

Leading American scientist to head NTU

Ex-President of Carnegie Mellon University will succeed Prof Andersson from Jan 1

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SINGAPORE – American scientist Subra Suresh, who was picked to head the US National Science Foundation (NSF) in 2010, will take over as Nanyang Technological University (NTU) president from Jan 1 next year.

President of Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) for the past four years, Professor Suresh has had numerous high-level interactions with Singapore for 25 years, including serving as a consultant to the National Science and Technology Board, and sitting on the advisory boards or councils of A*Star institutes and Government agencies.

He will succeed Professor Bertil Andersson as the fourth president of NTU, as the latter is retiring from the role he has held for six years since 2011, said NTU in a press release yesterday.

Announcing Prof Suresh's appointment in an email to NTU faculty, staff, students and alumni, the chairman of the NTU Board of Trustees, Mr Koh Boon Hwee, said the search for Prof Andersson's replacement started last year.

An eight-member committee chaired by Mr Koh unanimously se-

lected Prof Suresh for the role, and his appointment has been strongly endorsed by all members of the university's Board of Trustees, said NTU.

Said Mr Koh: "As a world-class university, NTU will need a leader with vision, global stature, a thorough understanding of the environment in which it operates, and the larger international backdrop that the university and Singapore fit into. Prof Suresh more than matches all these criteria."

Prof Suresh, who hails from Tamil Nadu, India, officially stepped down as CMU president — a role he took on from 2013 — on June 30, as part of the transition.

Before that, he was director of the US NSF, where he oversaw an annual budget of US\$7 billion (S\$9.6 billion) supporting fundamental research and innovation in all fields of science and engineering and related education.

Prior to that, he was dean of engineering at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Throughout that time, Prof Suresh was the principal faculty coordinator from MIT for the formation of the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology (Smart) centre, which was established in 2006.

On his appointment, Prof Suresh said he shared "a very special affinity for Singapore and numerous interactions with colleagues here in academ-

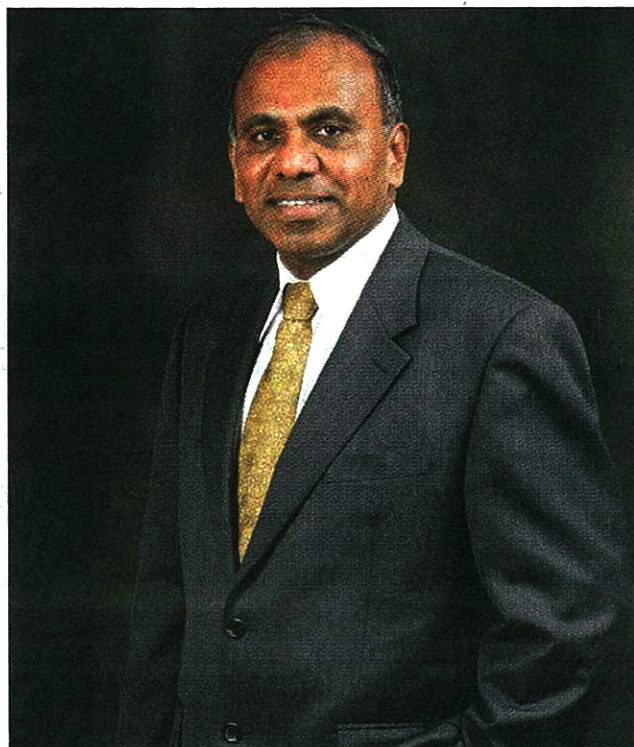


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PROF SURESH'S BACKGROUND

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With the future leadership of NTU in safe hands, Prof Andersson said he looks forward to working with Prof Suresh and the NTU Board of Trustees to ensure a smooth transition.

The Swede, who joined NTU in 2007, was its first provost before being appointed president.

A fellow of Imperial College London, Prof Andersson spearheaded the establishment of NTU's joint medical school with Imperial College, whose first batch of medical students will graduate in July next year.

Under his leadership, NTU jumped from 74th position in 2010 to an all-time high of No 11 globally, to be the highest placed Asian university in this year's Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings.

Yesterday, NTU was named the world's best young university for the fourth straight year.

In QS' latest rankings of the world's top 50 universities founded less than five decades ago, NTU retained its top spot, followed by Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology.

Writing on Facebook yesterday, Minister for Education (Higher Education) Ong Ye Kung welcomed Prof Suresh's appointment. He also thanked Prof Andersson for his contributions and wished him all the best in his next chapter.

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