

## Funding support for local firms eyeing North China market

By Linette Lim | Posted: 01 March 2012 1459 hrs

SINGAPORE: International Enterprise Singapore (IE Singapore) has announced fresh funding support for Singapore-based companies looking to enter the North China market.

Over the next five years, it will set aside S\$9.5 million to help companies expand into Tianjin through the Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-City.

IE Singapore CEO Teo Eng Cheong noted that Singapore companies have already been actively expanding into Tianjin. He said, "Bilateral trade between Singapore and Tianjin increased by 26 per cent to US\$2 billion last year. Singapore-based companies' investments into Tianjin reached US\$710 million with 26 projects."

The funding will be administered through the Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-City Investment and Development Company (SSTEC), Tianjin Eco-City's master developer. SSTEC is a joint venture between the Chinese consortium led by Tianjin TEDA investment holding company and the Singapore consortium led by Keppel Group.

The new funding - covering areas such as marketing and test-bedding - is available on top of support currently available. Under IE Singapore's existing Tianjin Eco-City Assistance Programme, a company may receive a grant of up to S\$150,000 for setting up a physical presence in the Eco-City.

The announcement was made at the Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-City Investment Seminar on Thursday. At the same time, five local companies signed investment deals with SSTEC, bringing the total registered capital of Singapore-based companies in the Tianjin Eco-City to S\$1.36 billion (6.8 billion yuan).

These five companies are Character Montessori, Hawaii Furnishing (the brand owner of "Scanteak"), advertising firm SPINN, landscaper Elmich and bathroom fittings company Rigel Technology.

"With the strategic location and support, we believe that Tianjin Eco-City is the right place to plant our base step in China, from which we will be conducting thorough market research as well as determining our market strategies," said Jamie Lim, regional marketing director, Scanteak.

To date, the Eco-city has attracted about S\$11.90 billion (60 billion yuan) of registered capital investment, with more than 600 companies registered to set up offices there.

- CNA/cc



Photos 1 of 1 < || >

Central Business District in Singapore.

### Video



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# 企发局 5 年内拨 950 万元 助本地公司立足天津生态城

(2012-03-02)

*从今天开始，有意进军华北市场的新加坡企业，将能在多个方面获得资源，包括考察该生态城的商机、参与展览和行销活动、市场可行性研究，以及测试项目等。有关的合格成本将可以获得最高 50% 的资助，例如行销活动的机票和住宿成本、参加国际展览的成本，以及市场可行性研究的成本。*

王阳发 报道

新加坡国际企业发展局 (IE Singapore) 今后五年将拨出 950 万元，协助新加坡公司在中新天津生态城建立进军华北市场的据点。这个支援计划将通过中新天津生态城投资开发有限公司 (Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-City Investment and Development Co. Ltd) 执行。

从今天开始，有意进军华北市场的新加坡企业，将能在多个方面获得资源，包括考察该生态城的商机、参与展览和行销活动、市场可行性研究，以及测试项目等。有关的合格成本将可以获得最高 50% 的资助，例如行销活动的机票和住宿成本、参加国际展览的成本，以及市场可行性研究的成本。

企发局局长张永昌，昨日在中新天津生态城投资开发有限公司于本地举办的投资研讨会上，宣布了这个消息。

合格公司

最高可获 15 万元

在 2010 年，企发局推出天津生态城支援计划 (TAP)，合格公司在生态城设立业务，可获得最高 15 万元的支持。而张永昌说，企发局决定给生态城项目更大的支持，因此推出了这个五年 950 万元的计划，帮助有兴趣通过生态城把业务扩展至天津的公司。

他说：“这个 950 万元的支持相当独特。首先，它是企发局预先作出的承诺，对今后五年来到生态城的公司给予支持。这将给予中新天津生态城投资开发公司保证，它们接触洽谈的公司将可能获得企发局的支持。我们相信这将帮助它们吸引更多公司进入生态城。”

(2012-03-02)

“第二，企发局认识到企业在探讨生态城项目时，也仅此市场可行性研究和试床测试活动。企发局的这个新支援计划，将支持这些活动，帮助企业在进入生态城取得进展。”

“第三，企发局执行这个计划时，将采用精简化的流程，有关手续对大多数公司将更简单，而且能够收集到更多细节。”

