ANNEX 2 – CITATIONS FOR UNVERSITY AWARDS 2015 RECIPIENTS

Citation for Ambassador Gopinath Pillai, Outstanding Service Award

Ambassador Gopinath Pillai is an accomplished businessman, a distinguished diplomat and an active alumnus of NUS.

Ambassador Pillai has had an interesting, varied and illustrious career, having been a journalist, teacher, an economist, entrepreneur and corporate leader, and a diplomat. In the 1980s and 1990s, Ambassador Pillai helmed various government enterprises. Most notably, he served as Chairman of the NTUC Fair Price Cooperative.

Following his successful stint in running government enterprises, Ambassador Pillai then decided to start his own business. With much foresight and acumen, he turned his attention to India, an emerging and populous country. The major companies that he founded, such as KSP Investments Private Limited, Gateway Distriparks Limited (India) and its subsidiaries, Snowman Logistics Limited and Gateway Rail Freight Limited - have flourished and are hailed as success stories in India.

Beyond the corporate world, Ambassador Pillai has served the nation in public service. He took on challenging diplomatic roles with flair and distinction. Ambassador Pillai was Singapore's longest serving Non-Resident Ambassador to Iran and later served as Singapore's High Commissioner to Pakistan. He is currently Ambassador-at-Large, and has just been appointed as Singapore's special envoy to the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. For his manifold contributions to public service, Ambassador Pillai has been awarded the Public Service Star Award (BBM) in 1999 and the Public Service Star Bar at the 2009 National Day Awards.

In spite of his demanding schedule, Ambassador Pillai continues to give generously of his time to NUS. His role as the founding Governing Board Chairman of the Institute of South Asian Studies is especially noteworthy. A hands-on Chairman, he has steered the relatively young Institute to become one of the most influential think-tanks on South Asia. He took personal leadership to drive initiatives such as the South Asian Diaspora Convention and the Singapore Symposium in India - two high-profiled events which featured senior political and business personalities from Singapore and South Asia. For his instrumental efforts in bridging and advancing Singapore-India relations, the Indian government conferred Ambassador Pillai with the Padma Shri Award at the 2012 Republic Day.

NUS is honoured to recognise Ambassador Pillai's outstanding and longstanding service to the international community, to Singapore and to the University. I am pleased to confer Ambassador Gopinath Pillai the Outstanding Service Award.

Citation for Dr Seek Ngee Huat, Outstanding Service Award

Dr Seek Ngee Huat, an illustrious NUS alumnus, is one of Singapore's international real estate titans. His influence extends beyond the real estate sector; he has served the profession, academia and the wider community with distinction in many ways. He is also a generous philanthropist with a heart for the less fortunate.

Dr Seek graduated from the University of Singapore (Class of '73) with a B.Sc. in Estate Management. He later pursued an M.Sc. in Business Administration from the University of British Columbia and a Ph.D. in Urban Research from the Australian National University. After which, Dr Seek very swiftly established himself in his career, and his influence extended to the global stage. Dr Seek helmed international business corporations, assumed key appointments and served on advisory boards. Prior to joining the Government of Singapore Investment Corporation, or GIC, Dr Seek was a Senior Partner at Jones Lang Wootton in Sydney. He then spent 15 years at GIC and was appointed as President of GIC Real Estate Pte Ltd. After his retirement in 2011, Dr Seek continued to serve as Advisor to the GIC Group Executive Committee, Chairman of the Latin America Business Group and as a Board Director of GIC Real Estate.

Within his professional sphere, Dr Seek systematically raised the bar for industry practitioners within Singapore and internationally. Dr Seek was the founding Chairman of the Property Council of Australia Property Index Committee and contributed in the capacity as either board director or advisor at various local and global organisations. These include the US Pension Real Estate Association, Banco BTG Pactual S.A. in Brazil, Fraser & Neave Limited and Pontiac Land Private Limited.

Dr Seek is widely sought after for his insights and expertise within the corporate and academic circles. Dr Seek served with distinction on the advisory boards of Guanghua School of Management at the Peking University; Fundacao Dom Cabral in Brazil; University of Cambridge and Harvard University. Presently, he continues to serve as Chairman of Global Logistic Properties Limited, a Board Director of Brookfield Asset Management Canada and a Senior Advisor to Frasers Centrepoint. He certainly has worldwide presence!

Dr Seek shares our university's passion and commitment to education, research and service. It is Dr Seek's single-minded conviction to the cause of excellence in research and education that saw the establishment of the NUS Institute of Real Estate Studies or IRES in 2007 where he actively supported the initiative. He continued to champion the mission of this institute as part of its inaugural Management Board, and subsequently assumed Chairmanship in 2009. Through the years, he reinforced the foundation of the institute and continued to raise its profile by setting the direction, building industry alliances and working fervently to fundraise. Today, IRES is a world-renowned real estate research institute.

