
NTU sets up Israel innovation centre

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Nanyang Technological University (NTU) students keen on developing entrepreneurial know-how can from next year head to one of the most entrepreneurial nations in the world – Israel.

NTU has set up an innovation centre in Haifa, Israel, and said yesterday that it intends to send up to 20 students yearly to the country to work in high-tech start-ups.

The city in Israel, which is dubbed “Start-Up Nation”, is the fifth destination to be included in NTU’s Overseas Entrepreneurship Programme. The others are in Silicon Valley in the United States, Beijing and Shanghai in China, and London in United Kingdom. Every year, about 60 NTU undergrads head overseas under the programme.

Made-in-NTU companies that wish to explore the Israeli market and capital opportunities can also use the NTU innovation centre as a base for their initial operations. The centre also aims to accelerate research collaboration between NTU and leading Israeli universities.

NTU’s president, Professor Bertil Andersson, who opened the centre on Thursday, said: “Beyond our focus in research, Haifa is also a great place to expose Singapore students to innovation and entrepreneurship.

“NTU students will be able to enrol in programmes that will immerse them in the latest innovations in Israel’s fast-paced high-tech industry. It will also give them first-hand exposure to the renowned start-up ecosystem.”

NTU said it chose Israel as the country produces an impressive number of successful tech start-ups relative to its population, which is only about 8.3 million.

Haifa, in northern Israel, is the nation’s hub for research and development, and home to two of the country’s respected institutions – the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, often called Israel’s MIT, and the University of Haifa.

NTU said one research area it will collaborate on is the maritime sector, given the university’s expertise in advanced marine-related research and Singapore’s strengths in maritime port technologies.

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