

PRESS RELEASE

28 April 2017

EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER DELIVERY OF SPEECH BY MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION DR YAACOB IBRAHIM AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF INNOVFEST UNBOUND ON 3 MAY 2017 AT 9:30 AM

NEW DATA SCIENCE CONSORTIUM TO BOOST PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND RESEARCHERS IN BIG DATA ANALYTICS

The National Research Foundation (NRF) Singapore, in collaboration with the National University Singapore (NUS), the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), the Singapore Management University (SMU) and the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), will set up the Singapore Data Science Consortium, a national partnership that will deepen Singapore's existing strengths in data science and analytics.

2. The Consortium will strengthen collaborative research linkages between Institutes of Higher Learning, research institutes and industry in data science R&D, with the aim of facilitating industry adoption of the latest cutting-edge data science and analytics technologies to address real-world challenges. It will also train our local pipeline of talents with deep data science capabilities.

3. This initiative builds on Singapore's vision of becoming a Smart Nation and answers the call by the Committee on the Future Economy to build strong digital capabilities, so that Singapore better seizes the growth opportunities offered by the digital economy.

Strengthening Academia-Industry Interaction in Data Science Technologies

4. The Singapore Data Science Consortium will be led by Professor Ho Teck Hua, Deputy President (Research & Technology) and Tan Chin Tuan Centennial Professor at NUS. It will be established as the key platform in Singapore for industry to access the latest data science technologies, applications, and expertise from the academia to create innovative solutions that solve real-world challenges. It will also work closely with AI.SG to synergise the use of data in deepening AI technologies and tools, and the use of AI to automate and develop deeper, actionable data science insights.

5. The Consortium will help the industry to identify and shape their data science problem statements, match companies to the relevant potential R&D partners, and conduct industry engagement events and workshops to allow companies to understand the possibilities that data science and data analytics can bring to their business and operations, thereby facilitating adoption and commercialisation of these technologies by our companies. Through the consortium, companies will be able to tap on data science expertise residing in our Institutes of Higher Learning and research institutes, access publicly-funded intellectual property to develop new products and services, or create solutions to existing market challenges.

6. The Consortium will work in partnership with the Economic Development Board (EDB) and the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) to engage companies in six economic sectors, namely: finance; healthcare; customer and retail; manufacturing; logistics; and transport. It will put particular emphasis on engaging local enterprises including Large Local Enterprises (LLEs), Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups.

Building Capabilities in Data Science

7. Data has been identified as a significant growth multiplier for Singapore. Regionally, more than 50 percent of Southeast Asia's data centres are located in Singapore. The ability to analyse complex data and predict relationships will build on our existing strengths to enable Singapore to create data-driven solutions that can improve the lives of Singaporeans or build products and services that can reach into regional or global markets.

8. **Professor Low Teck Seng, CEO, NRF** said: "The Singapore Data Science Consortium will build stronger public-private R&D collaboration by bringing together the key stakeholders – public agencies, data scientists and companies – in the data science ecosystem to realise innovation from the knowledge generated by our research efforts. It is through this synergy that we create solutions that have direct relevance to meeting industry needs or in addressing our national challenges."

9. **Professor Ho Teck Hua, Deputy President (Research & Technology) and Tan Chin Tuan Centennial Professor at NUS** said: "Data science is not just about capturing a large amount of data quickly and accurately. It is equally important to compute using that data to discover predictive and causal relationships, and create solutions to address real-world challenges. This is a tremendous endeavour that requires collaboration and contributions from a diverse community comprising scientists, engineers, domain experts, government agencies and end users. Under the Singapore Data Science Consortium, NUS will work closely with NTU, SMU, A*STAR and industry partners to pioneer innovations in data science and technology that will power Singapore's Smart Nation vision."

10. **Mr Nicholas Lee, CEO, EZ-Link Pte Ltd** said: "Collaborative big data analytics is of vital importance to the development of future innovative solutions. EZ-Link is excited to partner with the various research institutes and like-minded industry players under the Singapore Data Science Consortium to deepen our capabilities in data science, with EZ-Link transaction data as the core. This partnership will dovetail with our current collaboration with NUS and Alibaba on data analytics as well as our foray into new technologies such as wearables and account-based payments, to bring about new integrated payment solutions that take customer experience to new levels."

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