

# CONVERSATIONS

## EXEMPLARY EMPLOYERS, EVEN AMIDST A CRISIS

**COVID-19 has changed the way we work in unprecedented ways. But some employers in Singapore have risen above the challenges, and their efforts were recognised at the Tripartite Alliance Award 2021.**

The Tripartite Alliance Award returned on 16 August 2021 to recognise employers and individuals for their efforts in building progressive workplaces. The Award acknowledges organisations and individuals that have implemented fair, responsible and progressive employment practices. This year, the event pays special tribute to the resilience of awardees in building progressive workplaces despite challenges and restrictions brought along by the pandemic.

**“This batch of award winners is especially inspiring, as they have continued to keep their employees at the heart of their business, even in the midst of the pandemic,”** said Dr Tan See Leng, Minister for Manpower, in his opening remarks.

Twenty-one organisations and six individuals were lauded for their exemplary standards in adopting good employment practices, through four award categories:

1. Age Inclusive Practices
2. Fair and Progressive Employment Practices
3. Work-Life Excellence
4. Responsible Best Sourcing

### CONGRATULATIONS, HCPARTNERS!

This year, six HCPartners were recognised for their stellar progressive workplace practices, on both an organisational and individual basis.

HCPartner **OCBC Bank** was one of the winners of the Pinnacle Award, for its holistic people-centric strategies and practices above and beyond the scope of the Tripartite Alliance Award. OCBC has displayed stellar standards in enhancing organisational policies and programmes in addressing their current workforce needs, as well as its efforts to prepare employees for the future, in accordance with areas of national interest. OCBC was also awarded for its efforts in Fair and Progressive Employment Practices, as well as Work-Life Excellence. In the Individual Category, Mr David Cheng, Senior Vice President, Head of Corporate Finance, won the Special Mention Award (Advocate for Work-Life Harmony).

**aAdvantage Consulting**, was awarded for the Fair and Progressive Employment Practices as well as Work-Life Excellence. The SME ensures progressive workplace practices even before employment -



Dr Tan See Leng, Minister for Manpower delivering his speech at the Tripartite Alliance Award Ceremony

in selecting job candidates, it goes by a data-based evaluation criteria, instead of factors such as “gut feel”, and non-conclusive data such as educational qualifications. aAdvantage also has in place training and development opportunities for its people across the board - that is, from fresh graduates to mid-career workers, and mothers keen on returning to the workforce. Flexible work arrangements are also in place so that employees can pursue their personal interests while helping the company meet its business goals.

Another HCPartner that was recognised on both organisational and individual levels is **Prudential Assurance Company Singapore** - it was lauded for going above and beyond in enhancing its Age-Inclusive Practices. Some of its practices include being the first financial institution to remove the Retirement Age of 62 in 2018 to allow its people to enjoy extended careers, raising the age cap for group medical coverage to 100 years old, and providing life and skills workshops for its older workers. On the individual front, the organisation’s Chief Human Resources Officer, Ms Sheela Parakkal, was recognised for her stellar leadership in implementing age-inclusive practices.

**Royal Plaza on Scotts** was awarded for its exemplary standards in Work-Life Excellence, and its General Manager, Mr Patrick Fiat, was lauded for his leadership in the category. Other HCPartners that won awards include **DBS Bank** (Fair and Progressive Employment Practices and Work-Life Excellence) and **Mandarin Oriental Singapore** (Age Inclusive Practices).

### TAKING THE ALLIANCE FURTHER

Such achievements from exemplary organisations pave the way for other organisations to build their own progressive workplaces.

This year’s event saw the announcement of a new platform, the Tripartite Collective, to further enhance shared understanding of the role and importance of tripartism in Singapore. The platform - which will comprise members from tripartite partners as well as representatives from the academic, legal and media communities - aims to bring together the tripartite community to exchange ideas to address issues faced by the workforce and employers. It will commission research studies, organise open dialogues and cross-sharing sessions, and regular engagements and capability development programmes. The Tripartite Collective will be supported by Temasek Foundation and the tripartite partners - Ministry of Manpower, National Trades Union Congress, and Singapore National Employers Federation.

Additionally, TAFEP partnered the Human Capital Leadership Institute to put together a research report titled **“Beyond 2020: DNA of Progressive Employers”**. The report studies the mindsets and practices that made the Award winners such exemplary employers, and can be downloaded [here](#).

Once again, congratulations to all winners! See the full list of Tripartite Alliance Award 2021 winners [here](#).

## MAKING A CAREER SWITCH FROM ARCHITECTURE TO TECHNOLOGY

**Formerly from the architecture industry, Estelle today specialises in the world of data and business at e-commerce giant, Shopee. See how Shopee guided her - and many others - into the ever-evolving world of technology.**

Estelle graduated with a master’s degree in Architecture from the National University of Singapore and worked in the architecture field for four years before making a career switch.

Today, she plays a key role in leading e-commerce platform Shopee’s Business Development team as a business analyst, where she harnesses data to constantly improve projects, processes and best-practices across the region. Her work is unlike anything she had ever learnt or done during her time in architecture, but she has grown into her role well. With the resources and support from Shopee’s Company-Led Training (CLT) Programme, Estelle got the boost she needed to dive into the dynamic world of data and business.

**“I have always found the tech industry attractive and wanted to contribute to bringing immediate impact to end-users. I also wanted to work in an environment where new and innovative concepts take shape,”** Estelle explains her shift into a tech career.

