

SMART NATION  
&  
DIGITAL GOVERNMENT OFFICE



## MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 17 December 2021

### **'MY FAVOURITE DAYS' – NEW AUGMENTED REALITY STORYBOOK TO HELP CHILDREN IMAGINE A TECH-ENABLED FUTURE**

**SINGAPORE, 17 DECEMBER 2021** – The dragon playground in Toa Payoh is an old but iconic landmark in Singapore. Imagine it transforming into a smart playground, with the tiled dragon automatically sprouting majestic wings to provide shelter for children when it rains, or emitting cool mist when it gets hot. This is an example of how life could possibly be made better with technology, illustrated in a new augmented reality (AR) storybook for children, created here in Singapore.

To expose children to the benefits of technology in an innovative and engaging way, TOUCH Community Services ("TOUCH" or "触爱社会服务"), together with partners, Smart Nation and Digital Government Office (SNDGO); Meta; and MeshMinds; launched 'My Favourite Days', a 35-page AR storybook centred on the heart-warming interaction between a little girl and her grandfather on a journey of discovery. This initiative is funded by Meta, MeshMinds, and Our Singapore Fund.

By scanning the five QR codes on pages of the book, readers can activate an AR filter and see the scenes come to life. The AR effects are created by MeshMinds and hosted on Meta's Spark AR platform. The producers hope to inspire young readers to imagine a future where technology improves lives, and opens up fresh opportunities.

The book was launched by Minister for Communications and Information, and Minister-in-charge of Smart Nation and Cybersecurity, Josephine Teo. The book launch included an exhibition with fun activities for children to explore the benefits that technology can bring to our daily lives, and a live reading session attended by 18 parents and children at the Central Public Library. The hybrid event was also open to members of the public via live stream on Facebook.

Mr James Tan (陈锦耀), CEO of TOUCH said, "Technology has changed the way we live, work and play. At TOUCH, we see technology as an enabler for the communities that we serve. As we work with our beneficiaries of all ages to promote digital readiness and literacy efforts, we recognise that technology can complement processes to enhance the way we live and help us bond better with our loved ones."

He added, "I hope that the book will not only plant early seeds amongst our young to realise their dreams through technology, but also bring families together as we explore a smart future together."

Ms Huang Weixian, Director of Adoption and Engagement at SNDGO, said, "'My Favourite Days' is wonderful example of a community-led project to help children and parents learn more about Smart Nation. We love that it combines the age-old tradition of storytelling, with the magic of AR effects. We hope that more partners will come forward with their ideas, so that we can work on more of such meaningful projects together. This is the kind of Smart Nation that we want to set in motion – with all hands-on-deck. We also hope that children will read and love this book, and inspire them to do great in future."

“As we build our first Asia-based data centre in Singapore, we are excited to invest in programs like this that help inspire future generations with technology. We believe that AR is the next big computing platform and one that can potentially unlock limitless opportunities. We’re delighted to share this with the community and make it accessible for all ages,” said Mr Gavin Chua, Head of Infrastructure Engagement for APAC at Meta.

Ms Kay Poh Gek Vasey, Chief Connecting Officer at MeshMinds, said, “We are honoured to have had the chance to produce the AR experiences which make ‘My Favourite Days’ a truly unique and interactive digital pop-up book. Working closely with the illustrators and partners since January 2020 to push the boundaries of the latest AR technology has been both exciting and challenging. We cannot wait to see the surprise and delight of children and parents as they become fully immersed in the story and bring the beautifully designed characters to life simply by tapping the screen of their smartphone. We are also pleased that we had the freedom to experiment with the camera distance feature of the technology that allows AR ‘Easter eggs’ to be hidden in the book and only revealed when readers go closer to certain elements. We hope that applying AR to traditional storytelling will inspire the next generation of young readers as they envision a future powered by frontier technologies.”

The public can visit the exhibition from 17 December 2021 to 16 January 2022 at the Central Public Library, or find out more about the book by spotting colourful floor stickers displayed at three regional libraries located at Jurong, Tampines, and Woodlands and at [library@harbourfront](mailto:library@harbourfront).

‘My Favourite Days’ is available for borrowing at all public libraries. Some 2,400 copies of the book will also be distributed to pre-schools and primary schools around Singapore. An additional 19,500 copies (sponsored by Meta) will be distributed to children from low- and middle-income families, through the National Library Board’s Early READ Starter Kit<sup>1</sup>.

– End –

---

<sup>1</sup> The Early READ Starter Kits are distributed to selected preschool centres which includes low to middle-low income families and provide appropriate materials to encourage parents to read with their children. The variety of materials in the kit helps parents to guide their children through the five early literacy practices such as talking, singing, playing, reading and writing; practices that are important in inculcating early interest in reading. The items are also specially curated to allow repeated use over a long period of time.

