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How business networks are helping members amid pandemic

With the Covid-19 pandemic showing no signs of abating, business networks in Singapore have been facilitating information exchanges through webinars and establishing new initiatives to support member businesses.

Business luncheons that used to be held face to face have been moved online to ensure that members can continue to engage with one another.

The coronavirus outbreak has shown the value and importance of partnerships between businesses, the community and the au-

thorities, chamber representatives said.

Dr Lei Hsien-Hsien, chief executive of the American Chamber of Commerce in Singapore (AmCham), said: "Collaboration between businesses and with the Government will be crucial to help return the economy to pre-Covid-19 levels of productivity and activity."

AmCham is launching a programme later this month to support close to 200 of its small and medium-sized enterprise members, through avenues such as strategic partnerships and training

and development, to help these firms grow and transform their businesses.

The Singaporean-German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (SGC) has conducted eight surveys over the past few months to better understand the impact of Covid-19 on businesses and the economy, and had shared the results with its members.

Surveys found that the travel restrictions to curb the pandemic have been severely disruptive, leading to lower sales performance due to company representatives not

meeting existing and new clients.

The chamber has helped create new business collaboration opportunities. It has organised a virtual business delegation trip from Germany to Singapore and virtual business matching for German companies to find business partners in Singapore.

Meanwhile, the British Chamber of Commerce Singapore launched its trade services portal and services last month for businesses in the United Kingdom that are looking to expand to Singapore and the region.

The chamber is looking to launch an online learning hub soon, which will focus on education and professional development, said its executive director David Kelly.

Meanwhile, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been heading collaborations between trade associations and businesses to help businesses transform and capture new business opportunities.

It has helped its member companies access market opportunities in China and countries in South-east Asia.

For example, it is helping around 35 Singapore brands and 200 products branch into the Chinese market through the Singapore Import Pavilion at the Greenland Global Commodity Trading Hub in Shanghai. The Singapore Import Pavilion was launched on Nov 1 and the products on display will be rotated every six months.

Mr Jens Ruebbert, president of the SGC, said: "In difficult times, businesses must support communities because collaborations showcase unity between businesses and the community."

The chamber's members have donated close to \$250,000 to the Sayang Sayang Fund and the Invictus Fund so far, he added.

Choo Yun Ting

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The coronavirus outbreak has shown the value and importance of partnerships between businesses, the community and the authorities. PHOTO: ST FILE



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