

NUS kicks off 110th anniversary celebrations with launch of new community initiative

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The National University of Singapore (NUS) launched a new community initiative on Sunday morning, called NUS Cares (Community Advancement with Research and Education Synergies), in conjunction with its 110th anniversary celebrations. -- ST PHOTO: SEAH KWANG PENG

BY PRISCILLA GOY

SINGAPORE – The National University of Singapore (NUS) launched a new community initiative on Sunday morning, in conjunction with its 110th anniversary celebrations. Its faculty, researchers and students will work with partners to identify complex community problems, and leverage on the university’s research and academic expertise to find creative and practical solutions.

The initiative, called NUS Cares (Community Advancement with Research and Education Synergies), is meant to be a “solutioning platform”, said NUS president Tan Chorh Chuan. “We will... pilot practical solutions, and if successful, disseminate the key learning points that would allow scaling up of effective practices.”

For instance, NUS is partnering the Central Singapore Community Development Council (CDC) to look into addressing problems faced by elderly and needy residents who need to use wheelchairs. Many of the residents do not have the strength to navigate their manual wheelchairs, and motorised wheelchairs are costly. Engineering students from NUS will try to design a wheelchair that is affordable, robust and easy to use and maintain. They will test their solutions in Kampong Glam, and successful ones will be extended to the rest of the Central Singapore district.

NUS is working with three partners for a start. The other two partners are the National University Health System and the NUS Medical Society.

A special community event was held at Taman Jurong Community Club, where the NUS Cares initiative was launched. It included an exhibition featuring community projects led by NUS students, and other activities such as health talks and games. More than 1,000 people attended. Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam, who is also advisor to Jurong GRC grassroots organisations, was guest of honour.

Prof Tan said: “NUS110 is a very timely opportunity for us to reflect, share and celebrate service to the community. We felt that it would be most meaningful to do this in the community, rather than on the NUS campus.”