Dr Seek is also an adjunct professor of real estate at the School of Design and Environment. Dr Seek has always taken an interest in trying to advance NUS' curriculum with industry-relevant elements. He was instrumental in the establishment of the MBA Real Estate programme. In addition, Dr Seek's magnanimous gift to NUS has enabled the establishment of the NH Seek Fund

for Real Estate Education and Research. Dr Seek also has a heart for the underprivileged as he has generously donated funds to provide scholarships for top performing needy students.

Dr Seek was conferred the Singapore Public Administration Gold Medal in 2007 and the NUS Distinguished Alumni Service Award in 2011. This evening, NUS is honoured to present Dr Seek Ngee Huat the 2015 Outstanding Service Award. Congratulations!

Citation for Professor Brian P Farrell, Outstanding Educator Award

Professor Brian Farrell teaches History with a conviction that students should emerge from his class transformed. Reading critically, thinking analytically, arguing independently and always being ready to do the “necessary hard work” are skills he inculcates in all his students.

His passion for teaching is most evident when he brings students into the field. History is brought from the past to the present. Think, feel, experience. Up mountains, down valleys and often to cemeteries, battlefields and jungles, he is the consummate field-educator who believes in stretching learners intellectually, mentally and even physically. To date, he has conducted 13 overseas field modules to nine different locations across six countries.

Believing that there is no better way to learn than to be actively and critically engaged, Brian’s students have come face to face with the Bidayu Dayak people of Borneo, interviewed army and air-force personnel, and spoken to policy makers in defence and military in countries as diverse as Australia, Vietnam, Korea and the Philippines.

Brian is an inspiration not only to students, but to colleagues around him. He makes it a point to bring young faculty along on field trips, hoping to inspire them to undertake field teaching themselves. He has also engaged museum docents, tour guides as well as secondary school and junior college students.

Bringing history alive, firing the imagination, and instilling a curiosity about people, places and processes – these are the indelible qualities for which we recognise Brian as this year’s Outstanding Educator. My heartiest congratulations to Professor Brian Farrell.

Citation for Associate Professor Ben Leong Wing Lup, Outstanding Educator Award

Associate Professor Ben Leong Wing Lup is an exemplary and award-winning teacher. Within his first four years of teaching at NUS, he won the Faculty Teaching Excellence Award and the Annual Teaching Excellence Award for three consecutive years each. In 2011, Ben was deservedly placed on the Annual Teaching Excellence Award honour roll.

Ben is a highly versatile teacher who excels in many aspects of teaching. He harnesses and combines diverse techniques, from peer teaching and gamification to case studies, to teach more effectively. Within his School, Ben has contributed significantly to curriculum development through several curriculum revision initiatives. Over the years, he developed four new modules, which were very well received by students. Some modules were even featured in the press for their innovative elements. It is thus not surprising that Ben's student feedback scores are consistently among the top in his School.

Ben is an avid user of technology to enhance pedagogy. His team developed Coursemology, an online gamified learning management system. This is a versatile and intuitive system which allows educators of any subject to add gamification elements to classroom assignments. Since its launch in 2013, Coursemology has been adopted for use by educators within and outside NUS and Singapore.

Ben's contributions extend beyond the classroom. In 2007, Ben started the student group Computing for Voluntary Welfare Organisations, or CVWO to develop IT systems for local volunteer welfare organisations. CVWO doubles as a platform for training students to work with people to benefit the less fortunate.

Ben is recognized as a prominent and trailblazing educator. In 2013, Ben was inducted into Facebook's Faculty Thought Leader Council. In 2014, Ben was appointed as founding Director of the Ministry of Education's Experimental Systems and Technology Laboratory. This evening, NUS is proud to honour Ben's innovative contributions and it gives me great pleasure to present him with the Outstanding Educator Award. My heartiest congratulations to Associate Professor Ben Leong.

Citation for Professor Neal Chung Tai-Shung, Outstanding Researcher Award

Professor Neal Chung Tai-Shung is at the forefront of research into membrane for clean water, clean energy, biofuel separation and carbon dioxide capture. Neal, who is also a Provost's Chair Professor, has contributed significantly to the development of exploitable membrane science and technologies.

Neal and his team have designed advanced forward osmosis, pressure-retarded osmosis and membrane distillation membranes for water reuse and desalination. From 2004 to 2008, Neal worked as a senior consultant and led Hyflux's R&D in membrane technologies, where he co-invented Hyflux's Kristal™ ultra-filtration membranes for water recycling and wastewater treatment.

