

## British businesses show strong signs of recruitment recovery despite local talent crunch; launch of Information Hub to support skills development and transfer to local workforce

**Wednesday, October 13, 2021:** In the past 12 months, the long-term impacts of Covid have become apparent in Singapore, with a shift towards post-pandemic flexible working, embracing new technologies and an increased focus on the mental wellbeing of employees. In our poll earlier this year, mental health was highlighted when 79% of companies reported an awareness at all levels of the need to support employees in this area.

In the second edition of the BritCham annual Manpower Survey, we report that 84% of companies are actively recruiting or plan to do so within the next six months. Of those recruiting during polling, this is a 27% increase from 2020, indicating the hiring freeze experienced during the height of the pandemic has been lifted and businesses are keen to continue creating jobs and skills in Singapore's employment market.

In June this year, national employment figures were released which reported there were [163 job openings for every 100 unemployed persons](#) and a [10.7 per cent decrease in the non-resident population](#). With an increased appetite for recruitment, companies are competing in a confined talent pool for Singaporean or Permanent Resident employees. This is seen particularly in senior and line management functions. In a direct comparison, the proportion of companies who flagged the size of the talent pool as an issue for local recruitment increased by 24% since last year to over half of all responding companies in 2021. 64% have been struggling to recruit senior management locally, and 57% for line managers.

The British business community raised concerns with the technical skills of the local workforce within the results, with almost half of all responding companies highlighting this as an obstacle to the successful recruitment of local talent in the past year. **The British Chamber of Commerce will support the process of finding talent and the transfer of skills from British and other foreign-owned businesses to the local workforce through our new Future of Work Information Hub launched today** [\[https://futureofwork.britcham.org.sg\]](https://futureofwork.britcham.org.sg), part of our ongoing campaign of the same name. The Hub will provide clear navigation to recruitment channels, SkillsFuture programmes, employee engagement resources and other development initiatives alongside the latest news, case studies and content relevant through the entire career lifecycle.

Reflecting on the results of our latest poll, British Chamber of Commerce Singapore Executive Director, David Kelly, said:

*"It is encouraging to see the significant number of companies actively recruiting and creating jobs in Singapore. For businesses to recover and grow in the coming months, the community needs consistency in operations, a well-balanced approach to diverse talent and the continued support of our colleagues at*

*Singapore's Government agencies to support the country's long history of openness to doing business. We, together with 28 other Trade Associations and Chambers (TACs), committed to a collective joint statement to support fair hiring and employment practices earlier this year. We will build on this by launching our Future of Work Information Hub, which provides information, tools and support for companies of all sizes looking to transfer knowledge and enhance skills and talent within the workforce."*

Representing BritCham's Official Future of Work Partner, Charles Ferguson, General Manager Asia Pacific for Globalization Partners, said:

*"With recruitment thankfully on the rise again, we can expect the war for talent to intensify. Maintaining high levels of employee engagement will be a top priority for most businesses seeking to hire and retain staff. With the remote work revolution exploding, British companies can enjoy Singapore's best assets and the enormous, vibrant workforce Asia has to offer, providing the perfect launchpad for further business expansion in the region. Safeguarding compliance and reducing any risk associated with this process is one sure way that peace of mind can be delivered, and employee retention improved."*

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#### **Note to the Editor:**

The Manpower Survey 2021 reflects a sample response from BritCham Singapore member companies polled between 26<sup>th</sup> August and 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Half of those who responded are SMEs, and a broad cross-section of industries is reflected.

The Future of Work Information Hub website link will be made live from Wednesday, October 13, 2021 at <https://futureofwork.britcham.org.sg>.

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#### **About the British Chamber of Commerce Singapore (BritCham):**

The British Chamber of Commerce Singapore (BritCham) is an independent not-for-profit membership organisation supporting approximately 3,500 members from 320 member organisations, part of the British Chambers of Commerce Global Network and a leading member of the Britain in South East Asia network (BiSEA). Our members vary from startups and SMEs to global MNCs, spanning all sectors and industries. Approximately two-thirds of the network in Singapore are British nationals or those employed by an organisation headquartered in the UK.

The Chamber is a registered Society, led by an Executive Team, overseen by an elected Board of members and operating under a published Constitution. Our mission is to drive British business growth in Singapore, create opportunities for our members, facilitate industry knowledge sharing, and support exporters from the UK. This is achieved by working alongside Government, our partners and our engaged members to deliver services, committee participation, activities and opportunities throughout the year.

Within our services to the British business community, we focus on five broad themes - the [Future of Trade](#) (creating jobs and boosting economic growth in Singapore), the [Future of Work](#) (supporting talent and the enhancement of people to support business growth), [Diversity & Inclusion](#) (ensuring that rich and diverse workforces are working together to support business innovation and growth), [Education & Learning](#) (focusing on quality education and future skills that businesses will require), and sustainability through our [Road to Net Zero](#) campaign (encouraging businesses to do their part for a world that we all want to live in in the future). We also maintain a [Covid-19 Information Hub](#) resource.

For more information on the Chamber, our advocacy and our areas of focus, visit [www.britcham.org.sg](http://www.britcham.org.sg).

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