

"You are close to the companies, and understand the needs of your industries well. You support Small and Medium Enterprises to overcome the limitations of size by working together, and doing things that would otherwise be difficult for a single company to do alone."

 Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister November 2017

# FOREWORD

Trade Associations and Chambers (TACs) play a significant role in helping our Singapore companies to expand, transform and innovate. They are also important intermediaries who regularly provide feedback and suggestions to the Government on behalf of their members.

COVID-19 has brought unprecedented changes to the global business landscape. In this new environment, companies need to re-think their business models, find innovative ways to engage partners and consumers, and stay relevant. In these times, TACs are needed more than ever to help their members overcome difficulties and capture new opportunities.

It is very heartening to see that many TACs have stepped up to help our local businesses navigate the fast-evolving and uncertain environment. As they help businesses to upgrade and improve, TACs too will need to boost their own core capabilities to ensure that they are well placed to support the growth and transformation of their respective sectors.

Recognising this need, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), a leading TAC since its formation in 1906, has developed a Growth Model Framework for the TAC sector in partnership with Enterprise Singapore. This framework will be a useful guide for all TACs in identifying their current gaps and prioritising areas to improve on. It also includes a toolkit that provides a structured approach for TACs to plan and strategise their growth.

The Government is fully committed to supporting and uplifting our TACs. Strong, well-equipped and innovative TACs will be able to better serve our local business community, and help steer effective transformation at the sectoral level. I encourage our TACs to tap on the Growth Model Framework to strengthen their capabilities from within, and develop a new generation of talent who can lead their sectors to the next phase of growth.

I am confident that our collective strength and resolve will help Singapore emerge from this crisis stronger, more dynamic and more resilient than before.

### Ms Low Yen Ling

Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Culture, Community and Youth

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# Control Contro

# TACs IN TODAY'S CONTEXT

As companies continue to face industrial headwinds, there is now a stronger need for Trade Associations and Chambers (TACs) to play a vital role in helping these companies to overcome challenges and grow, hence driving the need for TACs to take a deeper look at their roles, operating model and association workforce capabilities.







PM Lee underlined the important role that TACs in Singapore play during launch of the Trade Association Hub (TA Hub)

The TACs are important players in our journey to upgrade our economy, grow our companies, and create better jobs for Singaporeans.

> Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister November 2017





Budget 2020: Enterprise Singapore launches 2 programmes to support trade and merchant associations

Within each industry,
we need to strengthen
partnerships to deepen
industry-wide capabilities.
Even as our enterprises
compete to differentiate
themselves, they must come
together to solve common
challenges.

 Heng Swee Keat, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister February 2020



Budget Debate: New Framework being planned to upgrade Trade Associations and Chambers, says Low Yen Ling

Upgrading the TACs will be an important plank for the Government's strategy to uplift Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) from the depths of the coronavirus crisis.

 Low Yen Ling, Minister of State for Trade and Industry March 2021



To better understand the Trade Associations and Chambers (TAC) sector and help them grow, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI), in collaboration with Enterprise Singapore (ESG) and SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), commissioned Ernst & Young to develop a **Growth Model** and **Competency Framework** for the TAC sector.

# **GROWTH MODEL**

The Growth Model (GM) serves as a reference for TACs to consider key factors and parameters of how they can grow their business of tomorrow. To make implementation easier, a Toolkit has been developed to allow TACs to self-assess and develop action plans for the future.

The Growth Model (GM) Toolkit comprises of the following:

- **6 Growth Drivers** including People, Member, Technology, Finance, Strategy Planning & Operations and Risk
- 3 Growth Stages including Basic, Developing and Leading
- Assessment Framework detailing self-assessment questions for organisations to utilise
- **Action Plans** detailing how organisations can transform from one growth stage to the next across the 6 growth drivers

# COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

The Competency Framework (CF) for TACs was developed with the aim of building a future-ready and competitive workforce equipped with the right skills and competencies to thrive in a constantly evolving environment.

It serves as a reference for the TAC sector, providing clarity on the sector knowledge framework, career pathways, occupations/job roles, as well as existing and emerging skills required for these occupations/job roles.

In addition, it can be leveraged as a tool for Career Development and enable individuals and employers to undertake learning and development to prepare each TAC executive for their new roles.

The Competency Framework (CF) comprises of the following:

- Career Pathways detailing the 7 functional tracks within the TAC sector
- Skills Maps detailing roles and responsibilities, skills and competencies for each job role
- Skills and Competencies detailing knowledge and ability items

# Methodology

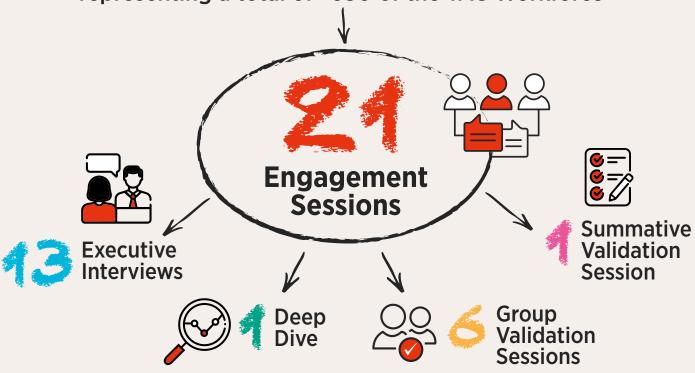
The Growth Model and Competency Framework were developed in consultation with the TAC industry over a period of 32 weeks from November 2020 to June 2021.

The design and validation of the Growth Model and Competency Framework comprises:

- a. Studying the growth journey of TACs
- b. Benchmarking study with non-profit organisations
- c. Career Pathways for TAC Sector
- d. Emerging trends that impact the TAC Sector in Singapore



representing a total of ~650 of the TAC Workforce



# **PARTICIPATING TACS**





























































# TRADE ASSOCIATIONS AND CHAMBERS (TACS): STRUCTURE AND ROLES





# WHAT IS A TAC?

A TAC is an organisation representing the collective interests of its members in a particular business, industry, or trade sector. Therefore, members are the key composition of a TAC with an executive committee of volunteers serving as its leaders. A full-time secretariat, if available, will take on executing the day-to-day functions to serve the needs of its members.

# STRUCTURE OF A TAC

In Singapore, a TAC is generally made up of 4 distinct groups

- Executive Committee (Exco)/Council/Board of Directors
- Secretariat
- Patron
- Members

Each of these groups have their own set of roles and responsibilities which contribute to the workings of a TAC.



