

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Take the Challenge to Experience Chinese Language and Culture

*The Promote Mandarin Council, The Chinese Language and Culture Fund
and Business China launch 华文? 谁怕谁! – The Chinese Challenge
as the key initiative to promote Mandarin*

Singapore, 26 March 2009 – This year, the Promote Mandarin Council brings to you *华文? 谁怕谁! – The Chinese Challenge*, a new nationwide initiative to deepen the appreciation of Chinese culture and increase the competency level of communication in Mandarin. *华文? 谁怕谁! – The Chinese Challenge* aims to provide a participatory environment for Singaporeans to enjoy and improve their Mandarin and knowledge of Chinese culture.

Ms Lim Sau Hoong, Chairperson of the Promote Mandarin Council, said: “We hope that with *华文? 谁怕谁! - The Chinese Challenge*, we are able to cultivate our fellow Singaporeans’ passion for the language through active learning and discovery. It is our wish that more Singaporeans would one day be effectively bilingual and bicultural.”

Co-organised with the Chinese Language and Culture Fund and Business China, *华文? 谁怕谁! – The Chinese Challenge* will showcase the finest in Chinese culture and language through an online competition that features captivating design and interesting content over a 12-week duration.

Mr Lim Fang Hua, Committee Member, Management Committee of the Chinese Language and Culture Fund, said: “We are very delighted to support the Promote Mandarin Council in this new and exciting initiative. We believe that *华文? 谁怕谁! – The Chinese Challenge* will be an effective platform to assist our Chinese Singaporeans in appreciating Chinese language and culture, and also cultivate bilingual and bicultural talents.”

Added Mr Sam Tan, Chief Executive Officer of Business China: “For Singaporeans to stay engaged with their counterparts in China effectively, speaking fluent Mandarin, appreciating the Chinese culture and understanding the current social conditions in China are three important attributes that they must possess. *华文? 谁怕谁! – The Chinese Challenge* works to nurture talents that have the capability to communicate with business partners in China at a higher competency level. These talents will inevitably become strong assets to

our society as they become the link for Singapore to forge stronger economic and social relationships with China.”

华文？谁怕谁！– The Chinese Challenge leverages on the use of online and traditional media platforms to pose general knowledge questions that focus on topics such as the Chinese language, literary arts, and popular culture. To draw a wider group of participants, the questions will be posed in Mandarin, English and Hanyu Pinyin.

Ms Lim, who is also the Chief Executive and Executive Creative Director of local advertising firm 10AM Communications, was responsible for the engaging and creative work behind *华文？谁怕谁！– The Chinese Challenge*. The creative designs used on the online and print materials were conceptualised by Ms Lim and her team to showcase the beauty of Chinese language and culture.

Starting from 30 March, 12 questions will be posted weekly over a period of three months and there will be monthly draws held to select the top scorers who will win attractive prizes. Contestants with the highest cumulative scores at the end of three months will be invited to attend an audition where six finalists will be selected to challenge one another in a grand finale TV show. The grand finale winner will walk away with \$10,000 worth of prizes, including \$5,000 worth of NTUC vouchers.

The challenge targets working adults and tertiary students who have undergone a bilingual education, as well as reaches out to a wide audience of Chinese Singaporeans and Permanent Residents who are interested to learn more about Chinese culture and language.

Publicity outreach events will be held from 28 March at Asian Civilisations Museum and various shopping malls such as VivoCity, Bishan Junction 8, Toa Payoh HDB Hub and Woodlands Civic Centre to increase awareness of *华文？谁怕谁！– The Chinese Challenge*. Contestants can use the facilities at regional libraries to submit their answers online.

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About Promote Mandarin Council

The Promote Mandarin Council supports the national objective of building a community of Singaporeans who have a strong command of Mandarin as well as an appreciation and understanding of Chinese culture, tradition and history.

About Chinese Language and Culture Fund

The Chinese Language and Culture Fund was set up by the Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations and Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry to promote Chinese language and culture.

About Business China

Business China aims to encourage Singaporeans to be bilingual and bicultural so that they can be more effective in creating and strengthening linkages with China in social, cultural, economic and other developments.