

## **NTU Singapore and Education Services Union commit \$500,000 to boost employees' digital skills**

New Company Training Committee will oversee training programmes to digitalise and future-proof NTU's workforce

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) and the Education Services Union (ESU) are jointly investing \$500,000 in a new training fund to upskill and equip the university's employees with digital skills and competencies to meet the demands of Industry 4.0.

NTU is contributing 90 per cent of the new fund, while ESU provides the remaining 10 per cent through the National Trades Union Congress' NTUC-Education and Training Fund.

NTUC Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) Dr Koh Poh Koon and Ms Tan Aik Na, NTU's Senior Vice President (Administration) witnessed the signing of the new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between ESU and NTU today, signed by ESU General Secretary Arshad Ismail and NTU Chief Human Resources Officer Esther Quek.

### Curated training for employees

Some 2,000 of NTU's union-member employees are expected to benefit from the new fund. These employees can look forward to 17 curated courses co-developed by the university, union and training partners such as NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute).

The courses aim to deepen the employees' competencies and ensure that they can embrace change, leverage new technology and adapt to new job roles as the education sector transforms in a post-COVID-19 world.

These courses will be rolled out progressively from this month, and will cover six key aspects: Digital Awareness, Critical Thinking, Effective Communication, Data Management, Project Management and Process Improvement.

Mr Lee Hon Wai, 49, who works as a Higher ICT Support Engineer at the National Institute of Education (NIE), NTU, has taken the opportunity to sign up for a data analytics course under the new training fund, in order to prepare himself for the future of work. As a union leader in ESU, he also hopes to lead by example and encourage fellow employees to upgrade themselves so that they can seize new opportunities.

He said, "The course will be very useful as it will help me better manage data and more importantly, make meaningful analysis out of the data and apply it in my projects. This will allow me to take on higher value job roles in the future. In view of the growing need to digitalise and automate our work processes, it is vital that we keep ourselves abreast of the industry trends and changes. I look forward to taking part in more courses as they are being rolled out. I will also encourage my fellow workers to learn new skillsets so that they can embrace change and remain relevant."

First Company Training Committee to enhance employees' capabilities

As part of the MOU, NTU and ESU will also establish a new Company Training Committee (CTC) that will enable the university and union to jointly identify new growth areas and map out new skills and competencies through targeted training programmes.

ESU General Secretary Arshad Ismail said, “We are happy to collaborate with NTU and support the university’s efforts in upskilling its employees to meet future challenges as the university and the education sector change with technology. Through this training initiative, employees will be able to take ownership of their learning and receive customised training tailored for their specific skills development needs.

“It complements NTUC’s CTC’s objective to enhance skillsets, capabilities and productivity of our workers, so that there is value-add to both our workers and companies. This is the first CTC that the ESU has with a university. Going forward, the union will continue to work closely with the management to help employees remain relevant through training. Along this vein, we will also embark on engaging other IHLs to set up more CTCs.”

NTU Senior Vice President for Administration Ms Tan Aik Na said, “This new agreement and the formation of a new Company Training Committee reaffirm NTU and ESU’s shared commitment to promote lifelong learning and develop a future-ready workforce. As digital technologies continue to disrupt and transform the global economy, upskilling has become a necessity. For NTU, deepening our employees’ digital capabilities is essential as the university accelerates its own digital transformation efforts to better support the entire student life cycle, from matriculation to graduation, and continuing education.”

NTUC Deputy Secretary-General Koh Poh Koon said, “There is an increasing need for digitalisation due to the disruptions brought on by COVID-19, and the education sector is no exception. Whilst this poses challenges, it also offers opportunities for the institutions and workers to transform themselves. With the CTC as an enabler, our union and management can work closely to assess skill gaps, identify training needs and carry out job redesign for our workers.

“On NTUC’s end, we have the Training and Transformation (T&T) department to further support the work of our CTCs and drive workers’ training in tandem with companies’ transformation. Through our T&T, we hope to tap on existing labour-management relations between unions and unionised companies and help the companies adopt our Operation & Technology Roadmap tool to enhance their business strategies and workforce development.”

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