



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**Singapore, 14 June 2021**

### **Nanofilm founder Dr Shi Xu appointed chairman of NTU's innovation and enterprise company, NTUitive**

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) today announced that **Dr Shi Xu**, Executive Chairman and founder of Nanofilm Technologies International Ltd, Singapore, will be appointed **Chairman of the Board of NTUitive** with effect from 1 July 2021. He will concurrently serve as **Nanyang Professor of the Practice at NTU**.

Dr Shi succeeds **Mr Inderjit Singh Dhaliwal** as the NTUitive Board Chair, a role Mr Singh has served over the last seven years since the establishment of this wholly owned subsidiary of NTU.

Dr Shi founded Nanofilm Technologies when he was a tenured NTU faculty member, which was spun off from the University in 1999. Last year, Nanofilm became the first local deep technology unicorn to be listed on the Singapore Exchange (SGX).

**NTU Chair of the Board of Trustees, Ms Goh Swee Chen**, said: "I would like to express my appreciation to Mr Inderjit Singh, who has chaired NTUitive since its inception, maturing it to its current standing. We look forward to Dr Shi, as the incoming Chairman, guiding the NTU subsidiary to achieve its goals to bring high impact research to market.

"NTU's faculty and students will be supported to accelerate the translation and commercialisation of their research, bringing together the best capabilities to deliver purposeful impact. Dr Shi will be an excellent role model, having developed his research and successfully commercialising it."

**Professor Subra Suresh, NTU President**, said: "Dr Shi brings three decades of experience, both as an academic and as a successful technopreneur. His achievements in both academia and industry uniquely position him for his appointments as Chair of NTUitive and Nanyang Professor of the Practice."

Prof Suresh thanked Mr Singh for building the foundation for NTUitive as the inaugural Chair of its board and for being a longstanding member of the NTU Board of Trustees. Mr Singh has helped to establish many practices that have laid the foundation for NTU's efforts in innovation, entrepreneurship and technology commercialisation.

Mr Singh, an NTU alumnus from the Class of 1985 and a member of the NTU Board of Trustees from 2006 to 2021, will continue to be an influential member of the OneNTU community as an Adjunct Professor in the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Nanyang Technopreneurship Centre.

Accepting the appointment, **Dr Shi** said: “The right vision, determination, and financial support are vital for any faculty looking to commercialise their research and achieve their objectives. NTUitive will continue to nurture a culture and environment for the sustainable spin-offs of deep-tech companies from the university’s research activities. I see myself as a suitable bridge between the academic and commercial worlds, which are usually far apart.”

In 2017, Dr Shi was named EY Entrepreneur of the Year Singapore as well as EY Entrepreneur of the Year for Diversified Engineering. His proprietary coating technology has garnered prestigious honours like the Singapore National Technology Award and Singapore Innovation Award. In 2008, Nanofilm was awarded two SME Growth Excellence Recognition Awards.

Dr Shi will take the helm of the NTUitive Board at a time the University has announced ambitious new plans for strengthening the portfolios, activities, and impact of NTUitive, as part of the NTU 2025 Strategic Plan.

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***About Nanyang Technological University, Singapore***

A research-intensive public university, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has 33,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Engineering, Business, Science, Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, and Graduate colleges. It also has a medical school, the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine, set up jointly with Imperial College London.

NTU is also home to world-class autonomous institutes – the National Institute of Education, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Earth Observatory of Singapore, and Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering – and various leading research centres such as the Nanyang Environment & Water Research Institute (NEWRI) and Energy Research Institute @ NTU (ERI@N).

Ranked amongst the world’s top universities by QS, NTU has also been named the world’s top young university for the past seven years. The University’s main campus is frequently listed among the Top 15 most beautiful university campuses in the world and it has 57 Green Mark-certified (equivalent to LEED-certified) building projects, of which 95% are certified Green Mark Platinum. Apart from its main campus, NTU also has a campus in Singapore’s healthcare district.

Under the NTU Smart Campus vision, the University harnesses the power of digital technology and tech-enabled solutions to support better learning and living experiences, the discovery of new knowledge, and the sustainability of resources.

For more information, visit [www.ntu.edu.sg](http://www.ntu.edu.sg)

### ***About NTUitive***

NTUitive Pte Ltd is the innovation and enterprise company – and a wholly-owned subsidiary – of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore). NTUitive manages the University's intellectual property, promote innovation, support entrepreneurship, and facilitate the commercialisation of research. Visit <https://ntuitive.sg> to find out more.

## **ANNEX**

### ***More on Dr Shi Xu***

**Dr Shi Xu**, the Executive Chairman of the Singapore unicorn **Nanofilm Technologies**, went from academic to tech tycoon when the company went public in 2020 with a market value of over S\$1.9 billion.

Nanofilm, an NTU tech start-up, manufactures nanotechnology solutions for industries such as consumer electronics, smartphones, and automobiles. It has a current market capitalisation of S\$3.2 billion and more than 300 industry customers, including global leaders such as Fuji Xerox, Microsoft, and Huawei Technologies.

Dr Shi received his PhD in Thin Film Technology from the University of Reading, United Kingdom, in 1991 and joined NTU in that same year as a faculty member of the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

While he was an associate professor at NTU, Dr Shi was approached by Japanese electronics firm Hitachi in 1999 to adopt his coating technology for use on their hard disk drives. Seeing an opportunity to market and commercialise his research, Dr Shi founded Nanofilm Technologies with a start-up capital of US\$300,000 and ventured full time into the business world.

Nanofilm Technologies is based on his award-winning patented filtered cathodic vacuum arc (FCVA) technology. Using this technology, the surface of objects can be coated with an extremely thin, yet strong, sliver of scratch-resistant carbon film. It continues to see widespread use in vacuum coating manufacturing, as it can coat a wide variety of materials, from plastics to metals, at room temperature.

Under Dr Shi's leadership, Nanofilm has grown to more than 1,500 employees and over 50 international patents and applications.

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