efforts, to allow more members of the public to experience heritage anytime, anywhere.”

4 Mr Justin Ang, Assistant Chief Executive, Media, Innovation, Communications & Marketing, IMDA, said, “We are pleased our national digital innovation programmes,

Accreditation@SGD and the *Open Innovation Platform*, have played an instrumental role in NHB's efforts to digitalise the heritage sector.

Through our programmes, IMDA makes innovation more accessible by connecting businesses to a wide ecosystem of tech companies and solutions providers to address their digitalisation needs. I encourage all businesses wanting to innovate and create new opportunities to engage us, and see how our vibrant ecosystem of solution providers can help with their needs."

Utilising technology to enhance the heritage experience

5 Globally, heritage and cultural institutions are pursuing technology to make artworks and artefacts more experiential, with various digital modes like 360-degree panoramas, live streams, and pre-recorded guided tours with museum curators being introduced over the past year. For the Asian Civilisations Museum (ACM), this has resulted in "virtual twins" of its Materials and Designs galleries, enhanced with a Virtual Museum Host that allows visitors to enjoy one-on-one, guided experiences from anywhere in the world.

6 ACM worked with spatial data company Matterport3D and pioneering, IMDA-accredited, Artificial Intelligence (AI) company TAIGER to create detailed 360-degree simulations of ACM's galleries, enhanced with a Virtual Museum Host that utilises humanistic AI capabilities to offer an immersive, personalised online experience of the museum.

7 New technology will also be introduced in museum spaces, to enhance the physical museum-going experience. In an on-going pilot project utilising local firm Trakomatic's patent-pending technology based on advanced video analytics, facial recognition and intelligent sensors, visitors will receive recommendations of artefacts and displays in the galleries that may interest them, based on a demographic analysis. This provides a useful starting point for a museum visit, and also helps visitors discover items they may be unfamiliar with. Visitors who want a more personalised experience can register to have their own profiles created on the system, for customised recommendations based on their preferences and previous interactions with museum content.

8 Trakomatic's project is a result of the sixth challenge that NHB has launched on IMDA's OIP, which has connected over \$400,000 worth of prize money with multiple innovative solution providers. Two other companies, Panasonic and Grid Synergy, are also involved in

the pilot project to use facial and gesture recognition technology to enhance museum experiences. Other on-going projects born from the OIP challenges include the development of a digital concierge solution with local start up Vouch SG and a virtual tourism solution with Revez Motion. NHB has its 7th innovation call open for proposals as part of OIP's ongoing 12th innovation call, which is open until 28 Jan 2022.

9 ACM's virtual Materials and Design galleries are accessible on www.nhb.gov.sg/acm/whats-on/tours, while the facial recognition project is currently in a developmental phase to assess how to optimise its application in NHB museums and heritage institutions.

10 For more information on the projects, please refer to:

- **Annex A:** About IMDA's initiatives
- **Annex B:** About TAIGER and Trakomatic
- **Annex C:** Quotes from representatives from TAIGER and Trakomatic

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About the National Heritage Board

The National Heritage Board (NHB) was formed on 1 August 1993. As the custodian of Singapore's heritage, NHB is responsible for telling the Singapore story, sharing the Singaporean experience and imparting our Singapore spirit.

NHB's mission is to preserve and celebrate the shared heritage of our diverse communities, for the purpose of education, nation-building and cultural understanding. It manages the national museums and heritage institutions, and sets policies relating to heritage sites, monuments and the national collection. Through the national collection, NHB curates heritage programmes and presents exhibitions to connect the past, present and future generations of Singaporeans. NHB is a statutory board under the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth. Please visit www.nhb.gov.sg for more information.

About the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)

The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) leads Singapore's digital transformation with infocomm media. To do this, IMDA will develop a dynamic digital economy and a cohesive digital society, driven by an exceptional infocomm media (ICM) ecosystem – by developing talent, strengthening business capabilities, and enhancing Singapore's ICM infrastructure. IMDA also regulates the telecommunications and media sectors to safeguard consumer interests while fostering a pro-business environment, and enhances Singapore's data protection regime through the Personal Data Protection Commission. For more news and information, visit www.imda.gov.sg or follow IMDA on Facebook and Twitter @IMDAsg.

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ABOUT IMDA'S INITIATIVES

Open Innovation Platform

IMDA's *Open Innovation Platform* (OIP) matches technology solvers and providers with real business needs of enterprises and public agencies. Since July 2018, problem owners such as VISA and Singapore Airlines have put up more than 250 challenges with cash prizes of up to \$50K (per challenge) for prototype development.

The OIP also provides a structured innovation process to accelerate the searching and matching of solutions with our pool of 11,000 technology solvers.

Accreditation@SGD

As a statutory board of the Singapore government, IMDA works with Singapore Digital (SG:D) Accredited companies to spearhead the strategic use of innovative technology in various sectors. The Accreditation@SG Digital (Accreditation@SGD) is a programme launched in 2014 where IMDA accelerates the growth of Singapore-based tech-product companies through recurring market access platforms, matchmaking of government and enterprise demand to these companies, and to help them secure new growth capital. Being accredited will provide assurance to Government agencies and large enterprises about the use of accredited companies' innovative technology solutions which have been evaluated on their core functionalities and ability to deliver.

ABOUT TAIGER AND TRAKOMATIC

TAIGER

TAIGER unlocks better growth for organisations by giving them the tools to automate complex cognitive tasks. Its hybrid AI solution, Omnitive, has helped global banks like Banco Santander and Otkritie, and various government agencies in Singapore accelerate digital transformation. TAIGER is recognised in Gartner's Hype Cycles for Natural Language Technologies in 2021 and has won numerous industry awards including IDC innovator in AI in 2019.

For more information, visit www.taiger.com.

Trakomatic

Trakomatic's patented AI powered video analytics solutions capture traffic profiles and behavioural data to automatically analyse and deliver real-time actionable insights. This real-time information enables our customers our customers ranging from Government Agencies, Malls to Tourist Attractions across 10 countries in Asia Pacific to make compelling business decisions to enhance shopper/visitors' experience by understanding their behaviour within their physical premises. Trakomatic is fully aligned with the Smart Nation vision where we work very closely with government agencies & industry leaders to harness ICT, networks and data to build a better city.

For more information, please visit us at www.trakomatic.com.

QUOTES FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF TAIGER AND TRAKOMATIC

Mr Jaron Ong, Head of Government Business, TAIGER, said, “AI is fast evolving and the possibilities are limitless. At TAIGER, we believe that AI has the ability to reshape the way we experience the world. Our partnership with the Asian Civilisations Museum in unlocking a personalised and scalable tour experience is a wonderful example of how we can go beyond the physical and engage the global community to see, hear and feel the stories of Southeast Asian cultures right where they are.”

Mr Allen Lin, Chief Executive Officer, Trakomatic, said, “Our vision is aimed towards digitalising the physical world through AI software developed with progressive Machine Learning capabilities. The partnership with NHB enables museums to utilise AI to digitalise visitors’ journeys in the museum, thereby enabling advanced personalisation capabilities with the purpose of delivering an engaging experience to each visitor through personalised recommendations and prompts, enriching their visit at the museum.”