

NTU Singapore and Temasek Foundation launch STEP Youth Regional Affairs Dialogue to develop and connect Asia's emerging leaders

More than 70 outstanding young leaders from 18 Asian countries and regions are gathering in Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore), for the inaugural **STEP Youth Regional Affairs Dialogue** that aims to build their leadership skills and geopolitical and cultural understanding.

Organised by NTU's University Scholars Programme and supported by Temasek Foundation, the eight-day event from 2 to 9 August also aims to foster among participants an appreciation of the complex and interconnected social, economic and political factors that are shaping Asia today and into the future.

Mr Chee Hong Tat, Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Education, is delivering the keynote address at the Dialogue's second day today, on the topic, "Regional Efforts for an Inter-Connected World".

The undergraduate participants, who come from the 10 ASEAN countries, as well as Asian countries and regions, including Bhutan, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, South Korea, Sri Lanka, and Taiwan, were selected to be part of the Dialogue from over 200 applicants.

Professor Ling San, NTU Provost and Vice-President (Academic), said, "NTU is launching the inaugural STEP Youth Regional Affairs Dialogue with the aim of building a network of connections among future Asian leaders, as well as to foster an appreciation of the complex, interwoven social, economic and political developments that define Asia today, and that are shaping the Asia of tomorrow. Through this Dialogue, we hope to create mutual understanding and strengthen the bonds of friendship, particularly among Asia's potential future leaders who will reach the peak of their profession and societal influence in 20 to 30 years' time."

Mr Benedict Cheong, Chief Executive of Temasek Foundation International, said, "Through our STEP series of programmes, Temasek Foundation brings together youth leaders from across Asia to bond together and learn from each other. The programmes cover areas such as leadership, science and technology, as well as sports and culture. Through the STEP Youth Regional Affairs Dialogue, we hope that participants will gain a deeper appreciation of the interconnectedness of Asian communities in areas such as the economy and regional affairs. The participants will also have a wonderful opportunity to build lasting friendships across borders."

As part of the programme, participants will get to meet their peers from the region, and engage with internationally renowned professors and experts on the key themes of Society and Culture, Economies and Economics, and Politics and Policies. They include Professor Joseph Liow, Dean of NTU's College of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences; Mr Eduardo Pedrosa, Secretary-

General of Pacific Economic Cooperation Council; and Mr Paul Tan, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of National Arts Council.

The participants will also get to learn more about Singapore's challenges and opportunities confronting smart cities, mass transport, and cultural heritage through educational visits at the Housing & Development Board, Jewel Changi Airport and National Heritage Board.

Temasek Foundation is supporting this programme through its STEP Endowment. The STEP Endowment focuses on leadership, entrepreneurship, innovation, science, technology, environmental sustainability, and social and cultural activities, to enable young people in Asia to build bridges of friendship, goodwill and understanding.

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Media contact:

Feisal Abdul Rahman
Senior Assistant Director
Corporate Communications Office
Nanyang Technological University
Email: feisalar(at)ntu.edu.sg

Tan Junming
Manager
Communications
Temasek Foundation
Email: junming(at)temasekfoundation.org.sg