

## MEDIA FACTSHEET

### Singapore Botanic Gardens Seed Bank



(House 4)

The Singapore Botanic Gardens' seed bank is Singapore's first seed bank and will conserve the seeds of threatened plant species from Southeast Asia. The seed bank will play a key role in conserving plant diversity in the region and ensure the growth of the Singapore Botanic Gardens' plant collection. The seed bank will have the capacity to store seeds from up to 25,000 species of plants. This is around half the total number of seed plant species in Southeast Asia, and nearly triple the 9,000 species of plants that the Gardens currently has in its living collection. When established, the seed bank targets to achieve 100 seed collections per year.

The facility will be established in House 4, the largest of five colonial-style houses within the Raffles College. Originally named Mansfield Lodge, it served as the college president's residence when it was built in the 1920s. This house was designated as a Conserved Building in October 2006.

The facility will include a seed biology lab, rooms for seed processing, and storage freezers for seeds, as well as interpretive galleries to provide opportunities for visitors to learn about seed banking and the importance of conservation work. NParks will be working with Kew Gardens' Millennium Seed Bank to learn best practices on the management of seed banks for tropical plants. Works for the seed bank are expected to be completed by mid-2019.

HSBC has donated \$103,000, through NParks' Garden City Fund, to support seed collection efforts for the seed bank. Moving forward, NParks will also be looking at opportunities for members of the public to contribute to the conservation work at the seed bank, through the Garden City Fund.

#### **Why is seed banking important?**

In recent years, climate change and habitat loss has increased the demand for conservation of plant genetic resources. Natural plant populations are repositories of genetic diversity and seed collection is one of the most effective ways of conserving wild populations of native plants.

Seed banking safeguards plant biodiversity in the region and acts as an insurance against threats such as disease, climate change, as well as natural and man-made disasters. Stored seeds are a valuable resource for habitat restoration and species conservation.