# Executive Committee (Exco)/Council/Board of Directors

The Exco/Council/Board of Directors is responsible for setting the overall strategic direction and priorities of the TAC, working closely with the Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer/Secretary-General in establishing the organisation goals, strategies and policies to ensure the maintenance of good governance practices. Made up of volunteers who are business leaders and C Suites of a particular industry, the Exco is also able to provide its TAC the necessary networks and connections.



# Secretariat

The Secretariat takes on the executive function and supports the Exco in implementing the organisation strategy and operational plans. The Secretariat is responsible for overseeing the governance of the TAC in accordance to the Societies Act and Societies Regulation and relevant laws. Typical functions of the Secretariat include (but not limited to) Membership, Branding, Marketing & Communications, Capability Building, Industry Development and Internationalisation.



### **Patron**

A TAC may sometimes appoint a person of good stature or repute as the Patron or Advisor. The primary role of the Patron is to provide advice, lend credibility and support in driving industry initiatives or transformation. He/She is usually a leading figure known either to the general public or a specific industry that the TAC represents.



# **Members**

Members form an important piece of a TAC which typically comprises of companies and individuals related to the industry, ancillary service providers, and related associations/ Government representatives. A most common motivation of members joining a TAC is to establish networks with other players or like-minded individuals in the same or similar ecosystem. With the combined resources of the members, the TAC can use them to advocate the needs of the members and lobby for more favorable regulations.

# ROLES OF A TAC

# ADVOCACY

- Advocate and represent members' needs and interests through relevant platforms and engagement with relevant ministries and government agencies
- Serve as a liaison between the Government and members to advocate and communicate needs and interests effectively
- Engage with the Government to understand the government policies and plans for the industry in order to educate the members and achieve alignment with the government in terms of industry plans and support
- Drive brand advocacy by creating awareness and uplifting the image of the TAC and the sector

# **COLLABORATION**



- Strengthen partnerships and collaborations with others to achieve common goals that are beneficial to the industry
- Partner with Government to drive industry policies and initiatives
- Drive collaboration with industry players to implement standards and best practices to uplift professionalism of the trade
- Develop strategic alliances with others to yield better value for money/economies of scale through pooling of resources

# **INNOVATION**



- Drive industry development and capture new growth opportunities for the industry and members
- Through industry initiatives and education, drive the innovation mindset and adoption
  of technology among members to enhance enterprise capabilities, productivity and
  product/service innovation
- Leverage on global platforms to deepen market presence, expand global footprints and enhance branding, marketing and communications opportunities

# **FUNCTIONS OF A TAC**

Through the engagements with TACs across Singapore in the development of the Growth Model, it has been validated that a TAC would typically have the 7 functions as illustrated below.

Understanding whether they are internal or external functions would allow TACs to understand the impacts they have on the organisation (internal) and its members (external), and therefore better determine the areas to focus and build on.

# **Internal Functions**



- Establishes the organisation's strategies and priorities
- Enforces corporate governance policies
- Oversees corporate planning functions



**Strategy & Governance** 



- Drives membership attraction and retention
- · Manages the administration of membership fee collection and database
- Advocates members' needs and interests
- Executes membership events (e.g. recruitment drives)

# **02** Membership



- Drives internal and external communications and marketing campaigns for the TAC
- · Drives brand awareness and uplift TAC image

Branding, Marketing & Communications

# **External Functions**



- Represents members' needs at relevant platforms
- Collaborates with key government agencies and multipliers to drive industry development and transformation
- Executes local industry events (e.g. industry trade fairs)



- Collaborates with external agencies and training providers to develop and deliver training programmes to members to uplift capabilities
- Assesses the learning needs and advise on skills to address the industry's manpower needs

**O**5 Capability Building



- Establishes partnerships with overseas entities and government agencies to achieve successful business matching opportunities for members
- Executes internationalisation events (e.g. overseas business missions)

06 Internationalisation



- This is a new and emerging function that typically only available in larger sized TACs
- Gathers data on market trends to keep abreast with the industry landscape so as to provide valuable insights to the members

Research

**Digital Marketing** is another emerging function identified. The rise of omni-channel has warranted the adoption of new customer-centric mindset, exploring new platforms/channels such as social media for members engagement. TACs could consider looking at digital marketing under its Memberships or Branding, Marketing and Communications functions.

Revenue Streams is another growing focus. To support growth plans and deliver more value add to members, TACs leaders are realising the importance to drive long-term financial sustainability. They are constantly exploring and innovating new ways of generating revenue through

- Expansion of functions and/or products/service offerings
- · Identify opportunities to provide greater value to members and justify membership fees

While most TACs' revenue streams tend to be from: (1) Membership Fees, (2) Marketing and Advertising Services for Members, (3) Training Programmes and (4) Events, there have been talks on exploring the expansion of Research function and provision of digital platform and consultancy services as new revenue opportunities and/ or value add to members.



# AND STREET, AND ST



Today's rapidly changing business environment has forced a change in the way companies operate and treat their employees. In order for TACs to better serve its member companies, it is therefore important that they understand the trends that are impacting the business landscape.



### **Increase in Business Costs**

Business costs such as labour, rental and raw materials have increased, causing an overall reduction in profit margins for businesses.



# Manpower

Availability of local manpower and foreign workers shortage contribute to increasing operational challenges.



# **Escalating US-China Trade War**

US-China trade tensions, coupled with China's economic slowdown are adding to business unease around the world.



# **Digitalisation and Technology Adoption**

Businesses are increasingly adopting technology to enhance the efficiency of their operations and data management, giving rise to the importance of digitalisation, data analytics and cybersecurity today.



# **Changing Consumer Behaviour**

With the advent of e-commerce and other retail-friendly technologies, consumer demands have shifted towards expedience and convenience.



# COVID-19

The pandemic-induced lockdowns and economic contraction have accelerated businesses' pace in technology adoption. Embracing uncertainty, reinventing the way we do things, willingness to think creatively and adapt will put businesses in a stronger forefront.



## **Growing Focus on Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability**

Businesses are increasingly recognising sustainable development, an integration of economic success, environmental quality, and social responsibility as a new growth opportunity (innovation in products, processes, and stakeholder relationships).



# **Skills Gaps Continue to Widen**

As jobs continue to change, skills gaps will widen as in-demand skills change. More employers are seeing a greater needs in skills such as problem solving, resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility.

# THE NEED FOR CHANGE

In order to help the companies grow and navigate through these disruptions, TACs need to transform and upgrade to better serve the needs of the members.



# Disrupted landscape for businesses and need for TACs to increase their value proposition

As companies adapt and evolve to the changing business landscape, so too must the value proposition of the TACs. Today's societal and environmental challenges require not only the efforts of the Government to address but also the TACs who may play an important role in influencing business behaviours. Hence, TACs should step up and play a leadership role in driving sectoral initiatives so as to increase their value proposition to the members.

