

MOE to offer scholarship for budding academics

Open to S'poreans, it aims to nurture strong talent core at local universities

By **FENG ZENGKUN**

YOUNG Singaporeans who want to pursue an academic career in the universities here can now apply for a new scholarship for their undergraduate studies.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) intends to offer 10 to 15 scholarships each year from now until 2030, to build up a strong core of academic and research talent at Singapore's universities.

The MOE-Autonomous University Scholarship will be given to students with a high level of proficiency, motivation and interest in a field. If they do well, they will also be sponsored for postgraduate scholarships and take up academic positions at the universities.

The scholars will be paired with the National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU) or Singapore Management University (SMU). An established academic will be assigned as a mentor.

Through a comprehensive programme, the scholar will be prepared for an academic career.

The undergraduate scholarship has a bond of four or six years, depending on whether the scholar studies in Singapore or overseas.

Announcing the scholarship yesterday at the inaugural Raffles Dialogue at Raffles Hotel, Education Minister Heng Swee Keat said the world is going through several "knowledge revolutions".

"We must continue to build up our nation's brain trust by invest-

ing in a Singaporean core that has the passion and ability to push the frontiers of knowledge, and to teach, for the greater good," he said.

MOE will also fund half of the postgraduate talent development schemes offered by the universities to Singaporeans, such as NUS' Overseas Graduate Scholarship and Overseas Postdoctoral Fellowship, NTU's Senior Tutorship Scheme and SMU's Faculty Development Scheme.

"This will grow the number of scholarships that the universities can support, so that these opportunities can be offered to many more talented young people with an interest in research and teaching," he said.

MOE and the universities are expected to offer more than 1,500 undergraduate and postgraduate scholarships in the next 15 years.

NUS president Tan Chorh Chuan said: "The new scholarship will provide a big boost to NUS' long-standing programmes to nurture young Singaporean faculty."

Organised by NUS and the National University Health System, the two-day Raffles Dialogue ending today gathers global and Asian thought leaders for lectures and talks. Participants at this year's dialogue, titled *The Future of Human Well-Being and Security*, included former World Trade Organisation director-general Pascal Lamy and Singapore Ambassador-at-large Tommy Koh.

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