

JOINT NEWS RELEASE

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NTU Singapore and US-based Activate launch S\$12 million fellowship to accelerate science entrepreneurship and develop deep-tech start-ups

In partnership with National Research Foundation, Singapore and Enterprise Singapore, up to 40 fellows will receive support, bespoke mentoring and deep immersion in the US market to scale their solutions

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) and US-based non-profit **Activate Global** have launched a new fellowship programme to support early-stage science and technology entrepreneurs in Singapore.

Announced today by **Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Trade and Industry Gan Kim Yong** at the **Singapore Week of Innovation and Technology (SWITCH)**, the new fellowship programme, named **Activate Global Fellows – Singapore**, will feature a S\$12 million commitment to support up to 20 science fellows and 20 co-fellows over the next three years.

This is funded by **National Research Foundation, Singapore (NRF)** and supported by **Enterprise Singapore (EnterpriseSG)**, which will provide founders with potential access to additional funding as well as its extensive network of ecosystem partners – including investors, corporates and infrastructure providers.

Adapted from Activate's flagship programme in the United States, which has supported nearly 300 fellows since 2015, the Singapore-adapted version marks the organisation's first international expansion outside of the US.

Hosted by NTU Singapore, the fellowship is open to all Singapore scientists and engineers with early-stage innovations that have the potential for commercial and social impact, who are seeking to build new ventures around these ideas.

It will focus on key deep tech areas such as advanced materials, robotics, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and life sciences, among others.

Fellows will receive a one-year support package, which includes a cash allowance, funding for business growth activities and resources for deep immersion in the US market. They can also nominate one scientific co-founder to be selected as a co-fellow, who can then join the fellowship activities.

Formalised today at SWITCH with a Memorandum of Understanding, the initiative supports Singapore's national push to grow its deep tech ecosystem through

collaborations with Singapore Institutes of Higher Learning (IHLs), Autonomous Universities (AUs) and research agencies (See *Annex A*).

NTU Vice President (Innovation and Entrepreneurship), Professor Louis Phee, said: "This new fellowship and partnership with Activate underscores NTU and Singapore's drive for turning scientific research into real-world impact. By nurturing early-stage science and technology entrepreneurs, we are giving locally funded research a greater chance of commercial success. With more successful start-ups, we can strengthen Singapore's innovation ecosystem, generate economic value, and contribute to the global development of deep tech."

Chief Executive Officer of Activate Global, Dr Cyrus Wadia, said: "Singapore stands out as a global leader in science and technology, combining world-class research with a bold vision for innovation. Through this partnership, we're excited to empower Singapore's scientists and engineers to turn their breakthroughs into real-world impact while also creating new bridges between the U.S. and Singapore's deep-tech communities."

Managing Director of EnterpriseSG, Ms Cindy Khoo, said, "Growing deep tech startups requires a collective, ecosystem effort. We are committed to attracting and anchoring the right partners that can support our science and technology entrepreneurs, and are excited to be partnering with Activate, NTU and NRF on this new programme. Through this, our founders will have access to research excellence, industry mentorship and venture building support, and be more equipped to commercialise their solutions and scale from Singapore."

Chief Executive Officer of NRF, Mr John Lim, said: "NRF is pleased to support this partnership between Activate and NTU, which combines Activate's experience, expertise and networks with NTU's own knowledge and networks to nurture academic entrepreneurs in Singapore. We look forward to seeing many early-stage innovations grow into ventures with lasting economic and societal impact in Singapore and beyond."

Structured mentorship and deeper immersion in the US

During the one-year fellowship, fellows will participate in monthly programming featuring bespoke coaching based on Activate's proven methodology, alongside technical and business development workshops and structured mentorship from Activate's global network of experts.

Fellows will also have key opportunities to engage with investors and industry partners in Singapore and the United States, including two deep immersion visits to the US and a dedicated Founders Day event to connect with venture capitalists and industry leaders.

Since its launch in 2015 at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory as Cyclotron Road, and later expanding nationally as Activate Global, the 235 companies supported by Activate have collectively attracted an estimated US\$4 billion in follow-on funding (see *Annex A*).

This new fellowship also supports NTU's strategic goals in innovation and entrepreneurship, reinforcing its role as a leading research-intensive university driving solutions to address global challenges.

Applications for the first cohort will open in November 2025. Connect with Activate and NTU to learn more (<https://www.ntu.edu.sg/innovates>).

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About Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

A research-intensive public university, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) has 35,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Business, Computing & Data Science, Engineering, Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences, Medicine, Science, and Graduate colleges.

NTU is also home to world-renowned autonomous institutes – the National Institute of Education, S Rajaratnam School of International Studies and Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering – and various leading research centres such as the Earth Observatory of Singapore, Nanyang Environment & Water Research Institute and Energy Research Institute @ NTU (ERI@N).

Under the NTU Smart Campus vision, the University harnesses the power of digital technology and tech-enabled solutions to support better learning and living experiences, the discovery of new knowledge, and the sustainability of resources. Ranked amongst the world's top universities, the University's main campus is also frequently listed among the world's most beautiful. Known for its sustainability, NTU has achieved 100% Green Mark Platinum certification for all its eligible building projects. Apart from its main campus, NTU also has a medical campus in Novena, Singapore's healthcare district.

For more information, visit www.ntu.edu.sg

About Activate Global

Activate is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming scientific discoveries into real-world impact. By building the community that drives science into impact, Activate is accelerating the leadership of scientists and engineers to shape the future of hard-tech for good. Since 2015, Activate's flagship fellowship program has supported nearly 300 fellows across the United States who have launched over 230 companies and secured more than \$4 billion in follow-on funding. Through partnerships with government, philanthropy, universities, and industry, Activate advances models for private investment, public sector support, and academic collaboration that enable the commercialization of transformative technologies and empower innovation at every stage by bridging business and science. Learn more at Activate.org.

About the National Research Foundation, Singapore (NRF)

The National Research Foundation, Singapore (NRF), set up on 1 January 2006, is a department within the Prime Minister's Office. The NRF sets the national direction for research and development (R&D) by developing policies, plans and strategies for research, innovation and enterprise. It also funds strategic initiatives and builds up R&D capabilities by nurturing research talent. Learn more about the NRF at www.nrf.gov.sg.

About Enterprise Singapore

Enterprise Singapore is the government agency championing enterprise development.

We partner committed companies to build capabilities, innovate and go global. We drive growth – empowering local businesses and shaping industries, anchoring Singapore as a trade and startup hub, and establishing trust in our products through quality and standards.

We're here, for wherever you're growing. Visit www.enterprisesg.gov.sg for more information.

Annex A

Examples of companies that have been supported by Activate Global

Among the most notable successes is **Twelve**, founded by Etosha Cave and Kendra Kuhl, which converts carbon dioxide into sustainable fuels and materials. It has since raised more than US\$600 million and reached a valuation above US\$1 billion.

Another example is **Fervo Energy**, co-founded by Tim Latimer and Jack Norbeck, which recently secured more than US\$250 million in funding to advance next-generation geothermal energy solutions.

Other notable Activate alumni include **Antora Energy**, which is developing advanced thermal energy storage systems, and **HOPO Therapeutics**, a life sciences firm that recently received a **US\$226 million grant** from the U.S. Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA).

Together, these companies demonstrate the impact of the Activate model in turning academic research into commercially successful deep tech ventures with global reach and impact.

Fellowship Working Committee

A working committee has been established for the new fellowship, which includes representatives from the National University of Singapore, Singapore Management University, Singapore University of Technology and Design, and the Agency for Science, Technology and Research.