

**WELCOME REMARKS BY MS HUI MEI SAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
INSTITUTE FOR ADULT LEARNING,  
AT THE ADULT LEARNING SYMPOSIUM 2014,  
RAFFLES CITY CONVENTION CENTRE  
ON THURSDAY, 10 JULY 2014, AT 9.30AM**

Minister for Manpower, Mr Tan Chuan-Jin

Chairman of the Singapore Workforce Development Agency, WDA,  
Mr Tan Pheng Hock

Chief Executive of WDA, Mr Ng Cher Pong

Distinguished guests and speakers,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning.

Welcome to Adult Learning Symposium 2014. It is my pleasure to be with you this morning.

In the past few years, the global landscape in continuing education and training, or CET in short, has seen some exciting changes. Several major technological innovations and trends have emerged, changing the way we learn. Some examples include Massive Open Online Courses or MOOCs, learning analytics, digital textbooks, gamification, flipped classroom and mobile learning; to name a few. As CET professionals and adult educators, it is important that we keep pace with these new ways of learning, and keep exploring and experimenting to find the right blend that fit our context and learners' needs.

### **Highlights of ALS 2014**

It is with this in mind that we have put together this year's Adult Learning Symposium, themed - Transforming CET through Innovations in Workplace Practice and Learning.

In line with the theme of innovation, we have introduced a couple of new features at this year's Symposium. You may have noticed the ALS café outside this hall. It is where you can share your thoughts and ideas with fellow adult educators through our online forum or over a cup of coffee. There are already some interesting discussion threads going on, such as how to drive a community of practice, potential of using technology to facilitate learning, and whether practitioners should conduct research. So do drop by the ALS Café over the next two days for coffee and a chat, or start a thread of discussion along the three sub-themes of this Symposium - namely, New media and technology; Enhancement in practice and Community and

collaboration. An ALS 2014 mobile application has also been developed to help you stay connected during the Symposium and continue your online discussions.

We will also be holding one of the keynote sessions over a webinar with a special guest speaker, Professor Andrew Ng, whom many of you may know as the co-founder of Coursera and a faculty member at Stanford University. He will be speaking to us from United States, and will reinforce the reality of learning without boundaries. We also have the privileged company of five other renowned experts - Dr Shahid Yusuf, Dr Matt Bower, Dr Jack Whitehead, Professor John Field and Dr Lee Kwok Cheong. They will share with us topics such as how CET greatly influences the growth of small advanced economies such as Singapore, and talk about how we can re-design learning by embracing new technologies, building social capital, and applying living theory at the workplace.

For the concurrent sessions, we have invited more than 30 local and overseas experts, thought leaders and seasoned practitioners who will share valuable insights on how to harness technology, transform our practices and create the necessary conditions to promote workplace and lifelong learning for adult learners.

### **Supporting the CET Community beyond ALS**

Transforming CET for innovation in workplace practices and learning go beyond this Adult Learning Symposium. It is also a constant endeavour of the Institute for Adult Learning.

In the past year, IAL has seen significant developments in our programme offerings such as the introduction of blended learning into our curricula. This augments our efforts to recognise and capitalise on learning opportunities at the workplace, as well as provide a rich and authentic context for the application of knowledge and skills. IAL will continue to establish strong linkages with industries and organisations, and seek out opportunities to co-create an eco-system where learning at work can be seamlessly integrated.

On research, IAL has put together a publication titled “Skills Strategies for an Inclusive Society”. Written from a practical perspective, it crystalises the learning from various economies, and discusses the implication for Singapore’s skills strategy. It underscores the importance of collaboration among key stakeholders, policy makers, and individuals, to transform workplace practices to realise a more inclusive workplace and society. There are 300 complimentary copies available at the foyer. Please feel free to browse and grab a copy.

### **Conclusion**

As adult learners, we need to continually brave new frontiers by learning new skills and keeping ourselves abreast of the latest trends and developments in the CET landscape. I hope the Symposium will contribute to your expedition to be at the forefront of your practices, and that you will enjoy what we have in store for you.

Thank you.