

New NUS think-tank to examine legal issues in tech

Centre to work with local and global partners on regulatory questions linked to AI, data analytics and robotics

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In the hope of promoting interdisciplinary research in technology law, the National University of Singapore (NUS) has opened a research centre for legal issues surrounding artificial intelligence (AI), robotics and data analytics.

The new Centre for Technology, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence and the Law (Trail) will be a think-tank under the faculty of law.

It was officially opened yesterday by Senior Minister of State for Law and Health Edwin Tong.

NUS said the centre has started researching the regulatory questions connected to the deployment of AI, information technology, data analytics and robotics in the practice of law.

It is also examining privacy

and data protection issues from the perspectives of computer science and law, and plans to probe the legal and ethical issues surrounding biotechnology.

The launch was held at an international academic conference on data privacy at NUS.

Speaking at the conference, Mr Tong said Trail will be able to work with partners locally and globally to produce valuable research and policies that will benefit societies in the rapidly growing digital age.

“The increasingly rapid pace of technological developments in fields like artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, Internet of Things and autonomous vehicles means the law has to respond even more quickly,” he added.

Mr Tong outlined several challenges presented by technologi-



Senior Minister of State for Law and Health Edwin Tong. TNP PHOTO: GIN TAY

cal advancement and how the Government has approached them. One of them has been in setting regulations that balance the need to protect public interest with promoting innovation.

The Government, he said, has responded by rolling out regulatory sandboxes in areas like transportation, fintech and healthcare that allow for experimentation within controlled

boundaries.

Another challenge lies in how technology has allowed bad actors to create, disseminate and profit from online falsehoods.

Mr Tong said Trail has an important role to play with regard to research and thought leadership in the field of law and technology.

The research unit consists of 12 academic fellows, including NUS law faculty dean Simon Chesterman. It is led by NUS law faculty's Associate Professor Daniel Seng, who is its director.

He will be assisted by two deputy directors – Professor David Tan from the faculty of law, and Professor Chang Ee-Chien from the School of Computing in NUS.

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