The Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation, the largest private financier of research in Sweden, is making a 50 million Swedish krona (S$7.6 million) endowed gift to Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) to establish a prestigious postdoctoral fellowship.

The donation is the largest single gift in perpetuity by a foreign entity to NTU Singapore. With matching by the Singapore government, the total endowment raised for the programme is S$11.4 million (US$8.3 million).

An additional S$5 million has been set aside by the Wallenberg Foundation, through its Artificial Intelligence (AI), Autonomous Systems and Software Programme, in support of the Postdoctoral Fellows, thus bringing the total donation to S$16.4 million (US$12 million).

The record-breaking gift will go towards supporting the Wallenberg-NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship, which will enable some of the world’s most promising postdoctoral candidates to carry out their research at NTU, ranked the world’s best young university in the last five years and one of the world’s top universities by QS. They will spend one year in Sweden affiliated with the Wallenberg Artificial Intelligence (AI), Autonomous Systems and Software Programme, Sweden’s largest research programme.

NTU President, Professor Subra Suresh believes the new Wallenberg-NTU Fellowships will play a key role in driving discovery, expanding knowledge, and advancing innovation beyond Singapore’s borders.

"On behalf of NTU, I wish to extend my thanks to the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation for this exceptional gift," said Professor Subra Suresh.

"The Wallenberg name is synonymous with research excellence and innovation, and these new fellowships will carry on that legacy. They will attract to NTU highly trained and experienced researchers who will promote and encourage vital partnerships between academia and industry with potential benefits for Singapore and the rest of the world. The university and the community will benefit in perpetuity from the Wallenbergs' immense generosity."

Mr Marcus Wallenberg, vice chairman of the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation, said, "The Wallenberg-NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowships will provide valuable opportunities for early-career researchers to develop their specialised expertise and widen their global networks that will translate their ideas into real-world influence and impact in Singapore, Sweden and beyond."
The NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship

The new fellowship forms part of the prestigious NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship (PPF) announced by Professor Subra Suresh during his inauguration as NTU President in February this year.

Since its announcement, the PPF has attracted almost 540 applications from around the world competing for only 12 fellowship places at NTU.

Designed to attract top early-career researchers to NTU, the NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship will equip outstanding PhD graduates with the resources they need to transform their research into potentially life-changing discoveries and inventions that will shape the world’s future.

Awarded competitively each year, each PPF Fellow will receive an annual salary of S$80,000 over a two-year tenure, including up to S$100,000 in research funding a year.

The Fellows will also deepen their expertise in a specialised research field under the mentorship of NTU faculty and through the University’s partnerships with industry leaders during their tenure here.

Fellows to work in emerging fields, from UAVs and new-age materials to healthcare

For the Wallenberg-NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship, early career scientists, engineers and scholars from Singapore and around the world will focus on independent investigations in the emerging areas of AI, Autonomous Systems, and/or Software. The awardees will be involved in undergraduate teaching at NTU during the course of their appointment, and will carry the title of Wallenberg-NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow in AI, Autonomous Systems, or Software, depending on their specialisation. Up to five new Wallenberg-NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship awards will be made each year over five years.

Hosted by the Wallenberg Artificial Intelligence (AI), Autonomous Systems and Software Programme, the Wallenberg-NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellows will receive additional support worth S$200,000 each to pursue their research at Swedish universities or industry partners in their second year. This financial support over five years amounts to S$5 million and is in addition to the Wallenberg Foundation's S$7.6 million endowed gift to NTU.

The Wallenberg gift comes just one month after the S$2 million gift from Mr Kris Gopalakrishnan, chairman of Axilor Ventures and co-founder of Indian IT giant Infosys, to set up the Gopalakrishnan-NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship, which was unveiled during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s inaugural visit to the university.

"We are very impressed by the quality of applicants from Singapore and around the world competing for the NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowships. The successful candidates will pursue cutting-edge research and the solutions they develop will be tested on the NTU Smart Campus, in collaboration with our industry partners in Singapore and overseas. They will help shape and improve our lives and society," added Prof Suresh.

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