中新天津生态城是中国和新加坡政府的第二个官方合作项目，由私人企业参与投资和发展，坐落在天津滨海新区，占地 30 平方公里，这个 2007 年开始的长期合作发展项目，预计 10 至 15 年发展完成，目前正在发展初期，已吸引 600 家企业落户，设立了一个动漫园以及购物、娱乐、酒店等社区设施。

张永昌受访时进一步表示，企发局希望通过给予更大的支持，能够鼓励更多公司考虑到天津生态城设立据点。当然，从企发局的角度来说，新加坡公司到中国时面对很多选择，它们应该选择最适合它们的城市。

负责生态城合作的新方政府机构是以国家发展部为主。国家发展部副常任秘书（发展）郑锦宝在投资研讨会上讲话时强调，天津生态城地点吸引人、是个双边合作项目、而且已经取得长足的进展。这是中国唯一的一个享受外汇奖励计划的城市（企业可先把资金转换成人民币存款，再按合同项目付款，免除了人民币升值的风险）。

新加坡政府动员所有能对这个生态城作出贡献的机构，包括市区重建局、建屋发展局、公用事业局以及建设局，都扮演着它们的角色。

#### 四年内卖出

#### 4000 住宅单位

他指出，短短四年里，生态城已经卖出 4000 个住宅单位，超过 600 家公司注册在当地设立办事处，吸引到 600 亿人民币的资本投资。随着越来越多居民和公司到来，生态城正进入新阶段的发展。居民和公司的需要，也将为各领域的新加坡公司提供新的商机，包括零售和服务行业。

中新天津生态城投资开发有限公司昨日也与多家新加坡公司签署投资协议架构，包括品格蒙特梭利（亚洲）公司（Character Montessori Asia）、锐佳科技公司（Rigel Technology）以及 SPINN 公司。品格蒙特梭利公司总裁黄国强以及锐佳科技集团董事长黄印成受询时，都认为企发局的 950 万元支援计划将很有帮助，因为企业到当地投资之前首先便需要进行市场可行性研究。

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# Firms can tap \$9.5m fund for North China ventures

By **BRYAN KOH**

SINGAPORE-BASED companies seeking to make inroads into North China's burgeoning market can draw on \$9.5 million worth of assistance.

The pledged grant will be provided by International Enterprise (IE) Singapore over a five-year period and administered through Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-City Investment and Development (SSTEC).

Details of the new funding were unveiled at the Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-City Investment Seminar yesterday, and designed to spur more Singapore companies into making an initial foray into Tianjin through the Tianjin Eco-City, serving as a springboard to expand outwards and establish a foothold throughout North China.

In a bid to jumpstart this process, local companies that qualify for the new assistance administered by SSTEC will be able to receive funding when engaging in business activities such as market feasibility studies, test-bedding projects, and pre-marketing trips, said IE Singapore CEO Teo Eng Cheong.

This is available on top of IE Singapore's existing Tianjin Eco-City Assistance Programme (TAP) that was launched in 2010, which allows eligible companies to receive a maximum of \$150,000 for setting up a physical presence in the Eco-City.

In addition, the Chinese government's role in promoting the Eco-City project in view of its unique status as a government-to-government project was acknowledged by Ministry of National Development deputy secretary for development Tay Kim Poh.

"(Tianjin Eco-City) is the only city in China which enjoys the Foreign Exchange Incentive Scheme," said Mr Tay.

He explained that under this scheme, foreign companies registered in the Eco-City can proactively mitigate business risks arising from potential exchange rate fluctuations.

This is because they have the flexible option of converting their funds into RMB deposits at a time of their choice, instead of being able to do so only upon confirmation of payment based on supported documents.

Yesterday's investment seminar also saw five more Singapore-based companies, including Rigel Technology and Character Montessori Asia, inking investment deals with SSTEC, adding to the more than 600 companies already registered in the Tianjin Eco-City.

Total registered capital

in the Eco-City stands at 60 billion yuan, which includes almost 6.8 billion yuan from Singapore-based companies.

Mr Ng Eng Seng, Rigel Technology's managing director, believes that for newcomers to the Chinese market, Tianjin Eco-City remains a more viable option.

However, he cautioned that the culture in China is different to that of Singapore's, urging companies to engage experienced staff to smoothen the transition process.

But Ho Tong Yen, SSTEC's CEO, was quick to dispel the notion that the two nations' cultural issues pose a barrier to entry.

"The fact that we have SSTEC as the master developer (for the Tianjin Eco-City) and Singapore officials seconded to the project working together with Singapore companies, in some ways, helps to bridge this cultural divide," said Mr Ho.