

# People

The government's commitment to further green up the island and transform the Garden City into a City in a Garden has created unprecedented opportunities for landscape and horticulture professionals.

To meet the challenges of our changing landscape, NParks works with partners like the Employment and Employability Institute (e2i), Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA), National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), and Singapore Landscape Industry Council (SLIC) to raise the profile and professionalism of the industry.

Today, some 21,000 workers are employed in the industry and manpower is expected to grow by 4% annually.

Within our organisation, we also provide opportunities to those with a passion for greenery. A structured professional development pathway equips staff without a horticultural background with the necessary skills and knowledge.





NParks' dragonboat team at Lower Seletar Reservoir Park

## Horticultural exchange

**More than 60 companies participated in the trade exhibition.**

The inaugural Singapore Garden Festival Expo organised by NParks saw the biggest gathering of international players from the industry.

Over 3,000 delegates from more than 10 countries converged for the three-day event from 24 to 26 July 2008. They included city planners, property developers, architects, landscape designers and park owners.

Comprising a thought leadership conference and trade exhibition, the expo was a marketplace for industry players to network and seek new opportunities in the region. A comprehensive line-up of programmes provided insights into emerging markets and trends such as Ecological Landscaping and Lifestyle Horticulture.

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## Field day for the green-collared

**A Green Carnival was also organised for the public to create greater awareness of the efforts of the landscape industry.**

Landscape practitioners had an enjoyable time pitting their skills against each other and demonstrating their expertise to the public at Green Thumbs 2008.

Held on 13 September at East Coast Park, the annual event featured a wider range of skills this time round – an indication of how the industry has grown in scope and depth.

Besides increasing the number of skills championship contests from seven to 10, the event also welcomed the first batch of overseas participants.

Job matching opportunities were available too, with some 80 job openings by 11 companies.

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## CUGE receives commendation

**Over 480 workers obtained Landscape WSQ certification in FY2008.**

The Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology (CUGE) was set up in 2007 to provide skills training and professional development for all levels of the landscape industry. As a National CET Institute (NCI), CUGE offers certified training in Landscape Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) to new entrants of all ages who have no prior experience.

To date, CUGE has certified over 1,900 workers using the WSQ system.

In recognition of its efforts to develop a structured training and career progression pathway for the industry, CUGE was conferred the Company Commendation Award by NTUC in May 2008.

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Award-winning landscape architect Kathryn Gustafson spoke at the Singapore Garden Festival Expo



The Champion Mower Operator was one of 10 skills championship contests at Green Thumbs 2008



Landscape WSQ focuses on practical, hands-on training

### Keeping it safe

**Workplace Safety and Health is one of the core modules in the Landscape WSQ training.**

NParks took steps to prepare both staff and industry partners for the Workplace Safety and Health Act, which was expanded to cover the landscape industry in March 2008. Safety training was organised at CUGE and a set of guidelines produced specifically for the landscape and horticultural workforce. Information on common workplace hazards and preventive measures were also made available on NParks' E-Library for staff.

For taking the lead in promoting workplace safety in the landscape industry, CUGE was recognised as a bizSAFE Partner by the Workplace Safety and Health Council.

### Reaching new heights

**NParks has introduced a pilot incentive scheme to encourage existing building owners to green up their roofs.**

The CUGE Seminar Series on Skyrise Greenery attracted a good mix of local and overseas participants from Asia and Europe. Over two days in October, experts from Germany, Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore shared their experiences in implementing skyrise greenery. Delegates were brought on technical tours to some of the skyrise greenery installations in Singapore, including the finalists of the SIA-NParks Skyrise Greenery Awards 2008.

The Awards, presented by NParks and Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA), celebrates the coming together of architecture and landscape. Four residential and commercial projects were conferred the inaugural Awards.

Also as part of ongoing efforts to promote skyrise greenery, NParks launched the second edition of the book "A Selection of Plants for Green Roofs in Singapore".

