

## **GRANT CALL 6**

### **DATA & TECHNOLOGY – ENRICHING SOCIAL LIFE AND EXPANDING WORK OPPORTUNITIES**

The 3rd Enabling Masterplan released in December 2016 continues to build on the vision of a caring and inclusive society in Singapore where persons with disabilities are empowered to achieve their fullest potential and participate fully as integral and contributing members of society.

Work is often an important bridge to connect an individual with the community. It provides dignity to a person and empowers the individual to lead independent, fulfilling lives. This is also true for persons with disabilities.

Opportunities for recreation and participation in social activities are also crucial to enabling greater engagement in the community and improving the psychological wellbeing of persons with disabilities.

Although there have been significant strides made to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in the economic and social spheres of our society, this Grant Call seeks data and tech solutions to further enhance opportunities for persons with disabilities in these areas.

### **ENRICHING SOCIAL LIFE**

Persons with disabilities often face challenges and obstacles in leading active social lives, especially if the disability results in greater difficulty in independent travelling or additional needs for the individual. Assistive technologies and other tools can therefore create and enhance opportunities for; or enable persons with disabilities to participate in social activities.

Social life includes the interactions and activities in which an individual engages with family members, caregivers and other members of the community, e.g. recreation activities such as games and sports, social activities such as shopping, dining, entertainment, etc. It could also include communication activities on online and electronic platforms such as social media or other technologies which connects the individual to a community and allows him/her to be informed and engaged.

## CHALLENGES FACED BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The challenges faced by persons with disabilities can be broadly classified as follows:

- **Infrastructure**
  - Availability of accessible spaces (physical or online) for persons with disabilities to connect / interact and participate in social activities in the community.
  
- **Mindset and Support**
  - Of family, caregivers and volunteers/buddies and their willingness to encourage, support and facilitate access by persons with disabilities to social activities in the community.
  
  - Of the community and the extent they are willing to be inclusive in designing and planning activities to facilitate participation for persons with disabilities.
  
- **Assistive Technologies**
  - To support and/or facilitate persons with disabilities to participate in social activities, e.g. devices and technologies to enjoy a movie or theatre performance, visit a museum, etc.

## POSSIBLE PROJECTS

- Solutions for support structure(s) that can facilitate participation in social activities within the community
- Solutions that support and enhance experiences in social activities (e.g. going to the movies, watching a performance, going to the museum, dining, etc)
- Solutions that allow persons with disabilities to interact (e.g. social media, chat, etc.)
- Solutions which facilitate persons with disabilities to commute more independently

## EXPANDING WORK OPPORTUNITIES

Persons with disabilities may face challenges at work that may hamper their ability to deliver and perform at their best potential. In turn, this could also restrict their options for the types of work they could perform.

Providing support to persons with disabilities at work through workplace and job design, including the application of relevant technologies and tools could allow persons with disabilities to maximise their potential to deliver at their best level of capacity / capabilities.

## CHALLENGES FACED BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

- Persons with disabilities may be perceived as being less capable at work due to their disability. Furthermore, taking on multiple tasks and roles is a norm in Singapore's workplace culture, and many employers may perceive that persons with disabilities are therefore less able than other candidates. However, employers of persons with disabilities have found the latter more productive when matched to the right job with the necessary accommodations.
- Given these perceptions, employers may tend to consider persons with disabilities for 'simpler' tasks in specific industries such as F&B and retail. These job opportunities, while providing persons with disabilities some level of financial independence, may not stretch them to their fullest potential and offer them true personal fulfilment.
- Persons with disabilities have a range of abilities and personal aspirations, just like persons without disabilities. The challenge is to help employers optimise each individual to the best of their abilities by helping them achieve their personal aspirations.

## POSSIBLE PROJECTS

Projects that enable persons with disabilities to grow to their potential and achieve their personal aspirations, e.g. in terms of learning and delivering higher value-added work, or expanding their opportunities in the types and level of work across industries, e.g.:

- Solutions in workplace and work flow designs to support persons with disabilities in the workplace.
- Technological solutions as enablers to better match jobseekers' abilities with employment opportunities; support employees at work and/or expand their work capabilities.
- Platforms and/or channels for employers to share their best practices in supporting persons with disabilities in the workplace to bring out their best potential; including success stories.
- Collation of best practices/re-designing solutions from specific industry groups and/or business association to be shared with other employers to bring out the best in persons with disabilities, at work.