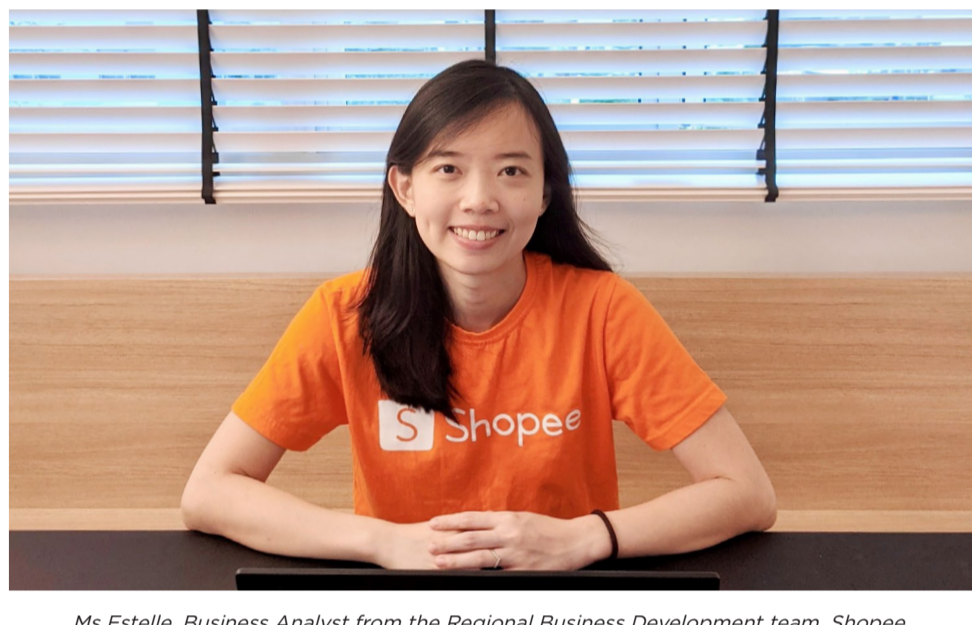
**“I was excited about joining a fast-growing company like Shopee, because I knew it would expose me to new opportunities to learn and grow.”**

### ACCELERATING SKILLS IN ALL THINGS TECH

Held in partnership with Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA), Shopee’s CLT programme is a specialised programme for new full-time employees to upskill and explore a variety of tech-related roles, in areas such as Product Management, Software Engineering, User Experience Design, and Business/Data Analytics. It is open to both fresh graduates and mid-career individuals.

**“Through the programme, we seek to boost trainees’ employment and employability outcomes, as part of the ongoing national efforts to create jobs and training opportunities for our local talent,”** explains Agatha Soh, Head of Regional People Team at Shopee.

As part of the programme, employees benefit from six months of on-the-job and structured training. They also receive guidance from a mentor within the same department, who will provide support and help them improve their skills.



Ms Estelle, Business Analyst from the Regional Business Development team, Shopee.

### AN EXTENSIVE INVENTORY OF TRAINING INITIATIVES

The CLT programme is just one of Shopee’s many initiatives to nurture talents.

**“As a homegrown tech company, we believe in the importance of doing our part to develop the local tech ecosystem,”** says Agatha.

**“Shopee has embarked on several initiatives, including our partnership with IMDA on the CLT programme as we seek to deepen our tech capabilities, engage Singaporeans from diverse backgrounds, and nurture the talent pipeline,”** Agatha explains.

For one, there’s Shopee Academy, where Shopee’s Learning and Development team designs a range of targeted training programmes, from fireside chats with leaders, to workshops and sharing sessions with teams across the organisation.

Shopee is also committed to doing its part for the local tech community and preparing them for the digital economy of tomorrow. It held the first-ever Shopee Product and Design Challenge 2021, where participants from all walks of life were equipped with essential product management and UI/UX design skills through training and mentorship. Another initiative is the Shopee Code League, a three-week hackathon that gathered thousands of students and professionals to spark greater awareness and interest in tech by working on real datasets and challenges. These events brought tech communities closer through problem solving and knowledge sharing across the region.

### PEOPLE AS THE FOUNDATION OF ITS PROGRESS

Beyond its efforts to cultivate talents in the tech industry, Shopee also ensures that every individual in the organisation is empowered and able to contribute to their own growth.

**“We value people of different experiences and backgrounds, and strive to foster a work environment where our employees get the right support and resources to grow their careers, as well as balance their commitments outside of work,”** elaborates Agatha.

Shopee also launched new wellness programmes to help employees take care of their physical and mental health. This includes regular fitness resources, self-care toolkits and counselling services for employees.

### THE MOVE TOWARDS TECH

With the world’s rapid move towards all things digital, the importance to keep up with this shift - for both businesses and individuals - is more evident than ever. As someone who has found her place in the world of tech as part of a mid-career decision, Estelle shares her words of advice for mid-careerists who are thinking about leaping into the dynamic world of tech.

**“Don’t be afraid to step into the unknown, outside what you have been familiar with. The tech industry is full of opportunities; keep knocking on every door and, at the right time, the right door will open.”**

## 7 PRACTICES TO ENHANCE WORK-LIFE HARMONY AT YOUR WORKPLACE

**Work-life Harmony is achieved when an individual is able to effectively manage both work responsibilities and personal aspirations.**

**Adopting the Tripartite Standard on Work-Life Harmony can help your employees manage their work and personal lives, and lead to more motivated staff with higher morale and better performance! You will also gain a competitive edge in attracting and retaining your talents.**



To find out more and to adopt this Tripartite Standard, visit [tafep.sg](https://www.tafep.sg)

**LET TRIPARTITE STANDARDS BE YOUR EMPLOYMENT STANDARD**