L'Oréal Singapore and NTU Singapore set up joint lab hosted by SCELSE for deeper exploration of skin and scalp microbiomes

28 September 2021

Launching this joint lab between L'Oréal and SCELSE are (seated L-R): Staffan KJELLEBERG, SCELSE Centre Dir & Research Dir (Biofilm Biology); Mark PHONG, L'Oréal Asia Dir of Advanced Research Labs & Open Innovation; and (standing L-R): Scott RICE, SCELSE dy research dir (Biofilm Biology); Prof Tim WHITE, NTU President's Chair in Materials Science & Engineering & Associate Vice President (Infrastructure & Programmes); Tarun CHOPRA, L'Oréal Dir Advanced Research Singapore & Head of Asia Microbiome Centre of Excellence

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) and **L'Oréal Singapore** today launched a new joint laboratory hosted by the **Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering (SCELSE)**, to conduct research on the community of bacteria, fungi, and viruses (also called the microbiome) that live on our skin and scalp.

SCELSE, a leading biofilm and microbiome Research Centre of Excellence, will spearhead this collaboration with L'Oréal to understand the role of microbes for skin health. The researchers will also look into possible applications of microbes for cosmetics and dermatology.

Located on the NTU Smart Campus, the joint lab is the culmination of the long-standing collaboration between SCELSE and L'Oréal Singapore. The partners have already jointly patented new technologies and this initiative will further strengthen their collaboration in the future.

The tie-up between NTU and L'Oréal exemplifies the University's research efforts as part of its **2025 strategic plan** to translate knowledge into enterprise that benefits industry and society through partnerships.

NTU Senior Vice President (Research) Professor Lam Khin Yong said: "This partnership taps on the technological and intellectual capabilities of SCELSE as a leading biofilm and microbiome research centre at NTU, including its next generation sequencing technologies and expertise in mixed species biofilm models. Our collaboration with L'Oréal will help to translate this scientific knowledge and expertise into solutions that will meet specific industry needs, such as in the area of skin and scalp health."

Dr. Luc Aguilar, Global Head of Microbiome Discovery Domain for L'Oréal, said: "This extended partnership is a recognition of SCELSE's scientific excellence in microbiology to further build L'Oréal microbiome expertise and accelerate discoveries applied to skin and scalp."

Dr. Mark Phong, **Asia Director for L'Oréal's Advanced Research Labs**, added: "We are looking forward to working with SCELSE to further explore the area of skin and scalp microbiomes, to fuel future innovations for our consumers."

SCELSE Director and **NTU Distinguished University Professor Staffan Kjelleberg** said: "SCELSE and L'Oréal have enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship, with many exciting discoveries. This latest move to set up a joint lab takes our partnership to a new level and consolidates our combined strengths and expertise to propel both SCELSE and L'Oréal forward in a more impactful way, translating discoveries into beneficial outcomes for society."

The joint laboratory will be headed by **NTU Associate Professor Scott Rice**, Deputy Director of the Biofilm Biology cluster at SCELSE, and **Dr. Tarun Chopra**, Director, Advanced Research, L'Oréal Singapore.

About 20 researchers from SCELSE and L'Oréal are expected to work together in this joint laboratory.