

Unis, polys to ramp up training for Industry 4.0

Push to equip workers with skills to use new tech; businesses' expertise to be tapped too

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Institutes of higher learning in Singapore will ramp up efforts to train people in emerging skills such as machine learning, entrepreneurship and data analytics.

Mr Chee Hong Tat, Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Education, announced yesterday plans to equip the workforce for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, or Industry 4.0.

Speaking at the annual SkillsFuture Festival, he said: "Industry 4.0 is not about replacing existing workers with machines or new workers. An essential component is the training of existing workers to equip them with the skills to use the new technologies."

To this end, the National University of Singapore (NUS) will play a key role in training, by starting a new Master of Science in Industry 4.0 next month to help workers keep pace with digital advances.

The new programme will cover areas such as data analytics, digital infrastructure and transformation systems, and include an industrial attachment.

It will also provide customised training modules for companies, and so far NUS has partnered 10 organisations, including United Overseas Bank and the Institute for Human Resource Professionals.

The institutes of higher learning will also continue to work with one another to develop "stackable" modular courses in Industry 4.0. For instance, NUS Institute of Systems Science will partner Ngee Ann Polytechnic and Temasek Polytechnic to allow modules from the polytechnics' post-diploma programmes to be counted towards a Master of Technology.

In his speech, Mr Chee also provided an update on adult education, as part of the SkillsFuture se-

ries, which are bite-size courses offered by the institutes of higher learning on emerging skills.

Since 2017, the number of courses has more than tripled from 400 to over 1,500.

As of March, close to 40,000 participants have signed up for such courses.

Starting next month, to help individuals make informed choices, SkillsFuture Singapore will publish a series of regular reports called Jobs-Skills Insights by linking up with career portals such as Burning Glass Technologies, Indeed.com and JobTech to analyse jobs data.

The information will be conveyed to students, working adults, enterprises and institutes of higher learning through reports, dashboards and articles.

Mr Chee said businesses' expertise will also be tapped to provide training. He announced that a new centre, where German engineering firm Bosch Rexroth will train and certify specialists who meet German standards, will be set up in Jurong Innovation District, Singapore's advanced manufacturing campus.

"The Bosch Rexroth Regional Training Centre will train beyond the needs of Bosch Rexroth, and will open up its training opportunities to other companies in the industry," he said.

It will start operations in the third quarter of next year.

"We recognise that smaller enterprises may lack the resources to make significant investments in training. Hence, we have been working on a collaborative training model that will tap the capabilities of anchor companies to uplift industry sectors as a whole," he added. "The end goal is to grow the talent pipeline by attracting and training more workers for all companies within the sector."

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