

New Singapore society launched for women's representation in sustainability

WISE seeks to ensure inclusiveness, bring 'gender action to sustainability'

Singapore

A NEW not-for-profit society called Women in Sustainability and Environment (WISE) was launched on Thursday (Nov 18), with the aim of ensuring a strong and equal voice and representation of women in the area of sustainability in Singapore.

In a news release, WISE said it will act as a lead focal point for greater green participation, inclusiveness, and visibility of women involved in the sustainability space, and bring "concerted gender action to sustainability" as the world transitions to a net-zero carbon future.

In a speech at the launch event, Minister for Sustainability and the Environment Grace Fu said WISE fills an important gap as a platform to aggregate the voices of women.

"WISE can advocate for higher sustainability standards in products and services. It can act as a bridge

between consumers and producers," she said.

"The WISE movement fits with the Singapore Green Plan nicely. Under the sustainable living pillar, we need all Singaporeans as consumers to make more sustainable choices."

WISE president Trina Liang said in a statement that women's voices "must be heard and amplified" as the world rapidly transitions to a new green economy.

"Fem-fluence – or women's consumer influence – is fast redefining global production decisions in not just traditional spaces such as household goods, but also in higher value products such as environmental, social and governance (ESG) investing," she said.

"Women professionals in the sustainability space are also making their mark in more visible and impactful ways making core decisions and redefining key business targets for their organisations," said Liang.

WISE will organise events for members, help spotlight green brands and businesses, as well as mentor the next generation of sustainability lead-

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ers. It will also commission research that is centred on Singapore and Asia.

The global female economy represents a market that is more than twice the size of India and China combined.

According to a UK Aid report, female consumers will control US\$15 trillion of global consumer spending by 2028.

A recent PwC report stated that women influence around 70 per cent of brand purchasing decisions. This includes not just household products but higher-valued products such as financial investments, property and vehicles.

And according to an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report, women are shown to be effective consumption change agents for families, communities and businesses.

Also announced on Thursday was the signing of a memorandum of understanding between WISE and the Singapore Management University to build knowledge and programmes around sustainability.

WISE also plans to launch a Sustainability Awards in the second quarter of 2022, to recognise women and organisations that are leading the charge in sustainability in Singapore.

There will be 3 categories – Women's Sustainability Champion of the Year; Young Women's Sustainability Champion of the Year; and Women's Champion for Corporate Sustainability.