NTU fellowship gets boost from Swedish foundation

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The Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation, the largest private financier of research in Sweden, is donating $7.6 million to Nanyang Technological University (NTU) for a postdoctoral fellowship that focuses on artificial intelligence (AI) and autonomous systems.

With matching by the Singapore Government, the total endowment raised for the programme is $11.4 million, making it the largest endowment gift from a foreign entity to NTU. It will enable promising postdoctoral candidates to do research at the university under the Wallenberg-NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship, NTU said.

An additional $5 million has been set aside by the Wallenberg Foundation in support of the postdoctoral fellows. This means NTU will receive $16.4 million in total for the fellowship.

NTU president Subra Suresh said yesterday: “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.”

Up to five Wallenberg-NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship awards will be given each year over five years.

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 new fellowship is part of the NTU Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship (PPF) announced by Professor Suresh during his inauguration as NTU president in February. The PPF has received about 540 applications from around the world for the 12 fellowship places at NTU.

The Wallenberg gift comes a month after the $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.

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