



An artist's impression of Hyflux's flagship Elo Lab, which is expected to open in the third quarter of this year. The EDB has partnered with the water-treatment company in rolling out a number of investments, including a \$30 million integrated and automated steel structure fabrication-processing line. PHOTO: HYFLUX

EDB partners Hyflux in efforts to 'future-proof' business operations

Jacqueline Woo

Water-treatment firm Hyflux is making a splash across its operations – boosting productivity, developing new membrane technology and diversifying into oxygen-rich water for the healthcare market.

The company has been taking these bold investment strides in partnership with the Economic Development Board (EDB).

The latest venture to come to fruition is a \$30 million fully-integrated and automated steel structure fabrication-processing line at Hyflux's Tuas facility, which was launched yesterday.

The facility will improve operational productivity by about 25 per cent, said Hyflux executive chairman and group chief executive Olivia Lum. It will also boost the skill profile of its employees and reduce its reliance on foreign labour.

"In order to remain competitive, we have to take the necessary steps to drive innovation and adopt high-value processes," Ms Lum said at the launch at Hyflux Innovation Centre.

The investment in robotics and

automation, she added, will help the group meet the challenges of tighter labour policies and increasing regional competition.

Hyflux yesterday also signed a memorandum of understanding with Nanyang Technological University's Nanyang Environment and Water Research Institute to collaborate on next-generation water-treatment technologies.

In addition, the mainboard-listed group said it will open its flagship Elo Lab in Belvedere Close in the third quarter this year, as it moves to diversify its business offerings. Elo is Hyflux's oxygen-rich water business line for the retail sector.

The new facility will follow the opening of its first Elo Lab, a bath therapy facility, at City Square Mall last September. It will feature 50 individual private suites offering Elo water therapy sessions, and is set to cater to Singapore's growing healthcare and wellness industry.

Ms Lum said Hyflux will continue to invest in research and development to expand new applications for the Elo business line. It manufactures and bottles Elo drinking water only at its Singapore facilities.

All of the investments were made

MAKING BOLD STRIKES

1

BOOSTING PRODUCTIVITY

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2

DEVELOPING NEW MEMBRANE TECHNOLOGY

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3

DIVERSIFYING INTO OXYGEN-RICH WATER

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Also speaking at the launch, EDB chairman Beh Swan Gin said the group's latest investments fit in very well with how the EDB is able to support such companies – in lifting the productivity of existing operations, commercialising next-generation products to sustain growth, and creating new businesses and growing new capabilities.

"Since EDB's establishment in 1961, we have done well to attract multinational companies to help Singapore build new capabilities and create new jobs," he said.

"We are complementing this by stepping up our efforts to support our large local enterprises in their journeys to grow and become globally competitive players in their res-

spective industries."

Pointing to the EDB's partnership with Hyflux on its recent investments, Dr Beh added: "We look forward to replicating this with other large local enterprises keen on future-proofing their business and growing new businesses."

Besides Hyflux, the EDB also worked with other large local enterprises such as precision engineering group Meiban on its iSmart Factory project last year. Meiban aims to use robotics and technology to digitalise its factory operations.

Hyflux shares closed three cents or 5.7 per cent higher at 56 cents yesterday, after the announcement was made.

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