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NTU Singapore launches new College of Computing and Data Science to propel AI ambitions

- *Eminent computer scientist appointed to newly created role of NTU Vice President (AI & Digital Economy)*

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) is launching a new college to deepen the University's investment and efforts in artificial intelligence (AI), computing, and data science.

The new **College of Computing and Data Science** will serve as a platform to deliver industry-relevant degree programmes that will train students to not just be comfortable but also fluent in AI. It will also accelerate interdisciplinary collaboration between computing and other disciplines in NTU Singapore.

Leading these efforts at the new College is Vice President (Research) and **Distinguished University Professor Luke Ong**. From 1 May, the eminent computer scientist will step down from his current role as Vice-President (Research) to take on the newly created position of NTU's **Vice President (AI & Digital Economy)**. Under this new portfolio, Prof Ong will be tasked with charting the path forward for the University as the world continues to be reshaped by computing. NTU will announce the new Vice President (Research) in due course.

NTU President Professor Ho Teck Hua said: "As artificial intelligence becomes a general-purpose technology that reshapes our world, universities like NTU have a responsibility to educate students to be conversant with AI so they thrive, and to help make sure technologies evolve the right way to make the world better. The new College of Computing and Data Science is our response to this new era of computing. Our goal for the new College is to nurture an NTU community that stays ahead of the curve in the AI age. By doing so, we can better support Singapore's ambition to be a major trusted AI hub."

Prof Ho, who is also the Founding Executive Chairman of AI Singapore, added: "Complementary to the establishment of the new College is the appointment of our first ever Vice President (AI & Digital Economy) to look into how we can integrate AI into NTU's daily functions to make us stronger, smarter, and more efficient as a whole.

As a computer scientist, Prof Luke Ong is well-versed in the language of AI and well-suited to guide NTU's AI strategy in his twin roles."

These key developments are part of the University's big push for AI for its next wave of growth. Earlier this month, NTU launched a series of new academic offerings to nurture socially conscious AI talent and develop human-centric AI solutions.

A new College to coordinate AI research and education efforts

NTU's new College of Computing and Data Science will combine the strengths of the University's **School of Computer Science and Engineering (SCSE)** with other related disciplines at NTU to form the University's sixth academic college.

A computer scientist by training, Prof Ong, who is also the Chief Scientist for AI Singapore, will lead the College's efforts by holding a concurrent appointment as its **Founding Dean.**

The College will be housed in SCSE's physical facilities, with the existing computing infrastructure refreshed to improve the overall educational experience for students.

All nine undergraduate programmes and five graduate programmes under SCSE will now be offered under the new College's three academic divisions in AI, Data Science, and Computing. The new College is expected to be home to more than 4,800 students in the new academic year that begins in August 2024.

In line with the University's commitment to lifelong learning, the College will ramp up its continuing education and training (CET) efforts in AI and computing by 30 per cent every year. It will do this by introducing new industry-relevant CET courses in AI, data science, and computing, including:
- Master of Science in AI, with a new specialisation in Generative AI
- CET Professional Certificate in Ethical Data Science
- CET Professional Certificate in Generative AI

The College will foster collaboration between computing and other disciplines through the establishment of the following research platforms:
- Generative AI Lab, which is concerned with both the theory and practice of generative AI;
- Centre for Cybersecurity and Digital Trust, which will build on government-funded research programmes to promote both basic and translational research in cybersecurity and digital trust;
- Institute of Computing & Society; which will study the impact of AI and computing on human civilisation and how AI can help to address the grand challenges facing humanity; and

- Centre for DSAI-4-X [1] , which will catalyse interdisciplinary research and education relating to data science and AI, and develop new interdisciplinary areas of scientific inquiry using AI.

New senior leadership role to steer NTU's growth in AI age

Prof Ong will be appointed to the newly created role of **Vice President (AI & Digital Economy)** from 1 May. In this new role, he will design and implement the University's AI strategy to support the University's functions in a safe and responsible manner. This includes driving AI initiatives that provide personalised learning experiences for students, support faculty in leveraging AI to advance their work, and help make data-driven decisions in areas such as resource allocation.

Prof Ong's twin roles draw on his considerable expertise and international experience in the areas of mathematics, informatics, and computer science. Prior to joining NTU, Prof Ong was a Professor of Computer Science at the University of Oxford. In 2017, he was recognised as a co-winner of the Alonzo Church Award for his outstanding contributions to the fields of logic and computation.

Prof Ong said: "AI technologies may pose several risks and challenges, but also opportunities when properly utilised, such as taking away the drudge work so that we can focus our time and effort where it is most valuable. Over the next few months, I will be consulting with both students and faculty to learn what their aspirations and concerns are when it comes to integrating AI into their work."

Prof Ong completed his undergraduate degree in mathematics from the University of Cambridge and completed his postgraduate diploma and doctorate degree in Computer Science from Cambridge and Imperial College London, respectively.

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About Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

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[1] 'X' refers to any discipline in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) or social sciences, humanities and the arts for people and the economy (SHAPE).

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