# **IMPACT ON TACS**

There is consensus that the old way of doing business needs to change. TACs would have
to be more pro-active, anticipatory and innovative in identifying and addressing the
business and society issues.

## **Key Skillsets required:**

- a. Business Environment Analysis
- b. Business Innovation and Improvement
- c. Solutions Design Thinking
- TACs need to engage in research activities like surveys, quick polls with members and keep up-to-date with emerging trends and practices in order to stay relevant to its members and industry.

- a. Business Opportunities Development
- b. Industry Knowledge, Research and Analysis
- c. Research Data Analysis



# Wider gap of member expectations and need for improved member engagement

TACs today have to manage a broad spectrum of member expectations. Members can range from those at the leading edge of thinking and practice that are highly engaged in TAC activities, to entities on the far end of the learning curve with intermittent or little TAC participation. Hence, it is important for TACs to be able to identify clear and collective interests, and explore ways to share best practices amongst their members. At the same time, TACs should focus on building internal capabilities to ensure the delivery of high-quality content, services and experiences to its members.

# **IMPACT ON TACS**

 TACs need to from time to time review and strengthen internal capabilities to ensure that their workforce has the right capabilities to effectively meet members' demands and expectations.

# **Key Skillsets required:**

- a. Trade Association Advocacy and Representation
- b. People and Performance Management
- 2. TACs need to be more agile around governance to streamline decision-making and increase transparency and accountability to better serve the needs of the members.

### **Key Skillsets required:**

- a. Corporate Governance
- b. Data Governance
- 3. TACs need to establish meaningful platforms and activities that sustain and allow better communications and engagements with their members. In addition, TACs need to harness new means of engaging members and at a more frequent basis so as to be more responsive to their needs.

- a. Customer Relationship Management Operations
- b. Stakeholder Management



# **Emerging workforce and evolving needs**

Recent years have seen a steady increase of more Millennials and Gen Z-ers entering the workforce, comprising a growing portion of the working population globally. This has inadvertently introduced a growing generation gap within member populations, further compounded by rapid shifts and booms in technology in the past 30 years. Hence, it is imperative that TACs are equipped with the tools and mindset needed to accommodate different expectations, interests, preferences and opinions on how things should be approached.

# **IMPACT ON TACS**

 TACs need to provide constructive guidance and leadership on how member entities can better equip themselves to navigate and manage the varying behaviours and expectations of the multi-generational workforce today.

# **Key Skillsets required:**

- a. Building Inclusivity (Critical Core Skills)
- b. Stakeholder Management
- 2. TACs need to be innovative in their approaches to creating solutions that address new-age problems, such as leveraging on modern channels like social media to disseminate useful information in ways that are easily digestible by the masses (infomercials, interactive content, etc.).

- a. Digital Marketing
- b. Social Media Marketing
- c. Marketing Communications Plan Development





# The increase use of technology and data management

Due to the complexities and vulnerabilities of technology, it is important for TACs with large membership base to properly managed, document and retrieve members' data and information. With more cyber attacks happening around the globe, members are also expecting data to be properly secured.

# **IMPACT ON TACS**

 As implementing technology and data management tools become more of a common practice, members will also expect their TACs to possess knowledge and provide guidance in technology adoption.

# **Key Skillsets required:**

- a. Emerging Technology
- b. Technology Adoption and Innovation
- 2. To enhance overall productivity, TACs can explore and leverage on technology and automated data management tools to execute high-volume and manual tasks, alleviating the manual effort required of staff to focus on higher value-added work and minimise risk of human error.

# **Key Skillsets required:**

- a. Data Analytics
- b. Data Governance
- c. Technology Adoption and Innovation
- 3. With more cyber attacks happening around the globe, TACs need to enhance data protection and prevent security breaches.

- a. Corporate Governance
- b. Data Governance
- c. Risk Management



# MATCH MATCH



# **OVERSEAS TACS LANDSCAPE SCAN**

Apart from studying the TACs in Singapore, an overseas scan was also conducted to better understand TACs globally, including the roles they perform and the environment they operate in.

# **Selection Criteria**

Based on the following selection criteria, a list of 13 TACs in 4 countries were identified for analysis:



Similarities between the roles and structure of TACs in Singapore



Established TACs from sectors which contribute largest to the country's GDP



Forward-looking TACs which can be regarded as role models for the TAC sector in Singapore



Opportunities to learn from and emulate the identified TACs

Which led to the selection of the following TACs:									
COUNTRIES/REGIONS	CHAMBERS	TRADE ASSOCIATIONS							
Australia	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI)	<ul> <li>Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC)</li> <li>The Western Australian Farmers Federation (WAFarmers)</li> </ul>							
Germany	German Chambers     of Commerce Abroad     (AHKs)	<ul> <li>Mechanical Engineering Industry Association (VDMA)</li> <li>Association of the German Trade Fair Industry (AUMA)</li> </ul>							
Switzerland	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Switzerland (CCIS)	<ul> <li>Swiss Association of Telecommunications (ASUT)</li> <li>Swiss Association of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Industries</li> <li>Appenzell Farmers' Association</li> </ul>							
• Taiwan External Trade  Taiwan  Development Council  (TAITRA)		<ul> <li>Taiwan Electrical and Electronic Manufacturers' Association (TEEMA)</li> <li>Taiwan Semiconductor Industry Association (TSIA)</li> </ul>							

A summary of the observations and learnings are summarised as follow:



# **ROLES OF TACS**

# **Key Observations**

- The structure and roles of a typical TAC overseas are similar to that of a TAC in Singapore, reinforcing
  the critical roles a TAC plays in driving Collaboration, Innovation and Advocacy for the industry and
  members it represents.
- 2. Overseas TACs have developed and maintained strong partnerships with key industry bodies and government representatives to achieve common goals that are beneficial to the industry. TACs are also collaborating with each other to share and exchange information on best practices, investments and technologies.
- 3. It has been noted that TACs are increasingly promoting collaborations amongst members such as creating opportunities for them to offer attractive products and services to each other, as well as the exchange of information and experiences.
- 4. Strategic alliances with industry organisations are also formed to provide services to members. An example is TAITRA from Taiwan, forming alliances with industry players in the field of digital commerce, online payment, logistics and third-party verification to provide value added services to its members.
- 5. On the Advocacy front, overseas TACs are largely seen to be playing an active role in representing the members' needs and interests at relevant platforms and influencing government policies through engagement with political leaders and policy decision makers.

