



NEWS RELEASE

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Former Dutch minister and renowned gastroenterologist joins NTU Singapore as Vice President of Research

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has appointed **Professor Ernst Kuipers**, a renowned gastroenterologist, healthcare executive, and former Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport for The Netherlands, as NTU Singapore's new **Vice President (Research)**.

Prof Kuipers will also be appointed to the tenured faculty rank of **Distinguished University Professor**, the highest faculty rank at NTU bestowed upon faculty members with extraordinary scholarly achievements that typically span multiple disciplinary boundaries.

Announcing this new appointment, **NTU President Prof Ho Teck Hua** said: "We warmly welcome Prof Ernst Kuipers as our incoming Vice President (Research). As a clinician-scientist, healthcare executive, and former minister, Prof Kuipers' varied experiences will bring new perspectives to our research ecosystem. I look forward to working with Prof Kuipers to drive NTU's aspirations to discover new knowledge and produce research solutions that will solve a societal need and make the world a better place."

Prof Kuipers will formally begin his tenure at NTU on 1 May 2024. He succeeds Prof Luke Ong, who will relinquish his appointment to take on the newly created role of NTU Vice President (AI & Digital Economy) and has concurrently been appointed the Founding Dean of NTU's new College of Computing and Data Science to drive NTU's ambitions in AI.

On his impending move to Singapore, **Prof Kuipers** said: "I started my career in 1995 as a postdoctoral researcher before moving on to other positions, so taking up the role of leading NTU's research ecosystem feels like I am coming a full circle. I have long admired NTU's vision that has led to its rapid ascent to become one of the world's top universities, and look forward to take NTU's research efforts through its next stage of development."

Former minister, clinician-scientist, and healthcare executive

As a former minister, clinician-scientist, and CEO of a hospital, Prof Kuipers has extensive expertise and experience in pooling resources, building dynamic teams, and driving organisational change.

As the Netherlands' Health Minister from 2022 to 2024, Prof Kuipers led the country's plan to improve pandemic and disaster preparedness. He also worked on a nationwide healthcare system reform to keep healthcare sustainable and affordable.

Prior to entering politics, Prof Kuipers was CEO of Erasmus University Medical Centre (Erasmus MC), the largest hospital in the Netherlands. Erasmus MC combines a hospital network, research facilities and schools of medicine, nursing, nanobiology, and clinical technology. As Professor of Medicine at Erasmus MC, Prof Kuipers was a pioneer in starting the Division of Gastroenterology & Hepatology with a focus on tertiary care, research, and teaching. He later led other departments at the hospital before becoming its CEO. As CEO, he steered large reforms, including a digital transformation, and oversaw the building of a new university medical centre.

From 2015 to 2022, he also served as chairman of the National Acute Care Network, where he played a prominent role in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the Netherlands.

He continues to be active on the boards of many public and private organisations in the Netherlands and abroad. He was a Member of the Governing Board of the National University Health System in Singapore from 2021 to 2022.

Said Prof Kuipers: "Over the years, I have had the opportunity to work with some colleagues in NTU and in Singapore in my previous capacities, be it through co-authoring research papers or being part of fireside chats and dialogues on healthcare and medicine. I am excited to reconnect with these colleagues, and hope that I can contribute to NTU and Singapore in a bigger way through my new appointment."

Prof Kuipers studied medicine at the University of Groningen and obtained his PhD from VU University Medical Centre, Amsterdam. He is renowned for his work on stomach cancer, and his research has led to over 850 peer-reviewed papers, which have been cited over 95,000 times.

He has received substantial research grants, which include funding from the Dutch Ministry of Health and the European Union. He is a Fellow of the American Gastroenterology Association and Honorary Fellow of the Hong Kong Society of Gastroenterology.

Throughout his career, Prof Kuipers has been recognised for his research, teaching, and leadership. Accolades he has received include the United European Gastroenterology Research Prize, Innovation Award from the German Felix Burda Society, and Dutch Healthcare Executive of the Year Award.

Prof Ho said: “Prof Kuipers distinguished career has earned him respect and accolades as an outstanding scientist and visionary leader. I have every confidence that he will continue to advance NTU’s mission to tackle some of the world’s most pressing challenges by spurring foundational and transformative research.”

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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, Medicine, Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, and Graduate colleges.

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

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.

Ranked amongst the world’s top universities, the University’s main campus is also frequently listed among the world’s most beautiful. Known for its sustainability, NTU has achieved 100% Green Mark Platinum certification for all its eligible building projects. Apart from its main campus, NTU also has a medical campus in Novena, Singapore’s healthcare district.

For more information, visit www.ntu.edu.sg