

36 join LKY School's new regional leadership course

Dominique Nelson

Thirty-six senior policymakers and industry leaders from around the world have joined a new leadership programme at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy that will look at leadership and governance issues around the region, including best practices from Singapore's public institutions.

Called the Lee Kuan Yew Senior Fellowship in Public Service Programme, it lasts six weeks and is aimed at those who cannot afford to take the year off for the school's master's programme.

"We found that senior officials find it very difficult to take one year away. So a decision was made some time last year that we would do a shorter programme," said Professor Tan Yong Soon, who is the programme director.

The course began on Oct 14 and will run till Nov 22. It currently has participants from 16 countries.

"The curriculum was designed so that leaders could better tackle leadership and governance in the face of rapidly changing technology and globalisation," Prof Tan said.

Senior fellows will get to hear from guest speakers such as Nobel Prize winner Konstantin Novoselov.

Professors Novoselov and Andre Geim were awarded the Nobel Prize in physics in 2010 for ground-breaking achievements with graphene, the first two-dimensional material discovered.

Speakers from Singapore in-

clude Economic Development Board chairman Beh Swan Gin and former foreign minister George Yeo.

Senior fellows who complete the programme will also be able to tap the school's network of faculty members and past alumni.

Mr Chencho, the principal secretary to the Prime Minister of Bhutan, is part of the inaugural cohort and he hopes to learn from the Singapore experience.

"Bhutan is a fairly young nation with an average age of 26.

"We are confronted with challenges on providing gainful employment to our youth, which is basically caused by inadequate skill sets. Singapore is a good reference point... which Bhutan can emulate," he said.

Mr Irakli Porchkhidze, dean of the School of Law at Ilia State University Law School in Georgia, echoed this sentiment.

The former Soviet republic, which lies between Europe and Asia, has a population of 3.7 million and is chasing a higher growth rate.

Mr Porchkhidze said that as the size of Georgia is comparable to Singapore, the former could use the latter as a sustainable model.

"I find that the transformational case that Singapore makes is very important. This country has achieved much in a very short period of time."

The programme will run again in September next year, and the deadline for the first round of applications is March 6.

dnelson@sph.com.sg



Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy professor Lim Siong Guan, former head of the civil service, in a discussion with participants of the Lee Kuan Yew Senior Fellowship in Public Service Programme. ST PHOTO: KELLY HUI