- a. Partnership and collaboration with the government, key industry bodies and other TACs, both locally and internationally, can be strengthened to support and drive the growth of the industry.
- Pooling resources through strategic alliances with industry organisations allow provision of better value to members and help the TACs to achieve economies of scales.
- c. Member collaboration can be further encouraged to enhance value add and attract new members.





# **Key Observations**

- 1. TACs' relationship and involvement with the government varies across countries, with some having closer partnerships and more support from their governments.
- 2. In Germany, the government views trade and commerce with other countries as a major factor in driving the country's economic growth and prosperity. With that, the government plays an active role in partnering TACs such as AHKs, AUMA, and Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI) to expand businesses overseas. The government also provides financial support for participation at selected trade fairs and exhibitions.
- 3. On the other hand, in Australia, the government's support for TACs and its members are not as strong as compared to other countries. While there are initiatives such as the Small Business Digital Champions project which involves partnerships between TACs and the government, such partnerships are not commonly practiced in Australia.

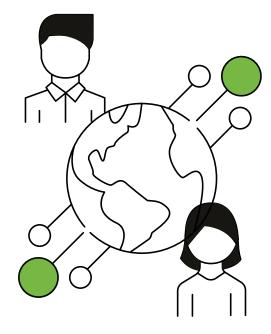
# **Learnings for TACs in Singapore**

a. There are opportunities to strengthen partnerships between TACs and the Government to drive industry transformation that are aligned to the Industry Transformation Maps (ITMs).

# INTERNATIONALISATION

# **Key Observations**

- 1. There has been a growing focus within TACs to help their member companies to venture abroad, coupled with the push from the government to internationalise.
- For instance, AHKs plays a central role in helping German companies expand internationally. Funded by the German government, it regularly conducts delegation trips for companies to explore new markets, learn about business opportunities at AHKs locations to familiarise with the political, cultural and economic characteristics of the target market.
- Others like AUMA works closely with the German government to decide on the financial support needed in selected trade fairs and exhibitions abroad. AUMA also collaborates with the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) and the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) to publish foreign trade fair programmes annually.
- 4. Similar to AHKs, TAITRA in Taiwan is co-sponsored by the government and focuses on assisting Taiwanese businesses develop their international markets through its overseas trade offices. TAITRA organises international trade shows, conducts market studies and provides professional information on international trade.
- TEEMA also organises overseas visits, surveys, sales promotion groups and business matching for members. It offers free marketing channels for members and gives priority to member companies when foreign buyers inquire.



- a. While market entry grants are already available for Singapore companies to tap on for overseas ventures, there could be complementary support given to TACs to drive internationalisation amongst members.
- b. To lobby and forge stronger partnerships with Government agencies to drive internationalisation, TACs should develop longer term internationalisation strategies that are supported by initiatives and activities to drive more impactful outcomes.



# SUPPORTING AND GROWING SMEs

# **Key Observations**

- 1. An integral part of overseas TACs' agenda is to help SMEs grow locally and internationally.
- 2. In Germany, AUMA supports SMEs with industry exports through collaboration with the government to publish trade fair programmes annually. This helps to promote the export of German companies' products overseas.
- 3. In Australia, ACCI provides a digital technology investment incentive for small businesses investing in digital technology hardware, software or services that will improve the efficiency of their operations.
- 4. In Taiwan, TAITRA started to offer international marketing advisory services to SMEs.

- a. TACs should play a more active role in helping local SMEs to expand and internationalise.
- b. Continue to partner with SME Centres to help the members in areas such as digitalising and financing.



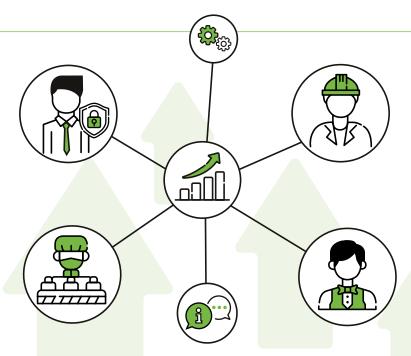


# MEMBERS NETWORKING

# **Key Observations**

- 1. Member networking continues to play an important aspect in the attraction and recruitment of members in the overseas TACs.
- 2. In Australia, members in AMEC are entitled to complimentary members only networking events and get exclusive invitations to board room lunches with key government decision makers and industry leaders.
- 3. In Taiwan, TSIA collaborates with other trade associations to conduct networking events for members in the semiconductor industry.
- 4. In Germany, AUMA provides a platform for the exchange of information and experiences among members. On the other hand, AHKs create opportunities for their members to exclusively offer each other attractive deals on products and services.
- 5. In Switzerland, ASUT develops cross-industry network through establishing contacts for its members and connecting them to other industries and companies. Members are also encouraged to share their knowledge and experiences with ASUT specialist committees to help shape the future of the industry.

- a. Enhance networking opportunities that are more targeted and curated so that members can better strengthen and grow their business relationships.
- b. Establish cross-industry network to connect members with other industries..







# DIGITAL AND TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

# **Key Observations**

- 1. There is a push in driving innovative mindset and adoption of technology across the overseas TACs to enhance company capabilities and capture new growth opportunities.
- 2. In Australia, ACCI provides digital and technology vouchers to small businesses for investing in digital technology hardware, software or services that will improve the efficiency of their operations.
- 3. In Taiwan, TAITRA launched the ONE TAITRA app to increase value and efficiency to its services. TAITRA also utilised big data to gather intelligence on overseas markets to support internationalisation.
- 4. TEEMA developed the Taiwan Electronics Industry App to incorporate players and ancillary services in the electronics industry to maximise competitiveness and increase international exposure for Taiwan manufacturers.

- a. Leverage and invest in technology and tools to help TACs be more efficient, productive and agile in meeting the needs of the members.
- b. Deliver strategic services and market information to members by tapping on new technology, digital platforms and data analytics.
- c. Leverage on global platforms to enhance marketing opportunities for members.

# ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES BETWEEN THE BOARD/COUNCIL AND SECRETARIAT

# **Key Observations**

- 1. The Board/Council provides the strategic direction and oversight for the planning, management and performance of the organisation.
- 2. The Secretariat reports to the Board/Council. It is responsible for the day-to-day operations and takes care of general administrative affairs within the TAC.

# **Learnings for TACs in Singapore**

- There is no notable differences between overseas and Singapore TACs in terms of the roles and responsibilities of the Board/ Council and Secretariat.
- b. However, it is important for the Board/Council and the Secretariat to have clarity and clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities so that the TAC can be managed and run more efficiently.





# FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

# **Key Observations**

- To secure long-term financial sustainability, overseas TACs are diversifying revenue beyond membership fees to include other sources such as Marketing and Advertising Services, Training Programmes, Events, Advisory/Consultancy, Office Rental Services, Product and Supplier Directories and Job Bank Platform.
- It is in their strategic priorities to constantly look at ways to provide value add to members, enhance
  operational efficiency and cost effectiveness, as well as increase investment and sponsorship from
  business partners.

