



PRESS RELEASE

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LAUNCH OF EUROPEAN UNION CENTRE IN SINGAPORE

New centre works closely with NUS and NTU to promote interest in European Union Studies, and expand academic linkages between NUS, NTU and universities in the EU

A tripartite partnership between the European Commission, National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) has culminated in the establishment of the European Union (EU) Centre in Singapore, to advance education and research in EU studies, and serve as a key focal point for outreach on EU issues. The EU Centre in Singapore aims to promote better understanding of EU institutions, policies and a greater appreciation of EU's role in Southeast Asia and its engagement with Singapore. The new Centre joins a network of EU Centres in the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and South Korea.

To mark the launch of the EU Centre in Singapore, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed today by Mrs Viviane Reding, EU Commissioner for Information, Society & Media; Professor Tan Eng Chye, NUS Deputy President and Provost; and Professor Bertil Andersson, NTU Provost. The signing ceremony was attended by representatives from EU member states and other European organisations based in Singapore, academia and media.

The EU Centre in Singapore marks a new collaborative effort by NUS and NTU. As two leading universities, both in the region and the world, with extensive networks both across Europe and throughout Asia, the universities are well-placed to establish the EU Centre in Singapore. The EU Centre in Singapore will be managed by NUS and hosted by NTU at its one-north campus. The new Director of the Centre is Ms Kwek Puay Swan, who has been with the NUS International Relations Office since 2000, handling European partnerships. Mr Tony Mayer, NTU's Senior Science Officer and Associate Registrar, will chair the Centre's Steering Committee.

The EU Centre, which will receive funding of up to €1.2 million over three years from the European Commission, will strive to raise awareness of the longstanding and important partnership between the EU and Singapore, and the EU and ASEAN. The Centre will implement education, research as well as national and regional outreach programmes with EU and EU-Singapore or EU-Southeast Asia themes. The Centre will also participate in cooperative activities in the network of EU centres worldwide.

Some specific initiatives of the Centre include developing a series of outreach and public education programmes targeted at the general public, teachers, students, and the business community; promoting interest in European Union Studies at all levels working in particular with NUS and NTU; carrying out multi-disciplinary research and developing a wider and deeper knowledge of the EU, its institutions and its policies, primarily in the Southeast Asian context; building and growing a network of people interested in EU policies and issues, creating opportunities for them to meet and bringing them together leading to more discussion, reflection and policy learning; and facilitating exchange and expanding academic linkages between NUS and NTU, and universities in the EU.

The EU is an important partner of Singapore – the republic is the EU's number one trading partner in ASEAN, and is a hub for over 2,200 European businesses in the Asia-Pacific region. The EU is ASEAN's second largest overall trading partner and the biggest source of direct investments. Talks are also underway to establish an EU-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement.

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