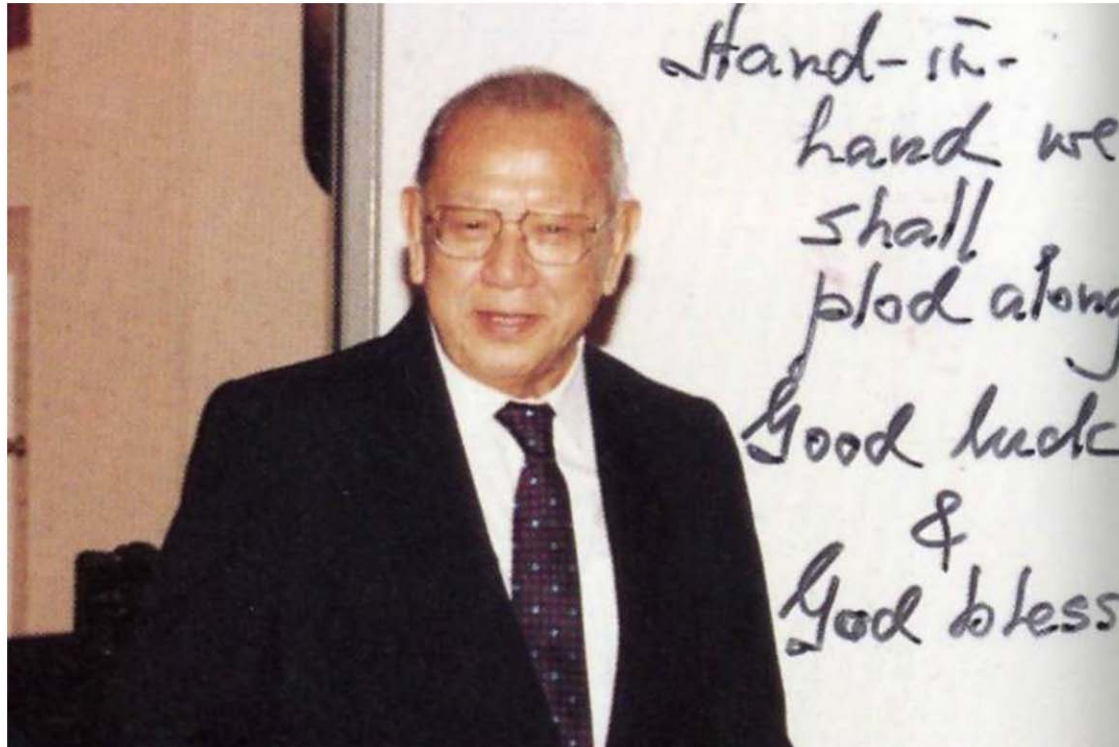


New award to boost social entrepreneurship initiatives in Asean region



The Asean Social Impact Award is inspired by the charitable initiatives of the late Dr Ee Peng Liang. PHOTO: THE EE FAMILY

🕒 PUBLISHED MAY 8, 2017, 2:12 PM SGT | UPDATED MAY 8, 2017, 5:01 PM



Winnie Tan ✉

SINGAPORE - A new social entrepreneurship award was launched on Monday (May 8) to recognise individuals from social organisations and philanthropists who have made a positive difference for the disadvantaged - not just in Singapore, but in the Asean region.

The Asean Social Impact Award, launched by the National University of Singapore's (NUS) department of social work, is inspired by the charitable initiatives of the late Dr Ee Peng Liang - also known as the "father of charity". Dr Ee was a businessman who founded various charity organisations, such as Community Chest and Singapore Council for Social Service.

"Having an actual practitioner is the best example to express the message we want to give," said Mr Stanley Tan, chairman of the award. "By highlighting an individual who has walked the journey, it will be far more inspirational and a bigger encouragement to those who are currently doing (social work)."

The award is open to candidates of all ages and nationalities who work with marginalised groups in Asean and have made an impact in this area for at least three years.

Some 120 applications are expected the first year of the award, which is organised by the Asia Philanthropy Circle (APC), Ashoka Innovators for the Public and NUS' department of social work, and supported by the Ee Peng Liang Memorial Fund.

Five finalists will be shortlisted based on the scale of social impact achieved, entrepreneurial quality, innovation quality and sustainability. The judging panel will include philanthropists and other individuals from across Asean.

The top three will receive up to \$50,000 each to help bolster their social entrepreneurial work.

"There are many philanthropists with great passion and commitment but lack resources and understanding. We want to empower them, connect them to mentors and resources, and enable them to come collectively to help (marginalised) groups," said Mr Tan, who is also the chairman of APC.

Yet another challenge facing the social service sector is that of resource constraints, in terms of funding and support. That is why effective and cost efficient ways to carry out social work have to be explored, said Dr S. Vasoo, associate professorial fellow of the NUS department of social work, which launched the award.

"It is critical for us to explore more appropriate and realistic approaches to deliver helpful and useful services for communities to benefit," added Dr Vasoo, who is also the chairman of the Ee Peng Liang Memorial Fund.