



Fourth-year engineering undergraduate Jodie Loi is one of the first students to apply for the NUS Global Mentorship Programme. She said that she has always wanted to explore a career with a global element and is curious to find out more about the working world. ST PHOTO: JOSEPH CHUA

Learning from mentors with global work experience

NUS' Global Mentorship Programme, which starts in August, is open to all its undergrads

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Students from the National University of Singapore (NUS) are to get the rare opportunity of learning from top executives who have experience working around the world.

Launched last week by the university at its career fair and managed by the NUS Centre for Future-ready Graduates, the NUS Global Mentorship Programme is open to all NUS undergraduates across its faculties.

Applications are open for the programme's 50 places until March 31. Students will be accepted based on whether there is a good fit between their interests and the mentors' expertise.

It will begin in the next academic year in August and has been launched in addition to the overseas exchange programmes, overseas colleges and internships that the NUS already offers.

More than 30 working professionals have been selected as mentors, bringing expertise and experience

from different sectors including technology, finance, engineering, education and the non-profit sector. They are either based overseas, have experience working abroad or hold a regional role.

Students can approach their mentors throughout the semester for advice on career development or industry insights.

Fourth-year engineering undergraduate Jodie Loi, one of the first students to apply for the scheme, said she has always wanted to explore a career with a global element.

The 21-year-old is even delaying her graduation by a year to go for an internship with the tech arm of an insurance company in Shanghai

STUDENTS NEED TO THINK GLOBAL

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NUS PRESIDENT TAN ENG CHYE, on the rationale behind the programme.

later this year.

This is on top of a six-month internship she had already completed as a research assistant in a glass and chemicals company in Japan last year and an exchange programme in South Korea during her holidays.

"Staying overseas makes me see the world in a smaller way. Despite the differences in culture, there are a lot of similarities," said Ms Loi, who also spent four years in high school in Australia before returning to Singapore.

Yet the younger of two daughters, whose father is a retired salesman and mother a civil servant, is still curious to find out more about the working world.

She said: "In terms of career direction, I'm not very clear. I think hearing from someone more experienced would be helpful and I hope the mentorship can last longer."

"I want to know how they got to where they are, which part of the industry would fit my interests and how I can grow."

NUS alumnus Lim Cheng Teck, one of the mentors, wants to share his experiences to help undergraduates in their career path, especially when it comes to developing leadership skills.

The 58-year-old, who was with Standard Chartered Bank for more than 28 years, has held senior positions such as regional chief executive of Asean and chief executive of Singapore.

"I hope that students would be able to benefit from practical career experience... and gain a head start in their careers," said Mr Lim, who is currently chairman of a Singapore-based fintech start-up.

Mentor Michele Lai Chin, 30, from Qvest Media, which provides consulting and development, and systems support, said: "Business today is international and cross-cultural communication is a key differentiator."

NUS president Tan Eng Chye said: "Companies increasing their global footprint value employees who can understand cultural sensitivities, build relationships across different markets and work effectively in a diverse international team."

"Many are also looking to expand into South-east Asia, a culturally diverse region that collectively makes up the world's fifth-largest economy. It is therefore vital for our students to think global, be nimble and seize the opportunities before them."

"The new NUS Global Mentorship Programme will give our students a stronger, global edge in their careers."

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