

New lab at NUS, scholarships to boost electronics sector

Singapore

A NEW research laboratory that aims to help develop advanced semiconductors that are more efficient and cheaper was launched on Thursday, along with S\$1.5 million in scholarships to grow the pool of talent in the electronics sector.

The lab, a collaboration between US equipment supplier Applied Materials and the National University of Singapore (NUS), will work on accelerating the discovery and commercialisation of new materials for manufacturing advanced semiconductors.

More than 50 researchers, engineers and doctoral students are expected to be trained at the lab in NUS.

Applied Materials will also be sponsoring scholarships worth S\$1.5 million for the doctoral students.

In a speech at the launch, Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat said that electronics remains a key pillar of Singapore's manufacturing sector, accounting for more than a quarter of the gross domestic product.

Singapore is now among the top locations for advanced semiconductor manufacturing, and more than half of the world's semiconductor companies have research and development, as well as manufacturing activities here, he said.

Mr Heng, who is also chairman of the National Research Foundation, said that the foundation is supporting the setting up of corporate laboratories in universities to strengthen the link between research, innovation and enterprise.

The lab at NUS "seeks to develop the next generation of semiconductors that are smaller, cheaper, faster and more power efficient", he said.

"It will also reinforce NUS's efforts in building research capabilities to ride the new waves of technological shifts in artificial intelligence, semiconductor technology and the Internet of Things, which can then be applied in areas such as autonomous vehicles, robotics and many others," he added.