Wallenberg foundation donates big for NTU Singapore fellowship

by Joakim Persson, Managing Editor ScandAsia • July 3, 2018 •

The Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation (KAW) and Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) have just announced a big donation of 50 million Swedish krona (S$7.6 million) as endowed gift to establish a prestigious postdoctoral fellowship. The donation is the largest single gift in perpetuity by a foreign entity to NTU Singapore.

The Wallenberg-NTU Fellowship that will nurture early-career scientists is matched by the Singapore government, with the total endowment raised for the programme at 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 Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation is the largest private financier of research in Sweden.

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.
This is Sweden’s largest-ever individual research programme, a major national initiative for strategically motivated basic research, education and faculty recruitment. The programme addresses research on artificial intelligence and autonomous systems acting in collaboration with humans, adapting to their environment through sensors, information and knowledge, and forming intelligent systems-of-systems. Software is the main enabler in these systems, and is an integrated research theme of the 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."

"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," said Mr **Marcus Wallenberg**, vice chairman of the Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation.

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. 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.

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.

“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.

 Ranked 12th in the world, NTU has been placed the world’s top young university for the past five years. The University’s main campus is frequently listed among the Top 15 most beautiful university campuses in the world and it has 57 Green Mark-certified (equivalent to LEED-certified) building projects comprising more than 230 buildings, of which 95% are certified Green Mark Platinum. Apart from its main campus, NTU also has a campus in Singapore’s healthcare district.

The Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation was established in 1917. The Foundation’s aim is to benefit Sweden by supporting Swedish basic research and education, mainly in medicine, technology and the natural sciences. The Foundation achieves this by awarding grants to excellent researchers and for projects.

Since 1917, the Foundation has awarded SEK 25 billion in grants for research and education, of which SEK 1.8 billion has been awarded annually in recent years, making the Foundation the largest private funder of scientific research in Sweden and one of the largest in Europe.

Source: https://scandasia.com/wallenberg-foundation-donates-big-for-ntu-singapore-fellowship/