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# NUS boosts financial aid, 3,300 needy undergrads expected to benefit

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All full-time Singaporean undergraduates enrolled in the National University of Singapore (NUS) will not need to pay tuition fees if they come from homes with per capita income of up to \$1,000.

Starting from the new academic

year in August, NUS will top up existing government bursaries to fully fund tuition fees for these students, it said yesterday.

NUS is setting aside additional funding of \$15 million per year for this latest enhancement in support, which is expected to benefit about 3,300 students.

Those in general courses such as the humanities and sciences will receive \$2,300 to \$7,000 more a year

in financial aid, depending on household income.

NUS' efforts to ensure students from less well-off families have access to higher education come as other organisations also beef up support due to the pandemic worsening financial difficulties for families already in need.

Self-help group Yayasan Mendaki slashed its annual registration fee for its tuition classes this year.





Malay/Muslim students applying for its Mendaki Tuition Scheme have to fork out only \$10 compared with \$210 previously.

NUS said yesterday the increased support is on top of existing financial aid. Both new and existing full-time undergraduates who meet the criteria are eligible.

Full-time Singaporean NUS un-

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## More support for students in need

Enhanced financial aid	Per capita income	Increase in financial support
 <p>NUS bursary tops up government bursary to provide full coverage of tuition fees.</p>	<b>Up to \$690</b>	\$2,300* to \$7,000* per annum depending on per capita income levels.
 <p>NUS bursary provides \$4,000 per annum for living expenses.</p>		
 <p>Opportunity Enhancement Grant provides \$10,000 over 4 years.</p>		
 <p>NUS bursary tops up government bursary to provide full coverage of tuition fees.</p>	<b>\$691 to \$1,000</b>	

### NOTES:

\*Based on tuition fees for general courses at \$8,200 per annum.

• The changes apply to full-time Singaporean undergraduates.

• They will also continue to have access to other forms of financial aid, including bursaries to cover accommodation-related fees, support for overseas programmes, and loans.

Source: NUS STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS



# Doing more to give needy students 'full NUS experience'

## FROM B1

dergraduates from households whose per capita income does not exceed \$690 will also receive financial support in more ways.

They will each get \$4,000 yearly in bursaries to cover living expenses. They can also each receive \$10,000 over four years from a new Opportunity Enhancement Grant, if they want to stay on campus and go on overseas exposure programmes.

Currently, about 16,000 NUS undergraduates in need receive some form of financial assistance yearly.

This is about 55 per cent of the university's undergraduate enrolment.

NUS president Tan Eng Chye said: "Low-income families in Singapore have been hard hit by this long pandemic.

"With more than half of our undergraduates on some form of need-based financial aid, I felt that the university needed to do more to ensure that these students will have access to the full NUS experience.

"There may also be Singaporean students from low-income households who may be hesitating to ap-

ply to university because of financial difficulties. I want to assure them that their tuition fees at NUS will be fully funded, and that more need-based financial aid will also be made available."

He said that while students from low-income backgrounds may already receive some financial help from various sources, it may not cover all of their university costs.

"Some students may also shy away from study abroad as well as residential programmes due to financial constraints," he added.

NUS is in the midst of garnering philanthropic support to build an endowment that will provide sustainable funding.

Several donors have pledged their support, including Quantedge Foundation – the philanthropic arm of local fund management firm Quantedge Capital – as an anchor donor.

In yesterday's statement, Quantedge Foundation board member Suhaimi Zainul-Abidin said: "Every student who qualifies, by merit, to attend university should not pass up on the opportunity to do so due to his financial situation.

"This is a major step forward in



## EASED FINANCIAL WOES

**It really helped a lot. If not, I would have to work a lot more.**



**MS MELANIS TAI**, who received the Chia Siew Wong Bursary on top of a government bursary. She graduated from NUS last December.

our continuing push for all deserving Singaporeans to have access to a truly need-blind university education across all autonomous universities in Singapore."

Ms Melanis Tai, who is now work-

ing in the public service, said having financial support lightened the load of her tuition fee loan and living expenses.

During her time in NUS, the 25-year-old, who graduated from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences last December, received the Chia Siew Wong Bursary, on top of a government bursary.

"It really helped a lot. If not, I would have to work a lot more," said Ms Tai, who took up part-time jobs as a front-desk staff member at a yoga studio and a fitness studio while studying.

She is the oldest of three children, whose single mother works as a service staff member at a food and beverage kiosk.

The bursaries also gave her peace of mind to explore other activities, such as going on exchange to Sydney. She also took on an internship and represented Singapore in an international beauty pageant in South Korea.

"The exchange was a very integral part of my NUS journey and I feel everybody should have the experience at least once," she said.

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## Support for those in need

### CHINESE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COUNCIL (CDAC)

- CDAC spent about \$33.6 million last year helping families. It has budgeted \$36.4 million this year.
- It is raising the quantum for CDAC-Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations Bursary by 7 per cent from this year. Primary school pupils will receive \$300 a year, up from \$280, while secondary school students will get \$480, up from \$450.

### YAYASAN MENDAKI

- It handed out over \$45 million in tertiary tuition fee subsidies and study loans last year to nearly 12,000 students, and over \$1.9 million was given out in bursaries, scholarships and awards to more than 7,000 students last year.

### SINGAPORE INDIAN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (SINDA)

- Since 2018, students in Sinda's Tutorials for Enhanced Performance, or Step, pay a nominal sum of \$10 per year regardless of

how many subjects they sign up for. Full fee waivers are also offered to families in greater difficulties.

- About 4,000 students enrol in Step tuition yearly.

### NTUC FIRST CAMPUS

- The pre-school operator's Bright Horizons Fund channelled about \$2.4 million last year to bridge income and learning gaps.
- More than 4,200 children in NTUC pre-schools received a one-time top-up of \$400 to their Child Development Account (CDA) last year.

### PAP COMMUNITY FOUNDATION (PCF) AND TEMASEK FOUNDATION

- From June 2021, about 8,500 PCF Sparkletots children from low-income homes get a top-up in their CDA of \$200 per year for two years. Temasek Foundation provides \$3.38 million in funds to support the scheme. With the Government's dollar-for-dollar matching contributions, each child's CDA will receive a total of up to \$800 over two years.