- a. To retain and attract members, TACs need to ensure it delivers compelling values to its members.
- b. To retain and increase investment and sponsorship, there is a need to constantly review the value and relationship with the members and business partners.

# **RESEARCH & PUBLICATION**

# **Key Observations**

- 1. There is an increase in focus in the areas of research and publication as value-added services to the members in the overseas TACs landscape.
- 2. In Australia, ACCI and AMEC provide policy publications, thought leadership and regular updates to members on current developments and issues affecting the industry.
- 3. In Taiwan, TAITRA, TEEMA and TSIA conduct research on trends and in-depth market surveys for members. TAITRA in particular utilised big data to gather market intelligence on overseas markets to implement strategies for exploring businesses and provided companies with analytic reports. TSIA, on the other hand, engages with international organisations in the industry to provide members with the latest global semiconductor-related regulations, technology trends and market forecasts.
- 4. In Germany, AUMA and AHKs inform the media and publications on industry-related information and developments on respective markets.

- a. Through research and market surveys, share and publish the industry insights as a value-added service for members.
- b. Leverage on big data to gather market intelligence and business sentiments.
- c. Partner with industry organisations, locally and internationally, to gather information on current developments, trends and market forecasts.

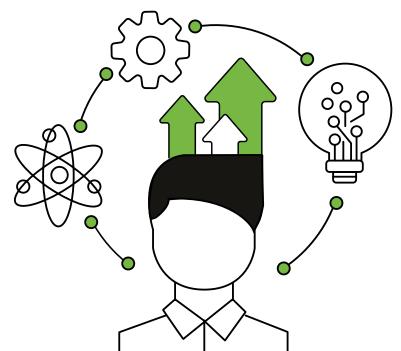


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# TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONALS

# **Key Observations**

- 1. There are associations set up specifically for the association professionals. Such associations play an important role in the delivery of knowledge and resources required to advance the association capabilities and excellence.
- 2. These associations support the associations professionals/executives in raising their value and that of their services and products to their members and community.
- 3. In the United States (US), the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and Mid- Atlandtic Society of Association Executives (MASAE) provide training programmes and learning opportunities for association professionals across various association management disciplines to build the skills and competencies needed to effectively lead and/or manage the association. They also offer educational programmes to help association professionals prepare for the Certified Association Executive (CAE) exam and fulfil the professional development requirements needed to maintain the CAE credential.
- 4. The MASAE offers a mentoring programme to connect association executives with early career professionals in the association industry to support professional development and networking.
- 5. In Canada, the Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE) offers a CAE programme designed to meet the needs of the association executives and provide transferable skills coupled with association sector-specific knowledge. The CSAE conducts research, produces publications and deliver events targeted to keep the association professionals informed on the latest trends, innovations and best practices in the sector.
- 6. In the United Kingdom, the Association of Association Executives (AAE) offers masterclasses to address a wide range of critical skills and knowledge needed for the management of an association. The AAE provides an online forum for members to engage in discussions, ask questions and share on current issues and solutions specific to associations. The AAE also has its own panel of specialist advisors to provide advice and guidance on critical areas of importance to the associations and executives.





- a. Develop TAC sector-specific training programmes and learning opportunities targeted at developing the skills and competencies needed to effectively manage associations. These transferable association management skills and competencies can also enable job mobility across associations and the sector.
- b. Ensure alignment between training contents and competencies needed to achieve the desired outcomes.
- c. Introduce mentorship programmes to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and experience between TAC professionals. This can also serve as a value-add to members, offering the opportunity to tap onto practical experience of the seniors, as well as to build and expand their network across the TAC sector.

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# OVERVIEW OF TAC GROWTH MODEL

The TAC Growth Model was developed to allow and enable TACs to think differently about their organisation, unlock the organisation's full potential and successfully deliver the growth strategy. A tool kit has been developed under the Growth Model to serve as a reference guide for TACs to assess their current state of maturity while considering the key factors and parameters of how they can develop and grow their organisation of tomorrow.

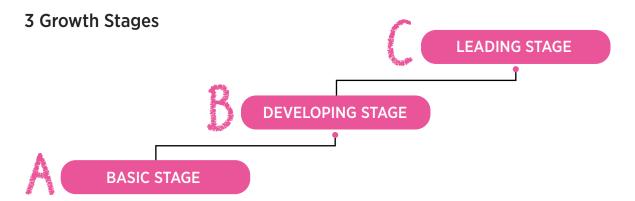
# Development of the TAC Growth Model: Alignment with Ernst & Young's (EY) 7 Drivers of Growth Framework

Using the EY's 7 Drivers of Growth Framework, together with the findings from the landscape scans in Chapter 3 and 4, the following 6 Drivers of Growth and 3 Growth Stages were identified.

# **6 Drivers of Growth**



- Behind each main driver are a number of sub-drivers which give TACs the opportunity to deep dive into the subject matter.
- Each driver will help TACs to determine which growth stage they are currently in and aspire to be in.



Do note that an organisation can be at a different growth stage for the different growth drivers. This is dependent on a TAC's priorities.

# **GROWTH DRIVERS**

### **DRIVER 1: MEMBERSHIP**

Refers to the organisation's key focus in order to anticipate future needs and deliver members' preferred experiences in order to build loyalty and drive long-term sustainable growth.

### **SUB-DRIVERS**

- a. Membership Experience
- b. Services & Markets
- c. Marketing
- d. Member Acquisition & Competition

# **DRIVER 2: FINANCE**

Refers to the way the organisation manages its finance, determines the best financial solution and derives maximum benefits from the management of available funds.

### **SUB-DRIVERS**

- a. Finance Sustainability and Growth
- b. Finance Processes and Controls
- c. Stakeholder Management

# DRIVER 3: STRATEGY PLANNING & OPERATIONS

Refers to the organisation operating model's ability to deliver strategic intent.

### **SUB-DRIVERS**

- a. Strategy and Planning
- b. Operational Excellence
- c. Continuous Improvement



## **DRIVER 4: RISK**

Refers to the good governance and risk management to help reduce volatility across the organisation.

## **SUB-DRIVERS**

- a. Governance Structure and Responsibilities
- b. Risk Management
- c. Policies, Procedures and Compliance

# **DRIVER 5: PEOPLE**

Refers to the attraction and retention of the right people to help grow the organisation – people who share the organisation's vision and fit its culture.

