

SINGAPORE MEDIA SECTOR GETS A BOOST AMIDST COVID-19

Companies and freelancers in Singapore can benefit from new projects, partnership opportunities and skills training to weather current challenges

SINGAPORE, 14 April 2020 - The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) introduced a series of initiatives to help the local media sector tide over COVID-19. Complementing the broad-based measures announced by the Finance Minister in the Unity, Resilience and Solidarity Budgets, these latest initiatives will help media companies benefit from more production project opportunities and reduced operating costs, as well as assist media professionals and freelancers build up their resilience through training and upskilling. These are part of the ongoing national efforts to protect jobs and livelihoods.

Supporting Media Professionals and Freelancers

More immediately, IMDA seeks to protect jobs in the media industry with the launch of a new \$8 million Public Service Content (PSC) Fund that will catalyse more production projects that in turn, benefits media professionals in the coming months. Under this initiative, Mediacorp, Viddsee and SPH will commission short-form content for their digital platforms through a Call for Proposal. Media companies and talent can take advantage of the Circuit Breaker period to start planning, conceptualising and submitting their proposals to be ready for production work when COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. More details of the PSC Fund are at [Annex A](#).

In addition, IMDA will continue to support ground-up initiatives by media associations to support those in need. For one, IMDA will match the Singapore Association for Motion Picture Professionals' (SAMPP) COVID-19 Relief Fund¹ contribution of \$20,000 to support media practitioners affected by the cancellation and postponement of projects.

IMDA also encourages media professionals to make use of this slowdown to deepen their tradecraft by bringing forward their training plans so that they are in good stead for the upturn. IMDA will support the upskilling of Self-Employed Persons (SEPs) by providing a training grant of up to 90% of course fees, capped at \$3,000 per course under the Talent Assistance (T-Assist) Programme. In addition to subsidised fees, Self-Employed Persons, including freelancers, can benefit from training allowance for eligible courses.

¹ The relief fund will offer grants of between \$300 and \$500 to film and TV media practitioners affected by the cancellation and postponement of projects.

Supporting Media Companies

IMDA will also help media companies reduce their operating costs. The Film Exhibition and Distribution Licence Fees will be waived from 17 April 2020. The waiver will apply to new licence applications and renewal of existing licences. Classification fees for films (public exhibition and video distribution), video games and label fees will also be waived until further notice.

In addition, IMDA will help local media companies strengthen their capabilities and increase their competitiveness by leveraging the expertise of MNC partners. IMDA has worked with international content partners such as WarnerMedia Entertainment Networks APAC and ViacomCBS Networks Asia, to bring forward the implementation of the Capabilities Partnership Programme (CPP), which pairs media MNCs with local media companies to develop “Made in Singapore” content. For example, ViacomCBS Networks Asia will develop up to three regional entertainment or family content Intellectual Properties (IPs) in May 2020. WarnerMedia Entertainment Networks APAC plans to commence development of up to three regional original content IPs for HBO Asia in June 2020. The CPP programme is expected to benefit 80 to 100 local media companies over the next 12 months.

Minister for Communications and Information S Iswaran said, “The Government will continue to support our media companies and professionals as they weather this trying period, so that they can continue to create content that inspires, uplifts and binds us as one united people. Media companies can look forward to more project opportunities and reduced operating costs, while media professionals and freelancers can benefit from subsidised training fees to sharpen their craft during this downtime. These initiatives form part of our larger national effort to protect jobs and livelihoods. In the longer term, the Government will continue to build capabilities to better prepare our workers, businesses and people to seize opportunities. Working together, we will overcome this period of uncertainty and emerge stronger as one”.

For more information on efforts to support the media sector, please visit <https://www.imda.gov.sg/for-industry/Efforts-To-Support-Singapore-Media-Sector>

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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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Public Service Content Fund to Spur Local Media Productions

IMDA launched a new \$8 million Public Service Content (PSC) Fund to catalyse more projects that can benefit local media companies and professionals in the coming months. Under this initiative, Mediacorp, Vidsee and SPH will commission short-form content for their digital platforms through Calls for Proposal (CFP). Up to \$150,000 in funding will be available per project per call. Mediacorp will be launching the first CFP on 23 April 2020. Media companies and talents can take advantage of this circuit breaker period to put together their proposals and start production work when restrictions are lifted.

The \$8 million PSC Fund comes on the back of an earlier \$1 million fund launched by IMDA in March 2020 (“Content Fund to Support SG United”). The fund was well-subscribed with close to twenty proposals from local creators. Five videos have since been released², and the full slate of videos will be made available progressively.

Criteria for application of Public Service Content Fund

Singapore-registered media/production companies with a proven track record in local content production over the last three years and which have adopted the Tripartite Standard on the Procurement of Services from Media Freelancers may apply for the Call-for-Proposals from commissioning partners of the Fund.

Proposals should fulfil the following criteria:

- Short form digital content (single video or a slate of videos) with minimum duration of 10-minute per video (standard rate of \$25,000 per video will apply)
- Creative concepts that meet any of the six Public Service Broadcast objectives³
- In any of the four official languages and any genre, with some flexibility for dialect content, but dialect should not form the bulk of the funded slate
- Funded content should not exceed PG13 classification in accordance with the Content Code for Over-the-Top, Video-on-demand and Niche Services to allow for widest possible reach

² See the Content Fund to Support SG United videos at:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2571780983069582&id=1459945444253147
https://m.youtube.com/watch?fbclid=IwAR1QIraCmM3P_vXuD2mfJ1VDJo3QZaLjZLFnpvQX4F5JpHVo_SDmcQ28Po&v=1D7_kJhnoyl&feature=youtu.be
<https://vimeo.com/404883134>
<https://www.facebook.com/noontalk/videos/1680816045404260/>
<https://youtu.be/F8WqF0Y3JoU>

³ PSB aims to foster a connected society through quality, engaging and informative public service content with reach and impact. PSB programmes serve the following national and social interest objectives:

- a. Promote positive social values important to Singapore and Singaporeans
- b. Celebrate our culture and heritage and/or promote cross-cultural awareness
- c. Promote racial and religious harmony
- d. Promote the Singapore identity
- e. Stimulate knowledge and learning, including factual and educational programmes targeting children, youth and the general population;
- f. Foster an informed society via news, information and analysis of current affairs that increase understanding of the world.

Partner Quotes from Public Service Content (PSC) Fund

Mediacorp

Irene Lim, Chief Customer Officer, Mediacorp said: “We are pleased to partner IMDA to support the local creative industry being impacted by the current situation. As Singapore’s national media network, the expertise and platforms provided by Mediacorp’s involvement in this initiative will enable local production houses and talents to produce innovative digital content that will continue to entertain and engage Singaporean audiences.”

Singapore Press Holdings

Mr Anthony Tan, Deputy CEO of Singapore Press Holdings said, “SPH hopes this meaningful initiative will spur our local content production community during these trying times. We look forward to commissioning engaging and informative productions, and to be able to share these fresh and exciting local content with our audience across our network’s different platforms.”

Viddsee

Said Derek Tan, Viddsee's co-founder: "In these challenging times, we see how important the filmmaking community is in bringing hope and joy through their films, series and documentaries. IMDA’s PSC Fund, which complements our recently launched StoriesTogether initiative, is a real statement of solidarity with our community of storytellers, ensuring that they keep their passion for filmmaking alive, and continue to connect us through our shared love for entertaining stories."