



PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Education
SINGAPORE

25 January 2010
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SINGAPORE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN SIGNS FORMAL AGREEMENT WITH MIT

1. The Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), Singapore's new publicly-funded university, has signed an agreement with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), formalising the detailed scope of collaboration between the two universities.

2. In his message conveyed via an SUTD video presentation, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong commented, "The Singapore University of Technology and Design will provide something different from the existing institutions - a very high quality education, not just an academic education, but one which is going to stimulate students to go beyond the book knowledge, to apply it to solving problems. It will teach students to be creative, not just in the technology and the design part, but also to be creative in bringing ideas out of the academic environment into the real world, into the business arena, into the real economy and make a difference to the world."

3. The partnership between the two universities represents MIT's most significant collaboration on education to date, and covers both education and research endeavours.

(a) Collaboration in Educational Endeavours

4. Under the education component, MIT will share its expertise with SUTD in a broad range of areas, including pedagogy, curriculum development and faculty recruitment and development. MIT will also assist in designing programmes to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship – hallmarks of the MIT brand of education. As part of the agreement, SUTD will see a regular flow of faculty and post-graduate fellows from MIT engaging in a range of activities, such as co-teaching of courses with SUTD faculty. There will also be opportunities for exchanges between students at MIT and SUTD. Such student and faculty exchanges will encourage in SUTD the same spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship that has helped to make MIT a top-ranking university internationally.

(b) Collaboration in Research Initiatives

5. In addition to building up SUTD's educational capabilities, MIT will also kick-start SUTD's research capability by developing relevant research programmes through their top-class faculty. SUTD students will benefit from being taught by, and interacting with, experienced MIT faculty members.

6. A key feature of the research component of the agreement is the establishment of an International Design Centre (IDC). Situated at the heart of SUTD with another smaller mirror facility at MIT, the IDC is intended to become the world's premier hub for technologically intensive design. The IDC will be a focal point for faculty and students from SUTD, MIT and partner institutions to collaborate in the design of devices, systems and services that address the strategic needs of Singapore, the region and the world. In doing so, the IDC will seek to address key "grand challenges" facing the world today – including sustainable built environment, engineering for the developing world and ICT-enabled devices for better living.

7. Both components of the collaboration are tightly integrated. For instance, the undergraduate education experience will incorporate design experiences, facilitated by the IDC, throughout the entire degree programme. At the same time, the IDC will be a source of new ideas for design education, methodology, tools and practices. By interacting with the curriculum, the IDC will serve to catalyse pedagogical innovation and experimentation.

8. Commenting on the collaboration, Dr Susan Hockfield, President of MIT, said, "Building on MIT's enduring relationship with Singapore, this Agreement represents MIT's most extensive collaboration with an overseas educational institution to date. The collaboration will not only help Singapore launch a new university, it will give MIT new opportunities to push the boundaries of design research. MIT is fully committed to helping SUTD achieve its distinctive vision."

9. SUTD's founding President Professor Thomas Magnanti said, "The creation of SUTD is as ambitious as it is exciting. I am especially excited to be collaborating with my long time home institution, MIT, which will bring much added value to SUTD's development, through MIT's contributions to the university's curriculum and research. SUTD aspires to establish an inspiring attitude and tone – the type of vibrant academic and research environment that exists at the world's leading universities. Having "MIT within" will help achieve this goal, help ensure that SUTD achieves the highest quality, and be instrumental in attracting distinguished faculty, researchers, and practitioners and top students to the university."

10. Besides MIT, SUTD will also partner Zhejiang University. These strategic alliances with top universities overseas will uniquely position SUTD to offer its students and faculty rich opportunities for international collaborations and global exposure.