

Ex-Carnegie Mellon University president Subra Suresh to head NTU

SANDRA DAVIE, THE STRAITS TIMES

A leading American scientist who was handpicked by former United States president Barack Obama to helm the country's National Science Foundation was yesterday named the fourth president of Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

Professor Subra Suresh, 61, who will take over from current president Bertil Andersson next year, had until recently served as president of Carnegie Mellon University.

NTU board chairman Koh Boon Hwee said succession planning began last year with a search for candidates in Singapore and globally. He led an eight-member search committee, which unanimously selected Prof Suresh.

The National University of Singapore and the Singapore University of Technology and Design are also searching for new heads.

Noting that NTU made "phenomenal progress" under Prof Andersson, Mr Koh said: "The appointment of the next president is crucial to continue that momentum and to elevate NTU in its next significant phase of growth and development."

Prof Suresh is considered one of the most distinguished scientists in the US, if not the world.

As director of the National Science Foundation between 2010 and 2013, he oversaw an annual budget of US\$7 billion (S\$9.6 billion) that supported fundamental research and innovation in all fields of science



Professor Subra Suresh. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

and engineering in more than 2,000 institutions in the US.

Prof Suresh holds the distinction of being the only university president elected to all three US National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, and is one of the few elected foreign members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

He is also the first Asian-born professor to have served as engineering dean of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he attained his doctorate.

At MIT, Prof Suresh was the principal faculty coordinator for the formation of the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology centre.

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