### **SUB-DRIVERS**

- a. Capability
- b. Performance Management and Rewards
- c. Human Resource Policies
- d. Leadership

# **DRIVER 6: TECHNOLOGY**

Refers to the way in which technology transforms every aspect of the organisation to make better decisions through digital, technology and data analytics.

### **SUB-DRIVERS**

- a. Digital Organisation
- b. Data and Analytics
- c. Security and Privacy

As aforementioned, each main driver comprises of a number of sub-drivers. TACs can first identify the main growth drivers (or sub-drivers) that are important to their organisation before determining the stage of growth for each drivers that it is currently in and where it aspires to be at in the future. After which, TACs can develop action plans for implementation.

An example of how TACs can determine the current and desired stage of each driver using the worksheet provided below:

# Exercise 1: Determining my organisation's stage of growth - Worksheet

# **DRIVER 1: MEMBER - MEMBER EXPERIENCE**

Sub-Driver	Basic	Developing	Leading	NA	Current Stage	Desired Stage
Member Experience	Member experience is siloed and often different across all touch points	The quality of member experience is consistent within, but not always across all channels	Quality of experience is customised and consistent across all channels and touchpoints	None of the statements applies	Example: Basic	Example: Developing
Member Engagement	The organisation periodically engages its members	The organisation regularly engages members and proactively reaches out to members to gather feedback	The organisation has an established and robust member engagement strategy, and utilises it to gain consistent insights on member sentiments	None of the statements applies	Example: Developing	Example: Leading
Member Loyalty	Member loyalty is recognised by the organisation; Current products and/ or services meet existing member needs	There are membership recognition programmes and rewards in place for long term members (e.g. long membership awards, discounted services, etc.)	Member loyalty is reflected through their contribution of ideas and insights that support the development of new services or programmes for the organisation; Members' contribution and participation in organisation activities are tracked and rewarded accordingly	None of the statements applies		

# **GROWTH MODEL TOOLKIT HANDBOOK**

To leverage the Growth Model (GM), a toolkit handbook has been developed for organisations to utilise. The toolkit aims to provide TACs with:



Scan for Toolkit Handbook



An overview of the TAC landscape and structure in Singapore



A guide to assess the organisation's current state of maturity against future aspirational state



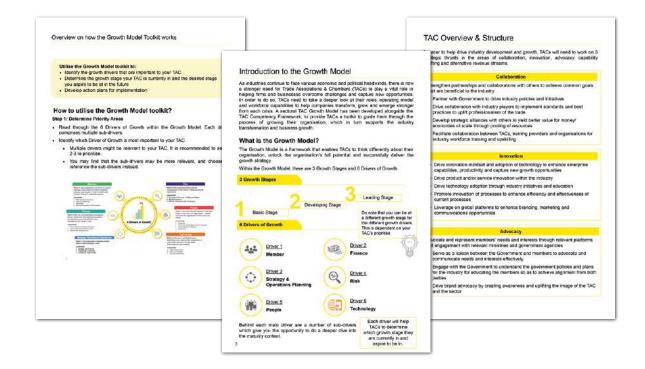
An overview of the various action plans and parameters to consider when developing organisation's growth strategy and plans



Case studies and insights on market-leading best practices for learning

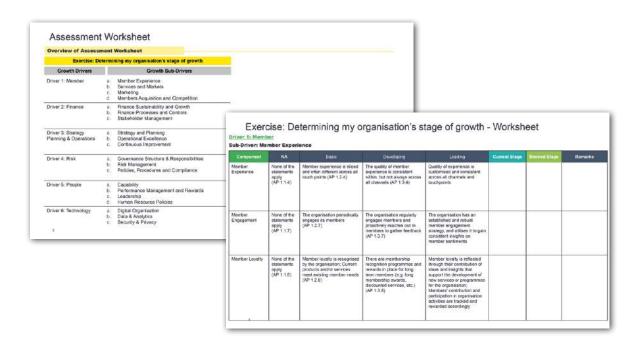
# 1. Main Toolkit

Use the Toolkit to determine priority areas of focus for the TAC across the 6 Drivers of Growth.



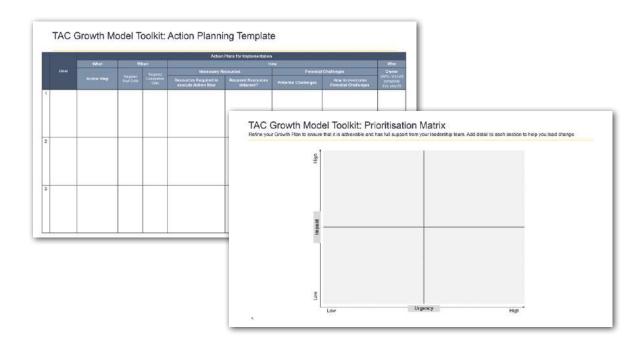
#### 2. Assessment Worksheet

Assess current state of maturity for selected drivers/sub-drivers.



#### 3. Action Panning Template

Reference suggested Action Plans to develop TAC's own customised action plan.



## AND SHARES AND SHARES





**Small-sized** 





- Membership
- Capability Building



### SINGAPORE MOTOR WORKSHOP ASSOCIATION (SMWA)

#### Impetus for SMWA's Transformation

The motor vehicle industry is facing great disruption. As Singapore aims for its transition from internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles to Electric Vehicles (EVs) by 2030, it potentially affects 40% of the existing sector's businesses and drives future skills gaps between existing workforce and the capabilities desired. This is further exacerbated by limited information from both car manufacturers and government, which limits the industry's ability to embark on transformation holistically.

Singapore Motor Workshop Association (SMWA) is challenged to put into place initiatives that can strengthen the car repair industry's capabilities, enhance its network of members and to maintain the prestige of the profession through disruption and change.

#### Initiatives to Strengthen Sector & TAC

- Training Academy to Build and Strengthen Capabilities To future-proof the
  workforce, SMWA's Council has led the development of a training roadmap for
  the sector. Internally, SMWA has developed a view of the trends and forecasted
  the necessary skills of the future, and consequently set up a Training Academy
  in 2020. In collaboration with Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs), the Training
  Academy serves as a platform to upskill motor workshop technicians and uplift
  service standards in the industry.
- Digitalisation for Engagement To better connect to members, SMWA has
  adopted digitalisation for its member engagement activities. SMWA set up
  an online website to engage and provide their members with updates, as well
  as a Workshop Directory to promote the services offered by their local network
  of member workshops. Through this digital portal that is managed by the TAC,
  members are able to stay in closer-touch with the TAC's activities and also
  access their available services with greater ease and convenience.
- Industry Standardisation for Workforce Quality To ensure and build consistency in the quality of the workforce, SMWA is leading three key initiatives:

   (a) Setting Industry Standards (b) Enhance business processes through SOPs and Workplace Safety Standards and (c) Accreditation and Licensing System for the Car Repair Industry. These initiatives seek to enhance the credibility and consistency of technicians in Singapore.

