

# New NTU institute to study technology's impact on human society

The institute will focus on ethical implications of innovations, the governance of technology use and how technology is transforming the urban landscape in Asia.

by Mohit Sagar — 13 March, 2019 in Education, News, Singapore



Photo Credit: NTU

NTU has established the NTU Institute of Science and Technology for Humanity (NISTH) to study the impact of technology on human society as well as to bring industry, government and academics together to find opportunities to enhance the use of technology for the betterment of humanity on 11 March 2019.

While launching the NISTH, Tharman Shanmugaratnam Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore, said, “While the benefits of technological innovation have been tremendous, more thoughts must be put into potential downsides. We have to think about the ethical implications of innovations in science and technology upfront, and build it into the design of our solutions,” he added.

The institute will begin by focussing on three areas: ethical implications of innovations; the governance of technology use and issues around leadership; and how technology is transforming the urban landscape in Asia.

### **Responsible Innovation**

This theme will seek to address ethical implications of innovations – such as nanotechnology, personalised medicine, unmanned ground and aerial vehicles, and bioengineering – that will have a wide impact on society.

### **Governance and Leadership in the Era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution**

This theme will look at issues of governance of technology use, the kind of leadership that is required to steer the world safely through this period of transformative change, and how new technologies, such as big data, impact leadership and policy decisions. The speed and influence of technological change have a significant impact on society, and there is a critical need to examine how they can be properly managed and regulated in the interest of human well-being.

### **New Urban Asia**

This theme looks at the impact of technology and how it is transforming the urban landscape in Asia, and how it is affecting the lives of people in the world’s most populous continent.

NTU president Subra Suresh said in his speech that the accelerating pace of technological progress will continue to propel rapid societal change in the coming

decades. While many of the changes will have positive outcomes,

Professor Suresh said “There are also potential concerns, challenges and questions on ethical dilemmas, regulations and work force disruption, for example. A human-centric and ethical approach to science and technology is therefore necessary.”

The new institute will be headed by Professor Vanessa Evers, she is a professor of computer science at the University of Twente’s Human Media Interaction group in The Netherlands, and will join NTU on Aug 1 (2019). She is renowned for her work in the field of socially intelligent computing and human-computer interaction.