Neal has received many research awards and honours including the Underwood Medal from the Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE), in the UK in 2014, the TechConnect Global Innovation Award in the same year, the Engineering Research Leadership Award in 2011, the Hyflux-Singapore National Institute of Chemistry Award in Environmental Chemistry, IChemE Singapore's Award for Excellence and Innovation in Sustainable Technology and the Institution of Engineers Singapore's Prestigious Engineering Achievement Award in 2010. He was also elected a Fellow of the Academy of Engineering Singapore in 2012.

In addition, his research has helped NUS to be ranked as the world's best in water research by Lux Research USA, the leading advisory firm providing strategic advice on research intelligence and emerging technologies. It also described Neal as a world-class membrane scientist.

Neal is recognised not only for his research work but also a good mentor to his students and staff, who have won more than 33 awards over the last five years.

This evening, Professor Neal Chung Tai-Shung receives the Outstanding Researcher Award.

Citation for Professor Gan Wee Teck, Outstanding Researcher Award

Professor Gan Wee Teck is widely recognised as an international leader in the field of number theory and representation theory, particularly their fascinating interactions, commonly known in the mathematics community as the Langlands programme. Among his many contributions, Wee Teck is especially well-known for the Gan-Gross-Prasad conjectures, which predict the behaviour of a wide class of restriction problems, also known as symmetry breaking or branching laws. These conjectures have generated great interest in recent years, and, in particular, are vigorously pursued by leading researchers from elite universities such as Princeton University, Columbia University, and the University of Paris. To cite an example, there was a 10-day summer school and conference at Paris 7 in June, 2014 exclusively devoted to the "Gan-Gross-Prasad conjectures", which may give a clear sense of the level of interest in the mathematics community.

Wee Teck joined the Department of Mathematics in 2010, having been previously associated with the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton and the University of California at San Diego. His groundbreaking work, energy and reputation have had a significant impact on the international profile of NUS Mathematics and have helped to firmly establish NUS as one of the world's important centres in number theory and representation theory.

Among Wee Teck's honours, he was the recipient of an American Mathematics Society Centennial Fellowship, a Sloan Research Fellowship from the Alfred P Sloan Foundation, and a Provost's Chair Professorship from NUS. He was an invited speaker of the International Congress of Mathematicians 2014 held in Korea.

This evening, we are pleased to present the Outstanding Researcher Award to Professor Gan Wee Teck. Congratulations.

Citation for Dr Goki Eda, Young Researcher Award

Dr Goki Eda is known for his several pioneering works in the emerging field of two-dimensional (2D) materials, which are crystalline, sheet-like materials with thicknesses of no more than a few atoms. Since he joined NUS as a National Research Foundation Fellow in 2011, he has actively worked on both the fundamental and applied aspects of nanomaterials synthesis and devices. His interdisciplinary work focusing on the unique physical and chemical properties of 2D materials has been highly recognised by the scientific community. He has given over 20 invited and plenary talks at international conferences and his papers published in the last three years have received over 500 citations. He has also received the Institute of Physics Singapore's Omicron Nanotechnology Medal and Prize, and our Faculty of Science's Young Scientist Award in recognition of his achievements.

Goki's academic contributions span over multiple disciplines. He and his collaborators revealed intriguing electrical, optical and electrochemical phenomena associated with atomically thin semiconductors. In his recent work, Goki and his coworkers demonstrated that some 2D materials absorb as much as 30 % of incident light despite being only three-atoms-thick. This is an unusually strong interaction between light and matter, and is of great interest to both fundamental research and technological applications. Goki's research team aspires to translate such unusual basic phenomena into novel enabling technologies.

This evening, we are pleased to honour Dr Goki Eda with a Young Researcher Award.

Citation for Dr Zhang Rui, Young Researcher Award

Dr Zhang Rui is internationally recognised for his significant contributions to the field of wireless communications. He carries out research of high impact in several frontier areas including cognitive radio, multi-antennas and energy-harvesting-enabled communications. He is also well-known for his work on the application of advanced optimisation methods to solve complex multi-user resource allocation problems in wireless networks. Recently, he pioneered promising inter-disciplinary research on the use of radio signals for simultaneous wireless information and power transfer in which he characterised the fundamental rate-energy performance trade-off, and designed practical receivers to achieve the fundamental limit. This work laid the theoretical foundation for a unified study of wireless information and power transmission, which is important for the design of next-generation wireless infrastructure that is capable of supporting both data and energy access over the air.

Zhang Rui has published extensively in his field, with over 200 publications that have been cited more than 8,000 times. Several of his high-impact papers published in prestigious Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) journals rank among the journals' top three most-cited papers. He is the editor of three top-tier IEEE journals and is an elected member of two internationally renowned technical committees of the IEEE Signal Processing Society. He is the recipient of the prestigious 6th IEEE Communications Society Asia-Pacific Best Young Researcher Award in 2011. He also received an NUS Young Investigator Award in 2011.

This evening, we are proud to present the Young Researcher Award to Dr Zhang Rui.