Embargoed for publication until 11.00am on Tuesday, 17 November 2015

Media Release: NR/19/2015

17 Nov 2015

SPRING and SPETA drive industry-wide adoption of capability solutions for precision engineering companies to strengthen their operations

SPETA unveils new logo and name in its plan to renew and revitalise the industry

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1. SPRING Singapore partners the Singapore Precision Engineering & Technology Association (SPETA) to revitalise the precision engineering industry and drive industry-wide adoption of capability solutions for companies to strengthen their operations. Supported by SPRING's Local Enterprise Association Development (LEAD) programme [1], SPETA continues to spearhead industry transformation over the next three years and encourage more precision engineering companies to upgrade their capabilities in the areas of technology adoption, productivity improvement, and business model innovation to stay competitive.

2. As part of its plan to renew and revitalise the precision engineering industry, the association unveiled its new logo and name, to recognise the timely need to kick start another journey of transformation and embrace change to meet evolving economic and industry needs. SPETA's new name with effect from today, the "Singapore Precision Engineering & *Technology* Association" (formerly the "Singapore Precision Engineering & *Tooling* Association"), signals that technological innovation anchors the priority for companies to sustain their competitiveness and move up the manufacturing value chain. This is critical as the local precision engineering industry is the backbone of the manufacturing sector, supporting other sectors such as electronics, aerospace, oil & gas and life sciences.

[1] The LEAD programme is an initiative by SPRING Singapore that enhances industry- and enterprise-competitiveness through partnerships with industry associations. More information on the programme can be found at http://www.spring.gov.sg/Developing-Industries/Industry-Initiatives/LEAD/Pages/Local-Enterprise-and-Association-Development.aspx

3. SPETA announced these at a media event attended by about 200 guests from the precision engineering industry held at Singapore Island Country Club today. The event was supported by SPRING Singapore, the national agency for enterprise development, and the Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech), a research institute of the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR).

Simpler and easier-to-implement solutions offered to precision engineering companies

4. Under its third LEAD programme supported by SPRING, SPETA takes the lead to curate relevant platforms and outreach activities to facilitate more companies in the sector to take up simpler and easier-to-implement solutions to strengthen their operations. Some of these solutions could be done in stages and with the help of experienced providers or advisors. SPETA will also be working with partners including SIMTech to develop new capabilities in the areas of technology, productivity improvement and business model innovation to meet industry demands. Some of the solutions include the following and can be supported under SPRING's Capability Development Grant (CDG) (for more information, please see **Annex A**):

Technology

a) Enhanced Operational and Technology Road-mapping (OTR)

b) Additive manufacturing opportunities

Productivity Improvement

c) Operational Excellence Diagnostic (OE)

d) Smart factory solutions including robotics and automation

Business Model Innovation

e) Business advisors and mentors

5. One of the solutions to help companies improve productivity is the diagnostic toolkit developed by SPRING based on the Operational Excellence model and endorsed by SPETA. Operational Excellence was identified as a key driver for overall business growth within the manufacturing industry as it focuses on managing the entire supply chain – from procurement, production, materials management to delivery. The diagnostic toolkit provides a developmental roadmap for SMEs to enhance their competencies, and deliver consistent and sustainable performance. As the diagnostic toolkit covers stringent requirements that MNCs and large organisations impose on their suppliers, SMEs that adopt the Operational

Excellence model would be in a more favourable position to become core or Tier 1 suppliers and strategic partners of choice for large organisations and MNCs. SPRING has also established a network of industry experts to guide SMEs in diagnosing and strengthening their capabilities in operational excellence.

6. Besides the diagnostic kit, the enhanced Operational and Technology Road-mapping aims to help SMEs become product or process owners more quickly with the support partners such as SIMTech and other research institutes. Companies tap on their expertise in strategic business and technology scanning methodology to generate new ideas and plan for future growth.

7. Wavelength Opto-Electronic, a manufacturer of optical components for laser systems, is one of the companies which has benefited from the OTR programme. The company started the OTR initiative in 2007 and identified potential growth opportunities. Since then, Wavelength advanced to own a few patents[2] and is now keen to embark on the Enhanced OTR programme supported by SPRING. It aims to further tap on support from SIMTech or other A*STAR consultants to better implement its technology plans.

8. Mr Jeremy Fong, Chairman of SPETA, said at the event, “We are very pleased to kick start a new transformation and engage the industry to help precision engineering companies improve, innovate, and grow. Through our partnership with SPRING Singapore and SIMTech in the LEAD programme, we hope to attract more members to join the association so as to be able to serve them better. SPETA is committed to serving our stakeholders in the precision engineering industry in order to bring the industry as a whole to the next level.”