#### **Key Learning to Drive Success**

**Identifying the Right Leaders Remains Critical to the Success of a TAC** – For a TAC to succeed, SMWA identifies that the executive committee must have common goals and are devoted to improving the trade that they are in. Having welcomed new members in their latest elections, SMWA shares that identifying the right leaders with the right mindset and the right heart are key to a TAC's success, as having genuine motivations to drive the betterment of the industry is imperative to ensure that the TAC constantly moves in the right directions.



Mid-sized



7 - 15



- People
- Risk
- Strategy Planning & Operations

#### SGTECH SGTECH

#### Impetus for SGTech's Transformation

The need for digitalisation has been accelerated and digital transformation has become critical for all businesses to remain relevant and continue to succeed. Technology plays an important role in achieving this transformation, driving the need for the sector as a whole to become more mature in both its own right and as a lever for other sectors to capitalise on.

To represent Singapore's technology industry, SGTech underwent extensive transformation from within, through brand refresh, redesigning of internal processes and developing capabilities, so as to be well positioned to support local technology companies and companies that leverage technology to power their core businesses, to grow and expand, taking their place as competitive players in today's evolving market landscape, both locally and globally.

#### Initiatives to Strengthen Sector & TAC

#### • Strategy Calibration Aligned to Members' Needs

SGTech's Chapters and Committees are structured around evolving tech verticals and technology focus areas to serve members' and the economy's needs. For example, its Cyber Security Chapter is working closely with the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore (CSA) on programmes to broaden awareness of cybersecurity among companies and individuals, while at the same time collaborating with institutes of higher learning to build cybersecurity talent. To drive advocacy on behalf of its members, SGTech makes conscious and consistent efforts to stay abreast of the industry and represent the industry's voice accurately to relevant stakeholders. The outcome of SGTech's advocacy is to re-affirm to members the reason and meaning of their membership in SGTech.

#### • Redesigning Processes for Efficiency

In re-designing their existing operating model, SGTech reviewed existing business processes and policies. Opportunities were identified for automation and digitalisation, thereby freeing resources that could be leveraged for value-added work.

#### • Clear Definition of Roles and Responsibilities

As part of internal talent transformation, SGTech also reviewed and updated existing roles and responsibilities within the organisation. Playbooks designed to clarify processes and crystallise each job role's responsibilities, and the interoperability and interconnectedness of systems and people across departments, allow the TAC to assess their existing capability and competency gaps and address it through upskilling and/or hiring.

#### **Key Learnings to Drive Success**

#### • Establish Trust and Communication with Council

With strong and consistent communication between the Council and the Secretariat, despite the extent of transformation that SGTech was undergoing, leadership and management remained aligned on organisation goals and priorities. This facilitated buy-in and support to accelerate the internal transformation, and positioned the TAC to be ready to support their members, the tech industry and end-users.

#### • Identifying Right People for the Right Job for the Secretariat

Through clear delineation of roles and responsibilities, the Secretariat is optimised to deliver value to its members by assigning accountability and responsibility to the team, empowering them to perform their roles to the best of their abilities.

#### Constant Communication with the Secretariat

A crucial element is keeping all employees informed of the direction the organisation is headed, and updated on the progress at each stage of the transformation process. Employees were given the initial context when they participated in fact-finding at the start. Subsequently, when the project involved a smaller group, regular (monthly) updates to inform them of the progress and ad-hoc updates were given when milestones were achieved.





Large-sized





Technology



#### Impetus for SMF's Transformation

Cost has always been a prohibitive factor for manufacturing in Singapore. Moving ahead into the new decade, in order to remain globally competitive, the manufacturing sector in Singapore must play to its strengths and use data analytics, advanced manufacturing technologies and techniques to experiment, innovate and create an even higher level of manufacturing. However, the SMF recognises that adoption of the same will entail a significant investment in both improving the existing talent pipeline, and, migrating from a big fixed cost structure to one that is nimble, agile and responsive, given the increasingly fluid dynamics of the global economy.

As Singapore's largest trade association representing the interests of the local manufacturing community, the SMF has always advocated for

- (a) technology adoption;
- (b) human resource transformation; and
- (c) innovation to its members.

Under the direction of a new management, the SMF has since embarked on a journey of self-review. In alignment with the SMF's fundamental tenet of collaboration, the SMF has engaged with its membership base, both MNCs and SMEs, as well as its vast local and overseas networks, to begin a recent transformation that span both people and technology. After all, by improving one's own capabilities, we can better improve that of others.

#### Initiatives to Strengthen Sector & TAC

#### · Providing Disruption Guidance

Leveraging on its membership base which spans 10 different Industry Groups within manufacturing, the SMF continuously engages with its members to seek feedback on digitalisation, a key disruptive factor within the sector. The SMF leads development of a technology roadmap that would identify key trends and the impact on manufacturing, which would in turn, identify thought leadership and best practices that organisations can reference and apply in their own digital transformation journey. The SMF also actively supports members in organising virtual exhibitions and business matching sessions, connecting digitally with members, with an outreach platform of over 1000 subscribers in the course of a year.

#### • Improving Internal IT Functions

The SMF did an internal audit of its IT systems and processes and worked with external agencies such as the Cybersecurity Agency of Singapore to assess its IT capabilities. It then moved swiftly to adopt and customise IT solutions with its vendors to better improve its capability. Such include adopting the PEPPOL E-Invoicing system as well as engaging fresh university graduates to design mobile resource applications for staff usage such as room bookings and making staff claims.

#### Putting People at the Forefront

Recognising that people are key to the TAC's success, the SMF commenced an organic and sustainable HR transformation journey that seeks to optimise their workforce across three key initiatives:

- (a) Clearly defined performance measures linked to key business outcomes;
- (b) Competitive compensation rates linked to performance; and
- (c) Training roadmap for upskilling and reskilling.

By linking pay to performance, the SMF sought to drive a performance culture that supports business goals, and subsequently attract the right talent for the job. It also believes that training would support employee retention and allow the SMF to develop its workforce holistically.

#### **Key Learnings to Drive Success**

#### Change Management

The critical factor for sustained success of its transformation journey is having dedicated change agents to ensure the complete transition of the TAC over time. At the direction of their new management team, the SMF regularly carries out organisation-wide reviews to identify high potential employees, and has started to involve these employees as well as the middle-management staff in the decision-making processes. The SMF has also increased the number of membership engagement activities and have even started the "SMF Helps" telegram group which put members in direct contact with the secretariat.

