

Block H #02-04, BCA Braddell Campus
200 Braddell Road, Singapore 579700

65 6732 5518 | www.sgbc.sg | enquiry@sgbc.sg



SGBCCommunity Spotlight

The SGBCCommunity Spotlight series highlights what sustainability means to SGBC Members and how they are helping to build a greener and healthier built environment.



Ng Kah Seng
R&D & Sustainability Director
Saint-Gobain (Singapore) Pte Ltd



How is the company helping to build greener buildings?

Addressing climate change is one of the most urgent challenges of our time—and the construction industry has a critical role to play. As buildings and construction account for nearly 40% of global greenhouse gas emissions, transforming the built environment is essential for a sustainable future. At Saint-Gobain, we are committed to leading this transformation.

Guided by our purpose, “Making the World a Better Home”, and our vision to be the worldwide leader in light and sustainable construction, we design, manufacture, and distribute innovative materials and solutions that reduce environmental impact while improving the quality of life. Our products contribute to energy efficiency, lower carbon footprints, and better indoor air quality—creating greener buildings that are healthier, more comfortable, and more sustainable. Through continuous innovation and a strong focus on circularity, we aim to build better for people and the planet.

What drove the founders to set up the company?

Saint-Gobain was originally founded in 1665 to produce glass for the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles, under the reign of Louis XIV. What started as a specialized project quickly evolved into a broader mission as the demand for high-quality glass and mirrors grew. Over time, the company expanded its expertise and product offerings, moving beyond glass into a wide range of materials and solutions for the construction and industrial sectors. Today, driven by a vision to lead the way in light and sustainable construction, Saint-Gobain operates in 80 countries with over 161,000 employees.

What is the biggest challenge the company has faced? Are there any learning points for the rest of the industry?

One of the biggest challenges we've faced as a company is staying ahead of evolving global trends and market needs while positioning ourselves as a true sustainability-focused organization. Transitioning the construction industry toward greener, more sustainable practices is no small feat—it involves navigating resistance to change, limited awareness, regulatory complexities, higher upfront costs, and technological barriers.

Overcoming these challenges has required continuous innovation, strong collaboration, and a steadfast long-term commitment. A key learning we can share with the wider industry is that achieving meaningful sustainability targets demands a long-term perspective. It's not about short-term gains, but lasting impact. Investing in innovation and building greater awareness across the value chain are critical to driving real change. Most importantly, we've learned that this journey cannot be undertaken alone. That's why we place great emphasis on engaging all stakeholders, such as, internal teams, partners, customers, and policymakers, to work together toward a more sustainable built environment.

What do you think can be done to move the needle on built environment sustainability?

Moving the needle toward sustainability in the built environment requires a holistic and integrated approach—one that brings together policy, innovation, design, materials, and societal behavior change. Stronger and more consistent green building standards and policies are essential to accelerate this shift. However, policy alone is not enough.

We must also drive innovation in materials and construction methods, promote circularity, and encourage sustainable design practices from the very beginning of a project. Equally important is raising awareness and shifting mindsets, both within companies and across society, toward long-term environmental responsibility. Above all, progress depends on collaboration. It requires the collective effort of governments, businesses, communities, and individuals to transform the way we build and live.

How does the future of our built environment look like to you?

The future of our built environment will be smarter, greener, and more resilient—a seamless fusion of technology, sustainability, and human-centric design. Buildings will be constructed using low-carbon, lightweight materials and will be designed to generate more energy than they consume. Adaptability will be key, with infrastructure built to withstand the impacts of climate change, such as flood resistance and heat mitigation features.

We also foresee a shift toward zero-waste construction, driven by the adoption of modular and prefabricated components that reduce material use and environmental impact. Digital technologies and smart systems will enable more efficient building management, improved indoor environmental quality, and optimized energy performance. Ultimately, the built environment of the future will be designed not just for efficiency, but for the well-being of people and the planet—creating healthier, more livable spaces that stand the test of time.

Block H #02-04, BCA Braddell Campus
200 Braddell Road, Singapore 579700

65 6732 5518 | www.sgbc.sg | enquiry@sgbc.sg



What's next for the company?

Looking ahead, our target is clear: to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. This ambitious goal will guide our efforts as we continue to innovate, invest in sustainable solutions, and refine our practices across all areas of the business. Our commitment extends beyond just our operations, we aim to actively train, influence, and educate all our stakeholders, sharing our experiences and insights to drive collective progress.

By working together, we believe we can create a positive and lasting impact on the built environment and contribute meaningfully to a more sustainable future.