

Innovation center taps rising Chinese tech sector

By ZHENG CAIXIONG
in Guangzhou

The Singapore Manufacturing Innovation Center officially opened in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, on Monday. It is expected to play an important role in promoting Sino-Singapore cooperation in high-tech industries going forward.

The center is located in the co-working space within Ascendas OneHub in the Sino-Singapore Guangzhou Knowledge City.

It is a one-stop shop to facilitate partnerships between Singapore Industry 4.0, also known as I4.0, technology solutions providers and Chinese enterprises looking to adopt such solutions.

The center was launched by International Enterprise Singapore and Ascendas-Singbridge as a joint initiative.

It aims to help Singaporean companies to tap rising demand in China, boosted by the Made in China 2025 strategy aimed at leveraging traditional industries and develop the advanced manufacturing sector. The center is a first-of-its-kind, promoting the co-creation of innovative technology solutions among Singapore companies and Chinese enterprises.

International Enterprise Singapore has partnered with Ascendas-Singbridge to bring together a pioneer batch of five Singapore technology companies with complementary capabilities to anchor the new center.

They are Akribis Systems, a motion control solutions specialist; Barghest Building Performance, an energy efficiency technology provider focusing on intelligent build-

ing space; K-One, an innovation solutions provider focusing on sustainability, environmentally friendly and value-added solutions; Plant Werx, an industrial information technology provider; and, SESTO Robotics, autonomous technology specialist delivering automated guided vehicle solutions.

"Singapore has a strong knowledge-intensive manufacturing sector, which accounts for 20 percent of our GDP. Because of this, our local technology solutions providers have gained relevant expertise and a track record in transforming the traditional manufacturing sector," Lee Ark Boon, CEO of International Enterprise Singapore, said.

"These companies can partner and co-create solutions with Chinese manufacturers as they move up the value chain.

"The center serves as a one-stop shop for Singapore and Guangdong enterprises to collaborate on I4.0 solutions, and scale up in other parts of China," he added.

Nina Yang, Ascendas-Singbridge's CEO for Sustainable Urban Development, said: "As the master developer of Sino-Singapore Guangzhou Knowledge City, Ascendas-Singbridge is pleased to jointly launch the Singapore Manufacturing Innovation

Center with IE Singapore."

Located in the heart of the Pearl River Delta region — one of the world's most important manufacturing and industrial hubs — the center is strategically positioned.

"This is in line with our commitment to play a meaningful role in supporting economic and social development in key cities across China and around the region," she said.

Chen Xiaohua, head of Guangzhou's Huangpu district and executive vice-director of Guangzhou Development District Administrative Committee, said the launch of the innovation center will be a new start for expanding Sino-Singapore cooperation in new and high-tech industries in Guangdong.

The Sino-Singapore Guangzhou Knowledge City aims to establish itself as a model zone for Sino-foreign economic cooperation under the country's Belt and Road Initiative, said Chen.

Michael Leong, CEO of SESTO Robotics, said: "The center's strategic location, with a well-connected transportation network and robust infrastructure, provides us with an excellent base for reaching out to the Chinese companies requiring quality and intelligent automation solutions."



A grand ceremony inaugurates the Singapore Manufacturing Innovation Center in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, on Monday.



Government officials, entrepreneurs and investors are present at the fifth Sino-Singapore Knowledge Forum held on Tuesday.

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Knowledge city opens new chapter for Guangdong-Singapore relations

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Singapore and Guangdong province have promised to further build out the Sino-Singapore Guangzhou Knowledge City into a shining pearl for Sino-foreign cooperation under the country's Belt and Road Initiative.

On Tuesday, both sides signed a total of eight memorandums of cooperation and framework agreements to advance their partnership during the Singapore-Guangdong Collaboration Council held in Guangzhou, the provincial capital.

The memorandums and agreements mainly involve urban construction, software cooperation, investment and trade, education and training, and new energy construction. The two sides said they expect the records to help accelerate the pace of construction in

the SSGKC over the coming months. The knowledge city was first established in 2010.

Ong Ye Kung, minister for education (higher education and skills) and second minister for defence of Singapore, highly praised the Singaporean companies that have set up their facilities in Guangdong.

"Singaporean companies should further expand their cooperation with foreign counterparts to increase their presence in the world market," he told the fifth Sino-Singapore Knowledge Forum on Tuesday. He met with senior Party and government officials from Guangdong province when he was in Guangzhou earlier this week.

Huang Ningsheng, vice-governor of Guangdong and director-general of the Guangdong Provincial Bureau of Science and Technology, said there is still vast scope for joint initiatives between Guangdong and Singapore.

He urged companies from

Guangdong to seize the opportunities available to work with their Singaporean counterparts and to promote such partnerships to a new level, building SSGKC into a new R&D and innovation center, helping to boost Guangdong's economic transformation and industrial upgrading.

In addition to Ong and Huang, senior government officials and experts that participated the forum urged both sides to further advance their cooperation and build SSGKC into a new international science and technology innovation hub, a new economic cooperative center and a new engine for economic growth under the country's Belt and Road Initiative.

Yang Mu, executive dean of the Institute of Public Policy at the South China University of Technology, said Guangdong's cooperation with Singapore is a classic win-win deal.

Yang explained that Singapore has constructed many

industrial development zones in its neighboring nations over the years. As such, it can help Guangdong companies to increase their presence in Southeast Asian countries and to expand internationally. In turn, Singaporean companies are able to gain greater access to the mainland market thanks to their counterparts' experience.

Inderjit Singh Dhaliwal, a member on the board of trustees of Nanyang Technological University, said Singapore and Guangdong should expand their cooperation in education, talent training, innovation and protection of intellectual property rights. He is also chairman of the Enterprise Committee and chairman of NTUitive, the innovation and enterprise company at the university.

Located in Guangzhou's Huangpu district, the knowledge city is linked to Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport and major ports in Guangdong via advanced expressways and light railway networks.