



JOINT NEWS RELEASE

Singapore, 4 October 2021

DBS partners NTU to help Singapore's SMEs seize regional growth opportunities

DBS and **Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore)** are collaborating on initiatives to help Singapore's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) scale their businesses overseas in the new normal and seize emerging opportunities in the APAC region.

Under an agreement, NTU and DBS will offer the national **Enterprise Leadership for Transformation (ELT) programme**, in partnership with Enterprise Singapore. The programme aims to support business leaders of promising SMEs to develop business growth capabilities and entrepreneurship skills relevant for expanding their businesses overseas.

The collaboration aims to leverage the respective strengths and areas of expertise of both partners **to deliver relevant insights and thought leadership pieces** tailored to SMEs on internationalisation and innovation.

DBS and NTU also aim **to organise overseas immersion programmes** when the situation allows to plug SMEs into the broader regional business ecosystems, with a focus on four business corridors, but not limited to, Singapore-Hong Kong; Singapore-China; Singapore-India; and China-Hong Kong.

SMEs will also benefit from the **expertise in internationalisation and innovation** offered by DBS and NTU.

Joyce Tee, Group Head of SME Banking at DBS, said: "SMEs in Singapore are becoming increasingly hungry to seize new growth opportunities brought about by digital innovation and regional connectivity. With this partnership, both DBS and NTU will leverage each other's strengths to create a supportive ecosystem that enables SMEs to capitalise on the twin trends of internationalisation and innovation and propel them to the next stage of growth. We know that our SMEs have what it takes to do well internationally, so our aim is to avail different avenues to support SMEs'

aspirations to spread their wings overseas. SMEs are critical to Singapore's economic vitality, and we firmly believe that when SMEs do well, Singapore will do well."

Professor Lam Kwok Yan, Director of Nanyang Technopreneurship Center at NTU, said: "The partnership between NTU, Enterprise Singapore and DBS will help empower Singapore's promising SME business leaders to transform their companies with innovative and actionable business growth plans. Apart from building capabilities, this one-year programme also offers valuable opportunities for enterprise leaders to tap into our strong local and global entrepreneurship and innovation networks to achieve greater success in their businesses. We look forward to seeing more enterprises in Singapore grow and transform with entrepreneurial mindset and digital innovations, especially in this post pandemic era, to seize opportunities of the future economy."

Equipping SME leaders with new capabilities around internationalisation and innovation

The inaugural cycle of the **Enterprise Leadership for Transformation (ELT) programme by NTU and DBS** will be offered in October 2021. Specially tailored to support local enterprises looking to internationalise, the programme will adopt an entrepreneur-centric experiential approach, with participants guided towards developing an actionable business transformation plan by the end of the programme.

Modules will be taught by faculty and instructors from NTU, with senior leaders from DBS supplementing the learning experience with industry perspectives and innovation insights through workshops, fireside chats, mentorship, and networking.

About 30 Singapore SME leaders from a wide spectrum of industries are expected to participate in the 2021 cycle.

Mr Jeremy Mun, Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer at Aztech Global, is part of the pioneer batch of participants. Aztech Global is a homegrown company with over three decades of experience in developing and manufacturing electronics products around data communication and LED lighting before its expansion into the Internet of Things (IoT).

Elaborating on the opportunities presented by the ELT programme, **Mr Mun** said: "With the global economy staging a gradual recovery from the disruption of Covid-19, Aztech Global is keen to seize emerging growth opportunities. The ELT that DBS and NTU are offering is timely as it provides useful frameworks to help chart our next stage of growth. I am eager to share and learn from my industry peers as we discuss our respective business transformation and innovation journeys. I appreciate how DBS

has gone beyond its role as our banker to offer programmes that would help prepare businesses such as ours for the future economy.”

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About DBS

DBS is a leading financial services group in Asia with a presence in 18 markets. Headquartered and listed in Singapore, DBS is in the three key Asian axes of growth: Greater China, Southeast Asia and South Asia. The bank's "AA-" and "Aa1" credit ratings are among the highest in the world.

Recognised for its global leadership, DBS has been named "[World's Best Bank](#)" by Euromoney, "[Global Bank of the Year](#)" by The Banker and "[Best Bank in the World](#)" by Global Finance. The bank is at the forefront of leveraging digital technology to shape the future of banking, having been named "[World's Best Digital Bank](#)" by Euromoney and the world's "[Most Innovative in Digital Banking](#)" by The Banker. In addition, DBS has been accorded the "[Safest Bank in Asia](#)" award by Global Finance for 13 consecutive years from 2009 to 2021.

DBS provides a full range of services in consumer, SME and corporate banking. As a bank born and bred in Asia, DBS understands the intricacies of doing business in the region's most dynamic markets. DBS is committed to building lasting relationships with customers, and positively impacting communities through supporting social enterprises, as it banks the Asian way. It has also established a SGD 50 million

foundation to strengthen its corporate social responsibility efforts in Singapore and across Asia.

With its extensive network of operations in Asia and emphasis on engaging and empowering its staff, DBS presents exciting career opportunities. For more information, please visit www.dbs.com.

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, established jointly with Imperial College London.

NTU is also home to world-renowned 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 last 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