## **ABOUT TOUCH COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Since 1992, TOUCH Community Services has served people of all backgrounds to see sustainable change and transformation in their lives. It believes in the worth and potential of every child, youth at-risk, family in need, senior and person with special or healthcare needs to grow, participate and contribute in the community. The heartbeat of TOUCH is to **activate potential, build independence, connect people, and deliver impact** by developing sustainable solutions in society.

TOUCH Child Care (TCC), a service of TOUCH, runs two child care centres which offer quality early childhood education in a safe, caring and inclusive environment. TCC reaches out to children aged two to six, including those with special needs, before they attend primary school.

For more information on TOUCH, please visit [www.touch.org.sg](http://www.touch.org.sg)

## **ABOUT SMART NATION AND DIGITAL GOVERNMENT OFFICE**

The Smart Nation and Digital Government Office (SNDGO), under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), plans and prioritises key Smart Nation projects, drives the digital transformation of government, builds long-term capabilities for the public sector, and promotes adoption and participation from the public and industry, to take a collective approach in building a Smart Nation.

For more information, please visit [www.smartnation.gov.sg](http://www.smartnation.gov.sg).

## **ABOUT META**

Meta builds technologies that help people connect, find communities, and grow businesses. When Facebook launched in 2004, it changed the way people connect. Apps like Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp further empowered billions around the world.

Now, Meta is moving beyond 2D screens toward immersive experiences like augmented and virtual reality to help build the next evolution in social technology.

## **ABOUT MESHMINDS**

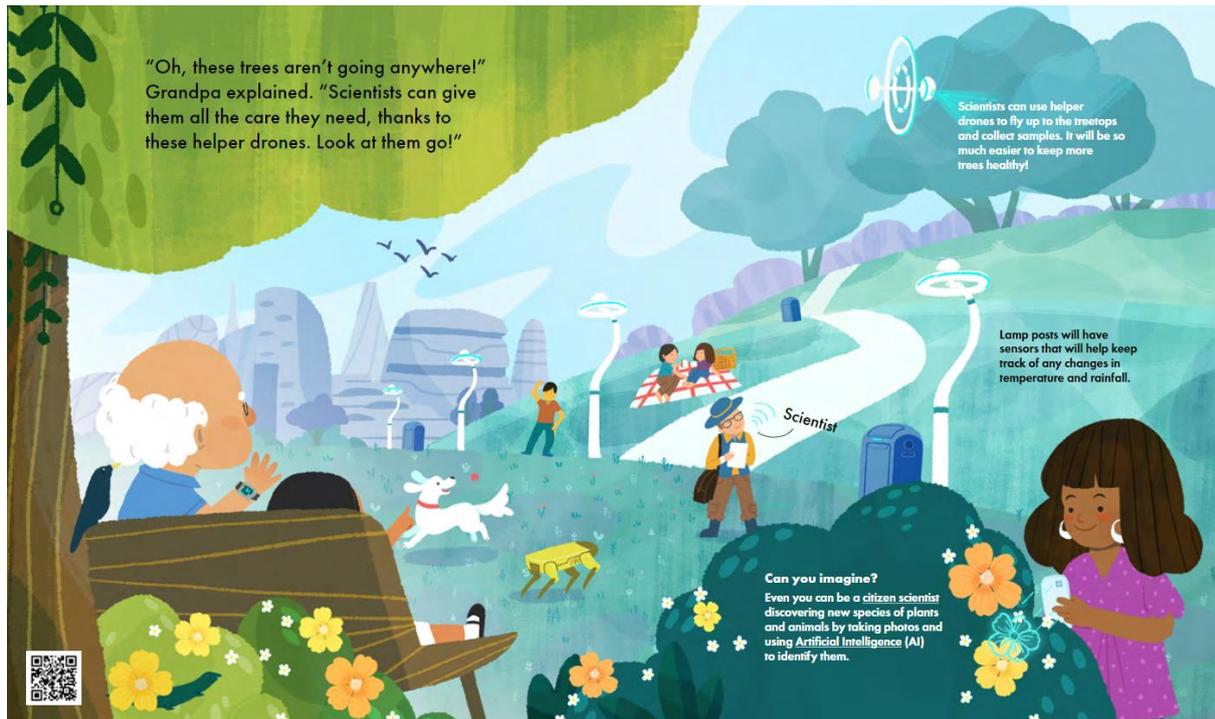
MeshMinds is a creative technology studio officially partnered with the United Nations Environment Programme. Together, they combine art and technology with powerful partnerships to drive awareness, ignite conversations and inspire behaviour change for the sustainable development of people and our planet. Alongside commercial work, through its sister organisation, The MeshMinds Foundation educates, enables and transforms artists to become creative technologists and donates services to financially-challenged charities and good causes.

AR SPREADS IN 'MY FAVOURITE DAYS'

Classroom Spread



## Drones Spread



## Hawker Centre Spread



## Telemedicine AR Spread



## Dragon Playground AR Spread

