

# Bird & Bird ATMD

## Legal Update

*The new Tech@SG Programme*

*February 2020*



*The Economic Development Board (EDB) and Enterprise Singapore (ESG) have recently rolled out the Tech@SG Programme which is designed to facilitate the hire of highly skilled foreign talent by qualifying technology firms in Singapore.*

This new programme will enable high tech firms with particular focus in sectors such as biotech, cleantech, digitaltech and fintech to draw on the skills and expertise of foreign manpower resources. The local talent working alongside the foreign experts will hopefully be able to draw on the experience of their foreign counterparties and colleagues, and upskill in the process. This is entirely in line with Singapore's quest to equip businesses with essential technological skills and should have a positive knock-on effect on Singapore's reputation as a major technology hub.

### Benefits

Essentially, Tech@SG will issue company-level endorsement to the Ministry of Manpower ("MOM"); MOM in turn grants a higher rate of acceptance for Employment Pass ("EP") applications. The high tech firm stands to gain:

- Up to 10 new EPs over two years for foreign employees who will be hired as part of the eligible company's core team in Singapore, and thereafter,
- Coverage for the first renewal of each new EP obtained under the Programme (with subsequent renewal valid for up to three years)

### Eligibility for companies

For companies with less than 30% of the company owned by local shareholder(s) an endorsement by EDB should be sought. For companies with 30% or more local shareholding, applications should be submitted to Startup SG, an entity under Enterprise Singapore. Companies must meet the following criteria to be eligible for the Programme:

- Incorporated business entity in Singapore
- Have a core business product or service related to digital or technological offerings
- Secured more than US\$10 million in investment funding in the past 36 months
- Received funding from a programme-recognised investment firm in the past 36 months ( No minimum funding amount)

### Eligibility for individuals applying for EPs under the Programme

After obtaining relevant endorsement under the Programme, the application process for EPs may begin. Individuals intending to obtain an EP under the Programme must meet the following criteria:

- Applicant must have a fixed monthly salary that meets MOM's minimum prevailing EP salary criteria (i.e. S\$3,600)
- Applicant must pass MOM's background checks

- Applicant must be considered a core team member holding a functional or senior role in the company

The new Tech@SG Programme is expected to help employers raise their profile, win more challenging work, and also provide local talent with a chance to learn new skillsets from their foreign co-workers.

## Contact Us

For queries or more information, please contact:

**Sandra Seah**  
Joint Managing Partner

Tel: +65 6428 9429  
sandra.seah@twobirds.com



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