

## EDITORIAL

**S**ocial Space 2010 covers a number of themes. Firstly it celebrates a milestone for Lien Centre for Social Innovation, as 2010 marks the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Centre. Social Space itself has become one of our most important platforms for sharing of ideas for innovation in civil society and from our feedback it has been very well received by our readers. We include a review of the achievements of the Centre over the past five years, highlighting the research conducted, our various platforms for exchange of ideas and our work in catalysing social innovation initiatives. Of the latter, one of our most dynamic programmes has been the Lien i3 Challenge, a global competition for the most innovative ideas that impact communities in Asia. The outcome of this programme is featured in this edition.

Secondly, climate change and the environment have been very much in the forefront of global concerns. Amelioration strategies for global warming are contentious, with every country looking first to their short term national interests before worrying about the fate of civilisation. It was no surprise, therefore, that the long-anticipated UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen in December 2009, which held out the best hope for global unity in addressing carbon emissions, degenerated into chaos and resulted only in a largely symbolic Copenhagen Accord that was long on rhetoric but short on tangible binding commitments from member countries. Perhaps the solution is more promising at a local level, bringing emphasis back to the cities, which owing to their density, offer the best and most efficient opportunity to have an impact on global warming gas



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emissions and where it is thought possible to craft strategies for large scale mitigation. Reflective of this promise, a number of articles elaborate on urban innovation and eco-cities that may be the future of urban development.

Finally, we reflected on the concern of our keynote speaker Mr Ho Kwon Ping, at the launch of Social Space 2009, that corporations and the youth of society were abysmally represented on the floor of our 'Think-Fest' panel discussion and dialogue session. His learned view, which we agree with, is that corporations have the greatest economic muscle to make significant leaps in social transformation, if only they internalised the values of corporate social responsibility and expressed this innovatively through their businesses. At the same time, everything is almost too late, if the youth of the world are not guided to temper their mercantilist tendencies, imbibe community values and develop the attitude of placing societal good first. Hence, we have included articles that elaborate on how corporations can move beyond CSR to embrace their responsibilities to their communities, an article that speaks of the need to rethink community education in schools and a wonderful piece by a couple of young trainee journalists who demonstrate the best in idealistic insurgent activism for the good of society. If a new generation of global citizens can keep the unmet needs of the world closest to their hearts, there is considerable hope for mankind's future.



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