

ANNEX – SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

(i) Current ecosystem for SEPs in the media, creative and entertainment industries

What works today?

- Participants agreed that top Singaporean SEPs in these industries are highly skilled and are competitive with top talent from around the world. Service-buyers welcomed this wealth of talent, as it allowed them to better augment their core workforce when niche skills are needed.
- SEPs generally agreed that the flexibility brought about by freelancing has enabled them to have better control over how and when they work.
- The emergence of platform intermediaries provided new ways and opportunities for SEPs and service-buyers to engage with each other. Generally, platform intermediaries tended to go beyond matching and add value to the relationship by facilitating options such as escrow or milestone payments, or identifying bona fide service buyers.

Concerns

a) Contracts, payment terms and pricing

- Most participants agreed that **non-payment or late payment** was an issue. Some cited instances where payment was not made because of differing expectations between service-buyers and SEPs. This was usually because contract terms were not clearly set out in written contracts or outcomes were not adequately understood.
- Participants agreed that it was important to raise awareness and understanding of the difference between contract workers and SEPs, how to draft accurate contracts for service, and where to seek recourse in the event of a dispute.
- Newer SEPs might not have enough opportunities and lack preparedness about running a professional freelancing business, such as pricing right. Participants also acknowledged that pricing was especially challenging, as the quality of creative products is subjective.

b) Loss of income from work injury

- Some SEPs discussed the lack of **insurance protection against loss of income due to work injury**, and other medical insurance benefits.



(ii) What can be done to ensure that self-employment remains sustainable?

a) Building SEP communities

- Participants agreed that **building SEP communities to be recognised, valued and supported by stakeholders** was important. This was a shift that has started over the past few years, and led to an improvement for SEPs.

b) Better alignment of expectations between SEP and service-buyer

- Participants agreed that contracting parties should focus more on communicating with each other and importantly, **reflecting their expectations in written contracts**.
- To ensure both parties' expectations were matched, the service-buyer should properly manage the project from start to end, with milestone payments and constant feedback.

c) Preparing SEPs for the future

- Participants agreed that, for change to happen, **SEPs, service-buyers, platform intermediaries and government agencies should take collective ownership**. Among others, this included being responsible to save and prepare themselves for the future.
- Other idea raised:
 - **More affordable insurance products for SEPs or interested service-buyers to purchase**, to protect for issues such as loss of income when injured.