

## WINNING PROPOSAL LIGHTS THE WAY TO CONNECTIONS WITH OTHERS

*Innovative proposal 'Musical Chairs' claims SPARK Challenge's top prize*

**16 September 2019** – Tall, glowing flowers are what first catch the attention of passers-by, drawing them in along with soothing music. Nestled beneath are seats that, when folded, look like flower buds. After a person takes a seat, the nearest seat automatically lights up, prompting the next passer-by to sit there.

The surreal installation, called 'Musical Chairs', was designed to create moments of connection, when strangers can naturally gather and chat about their surroundings. Its innovative design clinched it the URA-REDAS SPARK Challenge's top prize today. Guest of Honour Minister of State for National Development and Manpower Zaqy Mohamad gave out the \$10,000 cash prize, at the award ceremony held at Millenia Walk.



Glowing flowers, music and lighted seats of 'Musical Chairs' draw in passers-by to make connections with others.

Observing Singaporeans' tendency to sit alone led its creators, students Voon Soo Jun, 22, and Sally Tan, 21, to dream up the prototype.

"We noticed in everyday life, people tend to sit alone, like on a public bus, people will tend to sit on seats that are next to empty ones. So we try to bring people together, by encouraging them to sit near each other and to strike up conversation," said Ms Tan.

The URA-REDAS SPARK Challenge seeks creative ideas that can raise the quality of the urban environment. This second edition, with the theme of 'Connecting People in the City', sought original and innovative designs that could build connections among people in an urban environment.

After an initial round of submissions by the public, prototypes of five shortlisted proposals were displayed across nine malls in August and September 2019. The other four proposals were 'Flip!', 'Fun Mirror', 'Musi-C-Ycle' and 'The Supreme Pool'.

"We saw an even higher level of quality and creativity among the finalists this year. By partnering the public through such initiatives, even more meaning and engagement is brought to the urban environment," said Lim Eng Hwee, Chief Executive Officer of the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA).

The winner was decided by a panel of judges from URA, the Singapore University of Technology and Design, and Home-Fix Pte Ltd. Besides the judges' scores, the results of an online poll were also considered. Over 500 votes were received, with 'Musical Chairs' receiving more than half the votes.

"'Musical Chairs' stood out in terms of its originality, high level of design and the resourcefulness of the team in bringing together its different elements. Altogether, it was a well-crafted prototype that welcomed people to bond over a novel experience," said judge Low Cheong Kee, Managing Director of Home-Fix Pte Ltd.

"Visitors to Changi City Point and The Seletar Mall took well to 'Musical Chairs'. The prototype provided some surprise and delight that brought people together. Such ideas

are wonderful for injecting more buzz and vibrancy to our urban spaces,” said Real Estate Developers’ Association of Singapore (REDAS) President Chia Ngiang Hong.

‘Musical Chairs’ will continue to be displayed at Changi City Point until **25 September 2019**.

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*This press release is also available at URA-Online at <http://www.ura.gov.sg/>*