

Coronavirus: NTU, NUS, SMU to run virtual open houses, career fairs



A first-ever virtual NTU open house will be held on Feb 29, 2020, where real-life campus tours will be replaced by virtual tours. PHOTO: ST FILE

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SINGAPORE – The National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and the Singapore Management University (SMU) said on Friday (Feb 14) that two of their biggest annual events - their open houses and career fairs - will be going digital.

This comes even as the three universities have moved many classes online in response to the evolving coronavirus situation.

NTU's first-ever virtual open house will be held on Feb 29, where real-life campus tours will be replaced by virtual tours. The annual event typically attracts about 20,000 visitors.

Prospective students will be able to "visit" buildings around campus through a 360-degree video that "allows them to explore the inside of the iconic building as if they were physically there", said the university.

Various immersive videos of the rooms at the halls of residence as well as for campus facilities will also be uploaded on the virtual open house microsite.

Students can also attend online talks and presentations in virtual classrooms to find out more about NTU's application and selection processes, the range of degree programmes offered, and the internship and overseas opportunities available.

A live chat feature addresses specific queries, and a hotline will be set up for those who prefer to chat over the phone. Some schools are also planning to have virtual presentations.

Meanwhile, SMU's director of admissions strategy and outreach Linette Lim told The Straits Times on Friday that there will be a two-day virtual SMU open house from Feb 29 to March 1. It will be hosted on an SMU microsite (<https://admissions.smu.edu.sg/openhouse>).

"Students will get 24/7 access to our school's community and culture," she said.

SMU's annual open house typically sees about 13,000 visitors.

A schedule of live information sessions - generally from 10am to 6pm each day - will be released leading up to the virtual open house.

Students can watch those sessions to find out more about the SMU's degree programmes, and staff and students will be on hand to answer questions.

Like NTU, SMU's virtual open house will also feature virtual tours of the campus.

Said Ms Lim: "We want them to have the same physical open house experience. We might keep the site running for a few days after so students can continue to get information."

NTU deputy president and provost Ling San said: "While we are vigilant in protecting the health and well-being of our university community and our guests, we must also continue to provide prospective students with guidance and advice as they make choices for their university studies, and attract future students and assist the next generation of graduates find employment opportunities."

The university's annual career fair draws about 15,000 NTU students each year who are looking to meet prospective employers and land their first job after graduation.

It was originally planned for Feb 7, 11 and 14 this year.

It is being replaced with iFair, a fully interactive virtual career fair hosted on another NTU microsite, which will run from March 2 to 8 and allows students to visit virtual “booths” set up by participating employers, said NTU.

Virtual career fairs have previously run as a complement to physical career fairs.

At iFair, students will be able to interact with recruiters through video and audio calls, or text, at a virtual “networking lounge”.

They will also be able to view the companies’ profiles and videos, download brochures, review job opportunities, drop off their resumes, and receive interview requests from companies remotely.

Final-year communications student Seow Yun Rong said: “I have been looking forward to NTU’s career fair for a while, and have been worried about it being postponed due to the coronavirus situation... It is definitely an interesting alternative to be able to meet new employers while avoiding huge crowds.”

NUS will announce more details soon.