

Building a Fair, Flexible Workforce fit for Growth



Since its United Kingdom launch in 1999 the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo) has sought to differentiate the professional recruitment market from labour hire agencies by raising standards and delivering expert support and market intelligence to all its members. The economic importance of flexible, agile contracting to highly skilled and evolved labour markets, all of which are keen to capitalise on the opportunities of the fourth industrial revolution, remains a key message today across all APSCo entities.

It has evolved from UK beginnings into APSCo Global, an international trade body offering global services with local delivery to the international recruitment and outsourcing sectors through its entities APSCo Asia, APSCo Australia, APSCo Deutschland, APSCo United Kingdom and APSCo OutSource, the trade body for the RPO and MSP sectors. Our members, affiliates and Trusted Partners range from SMEs to the largest global, listed recruiters and outsourcers including Page Group Plc, Empresaria Group, SThree Plc and Robert Walters Plc. Members recruit professionals into permanent and contract roles with multi-national and local firms across STEM, accountancy, legal, finance, marketing, and media in addition to highly regulated sectors such as qualified social work, teaching and clinical healthcare.

To provide end clients and candidates with a meaningful badge of accreditation, APSCo membership is available only to quality organisations committed to providing multiple references and adherence to a strict [Code of Conduct](#).

APSCo Singapore was established in 2013 and has recently rebranded to APSCo Asia, reflecting the ever-growing importance of the APAC region to our members. As the only recruitment body with an international footprint, APSCo has a unique position and insight into international labour markets and how Singapore and the wider Asian market compare.

As an economic powerhouse, with its business-friendly environment, it is essential that the Singapore government continues to look at all options which will ensure Singapore has a labour market fit for the future and its aspirations to become a technical, fin-tech global centre of excellence. Such options must include the recognition of flexible, agile, highly skilled contracting and access to international, high-skilled, independent workers. This will help to fill current local skills gaps across the economy, as domestic skills and talents are nurtured with initiatives such as the TechSkills Accelerator (TeSA), part of the SkillsFuture programme. Singapore must maximise opportunities for global trade in services, with trade deals facilitating mutual recognition of standards and regulation.



Staffing is highly regulated by the Ministry of Manpower and we are proud to have a long standing relationship of mutual respect with them. Supporting and promoting regulatory compliance is without doubt the primary reason for businesses to join APSCo. Working with APSCo members, with their commitment to compliance and “badge of quality” manages risk, not only in taxation but also employment and privacy laws. Government and business can be assured that all appropriate licences and insurances are held, and background checks undertaken.

APSCo Asia members, many with global experience and expertise have prepared the following recommendations for government and policy makers:

Recognise the value of the permanent and contracting recruitment sectors and the differentiation of expert professional contracting from more traditional “blue collar” agency work

- The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) already seeks our members’ input into its workforce planning and employment law changes. We consider that there could be significant efficiencies and costs savings possible from a closer working relationship both with APSCo as a trusted partner and with our members via the Preferred Supplier List the MOM is developing.
- Different treatment in employment law, health and safety regulation and workers’ compensation for highly skilled “white collar” workers, and in particular technically skilled, entrepreneurial contractors. These should be recognised as separate to our members’ headcounts.

Facilitate a flexible labour market which can mature and respond to economic challenges and support Singapore’s long term digital and technical strategies

- APSCo can assist with policies and strategies to improve the skills and talent opportunities for Singaporeans, drawing on our members’ global expertise and experience. We can advise on the incentivisations, both personal and corporate that drive behaviours.
- Our members work in partnership with its global client base and local world-class academic institutions and can do so in partnership with EDB Singapore to help achieve its objectives.
- Immigration and cross-border talent movement should be leveraged through the promotion of existing and proposed trade deals between Singapore, UK and the wider APAC region with an increased focus on technical STEM services, to support Singapore’s growth aspirations. The visa system must be attractive to global candidates with a choice of location.
- Recruitment must be recognised as a profession on the skills shortage list within the visa system with a pathway to long term residence to incentivise the building of long term relationships and a commitment to Singaporean long term development plans.