9. “In order for our industries to stay competitive, contribute to our economic growth and create good jobs for Singaporeans, SPRING aims to enable more companies in the precision engineering industry to upgrade their technological capabilities and refine their business models. To achieve these outcomes, SPRING is happy to support our industry partner SPETA through the LEAD programme as the agent of change to drive adoption of the various capability solutions at the enterprise and sector levels. This is necessary to

[2] Wavelength has applied for and registered patents for these products: (i) Active Emission Multispectral Imaging Sorting Equipment; (ii) General Type Multispectral Imaging Plastic Sorting Equipment; (iii) Contact Lens Defection Sorting System; and (iv) Improved Galileo Zoom Expander.

ensure that our precision engineering industry stays ahead to create more economic value," said Mr Ted Tan, Deputy Chief Executive, SPRING Singapore.

10. "The use of technology is a game changer for the local precision engineering industry to transform itself. Through collaborations, SIMTech assists precision engineering companies to build R&D as well as relevant technological capabilities for innovations and the emerging and growing sectors, strengthening and sustaining the PE industry as a backbone for the manufacturing industry," added Dr Lim Ser Yong, Executive Director, SIMTech.

11. Putting its new focus and the LEAD programme in place, SPETA aims to attract more new members across the entire engineering value chain, and recruit individual members from tertiary institutions to ensure there is a continued pipeline of talent joining the PE industry. SPETA has a membership base of 135 and hopes to increase it by another 30% within the next three years. Precision engineering companies interested to adopt and explore the various capability solutions can approach the SPETA secretariat directly.

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About SPETA
The Singapore Precision Engineering and Technology Association(SPETA) is a trade association representing locally registered companies engaged in the manufacturing of moulds and dies, jigs and fixtures, metal stamping, metal castings, plastic and rubber moldings, precision machining, photonic and semi-conductor equipment, aerospace, automotive and medical parts as well as in providing services related to the precision engineering and technology industry. Please visit www.speta.org/index.html for more information and news about SPETA.

About SPRING Singapore
SPRING Singapore is the enterprise development agency for growing innovative companies and fostering a competitive SME sector. We work with partners to help enterprises in financing, capabilities and management development, technology and innovation, and access to markets. As the national standards and accreditation body, SPRING also develops and promotes internationally recognised standards and quality assurance to enhance competitiveness and facilitate trade. Please visit www.spring.gov.sg and www.facebook.com/sgspring for more information and news about SPRING Singapore.

About SIMTech
The Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech) develops high value manufacturing technology and human capital to enhance the competitiveness of Singapore's manufacturing industry. It is a research institute of the Agency for Science, Technology and

Research (A*STAR). SIMTech has completed projects for companies, big and small, in the precision engineering, medical technology, aerospace, automotive, marine, electronics, semiconductor, logistics and other sectors. Please visit www.a-star.edu.sg/SIMTech/Home.aspx for more information and news about SIMTech.

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Annex A

Capability Areas and Solutions supported under LEAD

Capability Areas	Description
Enhanced Operational and Technology Road-mapping (OTR)	SPRING and SIMTech jointly developed the enhanced OTR specifically for the PE industry as an upgraded version of the original OTR programme. The original OTR was a five and a half-day session to develop a technology roadmap. The enhanced OTR serves to bridge the gap to implement the plans after the OTR brainstorming session with SIMTech. It will include a two-month consultancy and an additional four-month internal manpower support for companies to kick-start the initiatives identified during the road mapping brainstorming phase. There would be a pool of SIMTech consultants or external experts to help companies chart their road-mapping journey.
Additive manufacturing technology opportunities	SPRING is promoting companies to tap on additive manufacturing as part of the four main areas under the future of manufacturing. The use of additive manufacturing builds an object by adding ultrathin layers of material one by one and can transform designs and makes many of the complex parts that go into everything from gas turbines to ultrasound machines. Additive manufacturing is the industrial version of 3D printing and it is already used to make some niche items, such as medical implants, and to produce plastic prototypes. Although the use of 3D printing for consumers has received a lot of interest and publicity, it is in manufacturing where the technology could have its most significant commercial impact.
Operational Excellence Diagnostic (OE)	SPRING developed the OE programme to help companies develop robust operational processes and systems that will be crucial for them to serve as core or Tier 1 suppliers to their customers. The OE programme has a pool of 20 industry experts to help companies diagnose and address improvement gaps using the OE framework in areas such as supply chain management, warehousing, design & development, materials management, and production. These experts are semi-retired professionals from multi-national corporations (MNCs) in manufacturing who are interested to impart their experience in best practices and champion the culture of excellence to PE companies
Smart factory solutions	SPRING has teamed up with smart factory solutions providers to help PE companies improve their productivity and efficiency. These solutions which include robotics and automation are intended for quick and easy deployment in the factory shop floor, given constraints in manpower shortage and production capacity constraints.
Business advisors and mentors	SPETA will promote business advisors/mentors as a means to help companies transform. They can use the Business Advisor Programme (BAP) or any other means to bring mentors into companies. The aim of having business advisors and mentors is to match independent external parties to PE companies to give advice on various business and corporate issues. This pool of experienced people can help PE companies to draw from their expertise and network to help improve company internal management systems and processes for growth. The role of the business advisors and mentors is to work closely with companies to train, coach and guide the company management staff to achieve the desired outcomes. However, they would not be involved in investing in the business during the project duration.