

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **GEORGE TOWN, PENANG**

**10 December 2009**

### **Think City launches George Town Grants Programme**

Think City Sdn Bhd (“Think City”) today launched the RM20 million George Town Grants Programme (“GTGP”) which will provide seed-funding for urban rejuvenation projects within the George Town World Heritage Site (“WHS”).

The grants programme, to be disbursed over a two year period, will support a series of small-scale initiatives involving as many stakeholders as possible. Think City is also working together with local government agencies, the World Heritage Office and NGOs to encourage projects that promote inclusiveness and a shared understanding of George Town’s Outstanding Universal Values (“OUVs”) between residents, businesses and visitors alike. This approach is aimed at enhancing the city’s livability and to build social capital over time.

Think City is now welcoming the first round of grant applications, to start from 15 December 2009 till 15 January 2010. As a public grants programme, any individual or organization can submit an application for projects that will enhance George Town’s OUVs in the WHS.

The selection process of projects will be managed independently and professionally, involving evaluations by the Think City management, followed by the Think City Advisory Panel and finally by the Board of the company. Projects will be assessed and given priority based on their ability to build local capacity, encourage private-public partnerships, improve awareness of local heritage and protect living traditions.

Think City commenced operations with the commissioning of the George Town Land Use and Population Survey, which was launched by the Chief Minister of Penang on 6 November 2009. Significantly, the survey is the first project that maps out the current land use and spatial allocation within the WHS. This data will provide more clarity on which key intervention areas in the WHS that funding is most needed. It will also contribute to the preparation of the Special Area Plan by JPBD, which is an obligation in order to maintain the UNESCO World Heritage listing of Georgetown.

The GTGP will target joint programmes between civil society and the private sector to promote awareness of the importance of heritage; help build local capacity for heritage conservation and develop greater awareness about George Town’s living heritage, culture and architecture.

The grants programme is also designed to support the momentum of the city’s dynamic grassroots-based efforts to enhance George Town’s OUVs, which have been defined by UNESCO to refer to both living and built heritage. The OUVs will be strengthened by



developing community-level initiatives that will stimulate public-private partnerships through urban rejuvenation activities.

The GTGP also provides incentives to property owners to adopt best practices in heritage conservation and will provide part-funding of the restoration of buildings of special historic significance and that results in a major public outcome.

The GTGP Application Form can be downloaded from the Think City website. For projects involving physical restoration works, applicants must also submit a Conservation Statement prepared by a suitably qualified professional. Think City does not fund routine maintenance work, alterations and private interior work, construction already underway and any physical work that detracts from George Town's OUVs. Only physical sites in the WHS core and buffer areas – approximately bordered to the west by Jalan Transfer and Jalan Dr. Lim Chwee Leong to the south - are eligible for a grant.

All completed proposals should be sent to Think City's Programme Director (Application & Implementation). Members of the public can also learn more about the grants programme and information on how to submit their proposals by visiting Think City's website at [www.thinkcity.com.my](http://www.thinkcity.com.my), or visit [www.surveygeorgetown.com](http://www.surveygeorgetown.com) to keep track of the George Town Land Use and Population Survey.

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### ***About Think City Sdn Bhd***

Think City, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Khazanah Nasional Berhad, is the special purpose vehicle set up to implement and manage the George Town Grants Programme ("GTGP"). The GTGP is designed to stimulate urban regeneration and rejuvenation within the George Town World Heritage Site ("WHS"), by encouraging projects that promote inclusiveness and a shared understanding of George Town's Outstanding Universal Values ("OUVs") between residents, businesses and visitors alike. This approach is aimed at enhancing the city's livability and to build social capital over time. The GTGP will be implemented for a period of two years. Information on GTGP projects will be made available on the Think City website ([www.thinkcity.com.my](http://www.thinkcity.com.my)).