### Passion required, training provided

**NParks' Teach and Learn initiative encourages experienced staff to share what they know.**

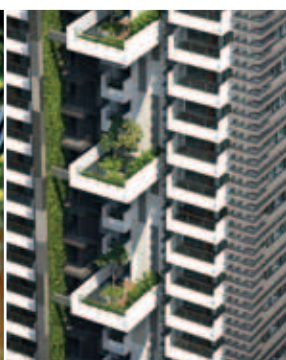
To meet our diverse needs for talents, NParks has extended its search to include people from non-horticultural backgrounds. The key requisite – a passion for nature.

Those who are new will be equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge through a structured training programme.

NParks also introduced on-the-job training for staff to gain groundwork experience in plant identification, tree inspection and turf management. Corporate staff undergo an orientation in basic landscaping skills to have a better understanding of NParks' core work.



Safe work practices include the use of protective gear



Newton Suites – Green walls and communal skyrise gardens (Photo: WOHA Architects Pte Ltd)



Training is tailored to the specific roles of staff

**NParks' Cadetship Programme provides a six-month horticultural apprenticeship for diploma students.**

### **Budding talents**

More opportunities abound for those aspiring to pursue a career in NParks and the landscape industry.

The Singapore Gardening Society and Garden City Fund launched the Singapore Gardening Society Study Grant Fund in April 2008 to assist youths who wish to study diploma courses in horticulture and related disciplines. Three students pursuing a Diploma in Horticulture and Landscape Management at Ngee Ann Polytechnic were the first to receive the grants.

Also for the first time, NParks offered scholarships to three undergraduates to pursue a Master of Landscape Architecture at National University of Singapore.

In addition, we presented eight undergraduate scholarships to students and three postgraduate scholarships to NParks staff. Seven individuals received the Overseas Merit Awards to pursue a one-year accelerated bridging course at the University of Queensland.

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### **Shaping the family tree**

To enhance coordination within NParks, our organisation structure has been realigned into three main clusters.

The Corporate Planning and Services Cluster focuses on strengthening organisational excellence, corporate governance and resource management to make NParks a Great Workplace.

The Professional Development and Services Cluster concentrates on NParks' strengths in horticulture, streetscape and conservation, and strives to position Singapore as a centre of excellence for urban greenery and ecology.

The Park Management and Lifestyle Cluster brings together the strengths of the Parks, Parks Development, Lifestyle Business and Corporate and Marketing Communications units to make our parks the preferred lifestyle destination for locals and visitors.

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Jenny Chua – Manager at Singapore Botanic Gardens and recipient of Overseas Merit Award



NParks' professional expertise has played a key role in the Garden City

### Growing the service culture

**NParks received 12 accolades at the Excellent Service Award 2008.**

Service Excellence is one of the core values of NParks.

To strengthen this Service DNA within the organisational culture, a new service tagline “Y.E.O.P!” or “Your Experience is Our Passion” was launched, together with a series of “Passion for Service” workshops designed to provide staff with a common service language.

NParks added another feather to its cap when one of its staff was presented the PS21 Star Service Award. Dennis Lim, Head of Singapore Garden Festival, was conferred the distinguished award in May 2008 for having demonstrated outstanding service excellence.

### A vibrant workplace

**In a 2008 employee survey, a significantly higher-than-norm percentage of staff indicated they were proud to work in NParks.**

To cultivate a dynamic environment that encourages work-life balance, a host of activities were organised for staff by our Staff Well-Being Committee.

It was an evening of good food and fun for all who attended NParks Night 2009. Divisions demonstrated their culinary and creative flair in the Food and Performance Competitions.

Our staff also volunteered their time to accompany members of NParks’ adopted charity, Handicaps Welfare Association (HWA), on guided tours to the Southern Ridges, parks and nature reserves.

To promote a healthy lifestyle, NParks introduced Active Hour for staff to participate in sports and gardening activities every Thursday from 4pm.



Our Service DNA guides the way we interact with our customers

NParks staff with members of Handicaps Welfare Association at HortPark