#### • Bottom-up Engagement

Throughout its transformation journey, the SMF has realised the importance of attaining buy-in across the entire organisation so as to achieve successful and unified transformation. This involves engaging employees across all levels, and keeping all team members in-sync with transformation initiatives in the pipeline, ensuring that the TAC materialises its full transformation in solidarity.

# 



Through the course of developing the TAC Growth Model, the following considerations were drawn from market research, observations, and inputs from members of the sector:



#### A. Partnership with Government

As the responsibilities of TACs continue to evolve, there is a need to develop and deepen partnership with the Government in order to support and drive the growth of the TACs and their industries. Constant communication and availability of information on government-led initiatives, market trends and statistics can help the TACs to better value-add to their members. TACs can serve as an effective and neutral platform for discussions and feedback between Government and enterprises.



#### B. Collaboration between TACs

There exist opportunities for collaboration between TACs by leveraging on common goals, complementary resources, and collective connections. This allows for the creation of a stronger and more connected network that not only plays to the strengths of TACs, but also drives growth opportunities for the smaller TACs.



#### C. Strategic Alignment of Council and TAC Management

As council members are consistently refreshed after a few years, it is important to maintain alignment between the Council and Secretariat's Management team (i.e. CXOs / Executive Directors) to drive tighter operational synergies. While the onus is on the Management to adapt working with a new Council, it is also just as important for the President and the Council to take a proactive stance to engage the Management team. The strategic partnership and alignment between Council and Management will provide greater clarity on the directions and goals of the TAC, resulting in positive impacts on both the operations and Secretariat staff. With that, outcomes can be better achieved, thus instill greater confidence in the TAC members in the longer term.



#### D. Upskill to Better Support Industries

As TACs have increased responsibilities, it is timely for the sector to also look inwards and prioritise their own learning needs. TACs are encouraged to adopt the Competency Framework to develop new skills and upskill current competencies. By doing so, the workforce in TAC sector can continue to stay ahead and support the industries that they serve.

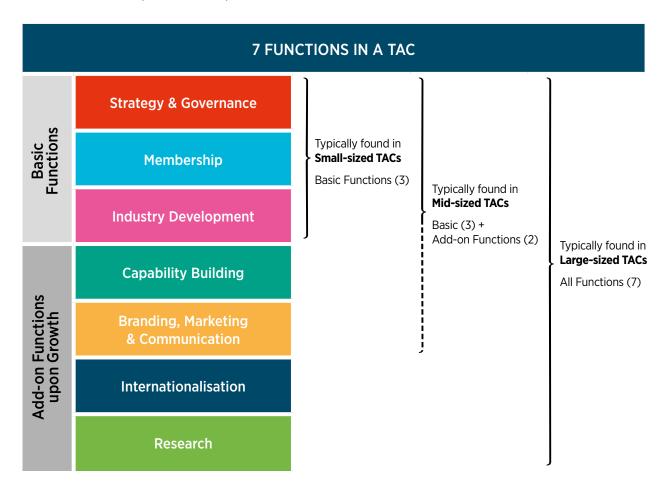


#### E. Roles and Functions of a TAC Secretariat

The roles and functions of a TAC Secretariat have become increasingly complex and multi-dimensional. In Chapter 2, it is mentioned that the Secretariat plays the role of implementing the Executive Council's policies and strategies. In Chapter 4, we have seen how these roles and functions in overseas TACs are becoming more distinct from the Executive Council, underscoring the importance of TAC Secretariat. Similarly in local TACs, the functions of a Secretariat today have evolved and expanded beyond the typical functions of membership and events management. Notwithstanding back office functions like Administration and Human Resources, a total of 7 functions have been identified to exist in the TAC sector.

However, it is to also note that not all the functions standalone as a department or exist in every TAC, as this would largely depends on the size of the Secretariat team. For instance, a smaller TAC may only cover basic functions of Strategy & Governance, Membership and Industry Development but may include Capability Building, Branding & Marketing when its manpower and resources grow.

Below illustrates the potential set-up of TACs across different sizes.\*



This provides a guide for TACs looking inwards at its structure and functions to bring greater value for the members. TACs can also refer to this in the TAC Competency Framework to see how they can upskill and train their Secretariat in these various functions and create career pathways for each employee.

<sup>\*</sup> Referencing to the publication on "Competency Framework for Trade Associations & Chambers" by SCCCI in 2022, a small sized TAC would typically have three main functions namely Strategy & Governance, Membership, and Industry Development. For mid-sized TACs, it would include additional functions of Capability Building and Branding, Marketing & Communications.

#### **MOVING AHEAD**

The Growth Model was developed with the intention to help TACs diagnose and review their organisation strategies and priorities. This toolkit aims to provide a structured approach for TACs to plan and strategise how they would like to sustainably grow their TACs – to better support their respective industries and members.

While the toolkit provides TACs a more structured roadmap to grow, having full-time secretariat staff is still essential to ensure that the execution strategy and action plans can be carried out. Hence, for smaller or newly formed TACs with limited resources to have a secretariat team, they could first consider having a shared secretariat (e.g. external shared secretariat services) or establish a small secretariat team of 2 to 3 personnels focusing on Strategy & Governance, Membership and Industry Development in its formative years as highlighted above.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham)	Singapore Contractors Association Ltd (SCAL)	
Association of Aerospace Industries	Singapore Furniture Association (SFA)	
(AAIS) Association of Electronics in Singapore	Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC)	
(AEIS) Association of Information Security	Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI)	
Professionals (AISP)  Association of Process Industry (ASPRI)	Singapore International Chamber of Commerce (SICC)	
Association of Singapore Marine	Singapore Jewellers Association (SJA)	
Industries (ASMI)  Corrugated Box Manufacturers'  Association (CBMA)	Singapore Logistics Association (SLA)	
	Singapore Malay Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SMCCI)	
Franchising and Licensing Association Singapore (FLA)	Singapore Manufacturing Federation (SMF)	
Landscape Industry Association (Singapore) (LIAS)	Singapore Motor Cycle Trade Association (SMCTA)	
Print and Media Association of Singapore (PMAS)	Singapore Motor Workshop Association (SMWA)	
Restaurant Association of Singapore (RAS)	Singapore Retailers Association (SRA)	
SGTech	Singapore Textile Centre Merchants' Association (STCMA)	
Singapore Book Publishers' Association (SBPA)	Textile and Fashion Federation (TAFF)	
Singapore Business Federation (SBF)	Waste Management and Recycling Association of Singapore (WMRAS)	
Singapore Chinese Chamber of	Association of Singapore (WinkAs)	

Commerce and Industry (SCCCI)

#### Notes

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