



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **NTU Singapore wins global award for demonstrating resilience in its COVID-19 efforts**

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has won international commendation for its efforts that demonstrate resilience amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

The University received the **COVID-19 Agility and Response** runner-up award at the recent **Duty of Care Awards** organised by **International SOS Foundation**. NTU is the only Institute of Higher Learning in Singapore chosen for the Duty of Care Awards.

The COVID-19 Agility and Response award was a new special category at this year's Duty of Care Awards to formally recognise the most inspiring initiatives and contributions taken by an organisation in the face of the global pandemic.

The Awards were presented on 24 September 2021 in London at the Duty of Care Summit, which gathered global leaders and key decision makers to discuss trends, challenges and best practices for protecting the health, safety, security and wellbeing of their employees in a COVID-19 world.

**Professor Subra Suresh, NTU President**, said "This award is a great credit to all the hard work by everyone at NTU who contributed to the University's safe and effective operations during the past 20 months, in education, research, student affairs, campus management, infrastructure maintenance, and IT services.

"One key factor in our success in the crisis preparedness efforts was our strategic investment in digital transformation the year before the onset of the pandemic. We had carefully introduced a major digital transformation of our administrative systems and processes by adopting cloud-based enterprise technology to improve efficiency and to optimise our IT and financial resources, as part of our NTU Smart Campus vision. These investments and efforts enabled NTU to pivot

relatively quickly and seamlessly to virtual and hybrid modes of work early on in the pandemic. .

“I would also like to commend the tenacity of our students, especially the graduating Classes of 2020 and 2021. These two cohorts have persevered and sacrificed in so many important ways that will never be forgotten. As a tribute to both classes, we successfully organised more than 80 in-person graduation ceremonies for them this year, involving more than 25,000 graduates and guests in total. Much credit also goes to the organising team members for their impressive performance in ensuring the smoothly-run ceremonies and adherence to the safe management measures.”

**John Denton, Secretary General of International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and Head of Judges**, said, “NTU demonstrated very important work as one of those institutions that have been impacted to the core by the pandemic. Taking care of the wellbeing of students, staff and faculty is no easy task, and it's nice to see that the university went above and beyond to also organise a programme for students in financial need (NTU COVID-19 Relief Package and the NTU Priorities Fund) and smart solutions to convert unused leave days into donations.”

**Arnaud Vaissié, Co-founder, Chairman and CEO of International SOS**, commented, “We are at a critical point in the evolution of Duty of Care. This has seen rapid acceleration in the past year. Since the International SOS Foundation last hosted this event, in 2019, we have all lived through extraordinary times. No one had foreseen the impact that COVID-19 has had on the global community, the economy and business operations. It has shaken many organisations to the core, and we will continue to see rapid and varying change.”

“We will continue to celebrate organisations and individuals who have shown great commitment to Duty of Care. I am always impressed at the calibre of all the entries. This years' have even exceeded my expectations.”

**Ms Tan Aik Na, NTU Senior Vice President (Administration)**, who chairs the task force that leads the University's efforts in tackling the unprecedented challenges brought about by the pandemic, said, “NTU's nomination was judged against many world-leading organisations, many of whom have access to deeper expertise and larger resources to respond to the pandemic. This international accolade is testament to how the OneNTU community came together in response to an extraordinary and protracted global health crisis. The battle is not yet over, but we are determined to walk this journey together as we transition safely towards an endemic COVID-19 world.”

## **Forging a resilient OneNTU community**

NTU's response in the early days of the pandemic involved a highly co-ordinated approach to ensure that precautionary safety measures were consistently implemented in a timely manner, to facilitate the University's many complex and large operations. These include a shift within one week from more than 1,000 in-person lessons weekly to online learning for 30,000 students in the first quarter of 2020, and the safe recall within two weeks of more than 2,000 students who were on overseas internship and exchange programmes.

The University also had to ensure the safe decanting of 8,000 local students from the campus halls of residence during the height of the pandemic before Singapore's circuit breaker took effect in April 2020. For those who remained in the residential halls, University employees worked to ensure that community support for their well-being and amenities remained accessible during the circuit breaker period from April to June 2020.

The **2021 Duty of Care Awards** received entries from organisations across 29 countries and 24 industries, showcasing their exceptional achievements and Duty of Care commitments in protecting their global workforce.

Under the award's COVID-19 Agility and Response category, NTU is placed ahead of several global organisations that received honourable mention including Greiner Packaging, Worley, and Oakwood Worldwide, with NYSE-listed Fortune Brands named the winner.

Winners were selected by a panel of sector-leading expert judges from a host of internationally recognised organisations, including the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and International Code of Conduct Association (ICoCA).

For more information on the Awards, visit: [www.dutyofcareawards.org](http://www.dutyofcareawards.org).

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## **About Nanyang Technological University**

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 11th in the world, NTU has been placed the world's top young university for the past six 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.

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