

Tuesday, October 12, 2021

# NTU unveils 15-year sustainability plan supported by \$1b bond facility

Yeo Shu Hui

Nanyang Technological University (NTU) will launch a \$1 billion multi-currency bond facility to support its aim of achieving carbon neutrality by 2035.

A 50 per cent decarbonisation target by the same year, and a slew of research and educational pathways in sustainability are part of the 15-year plan in the university's first-ever sustainability manifesto announced yesterday.

NTU also aims to reduce net energy utilisation, water usage and waste generation by 50 per cent by March 2026, from 2011 baseline levels.

A new NTU Sustainability Office will be established next month to coordinate and drive its sustainability efforts in an all-of-campus approach.

The office will be headed by Professor Madhavi Srinivasan of the School of Materials Science and Engineering.

Sustainability was included in NTU's common interdisciplinary core curriculum for undergraduates in August, offering 200 electives and a new interdisciplinary minor in topics such as environmental history and environmental sustainability.

A new interdisciplinary doctorate programme in artificial intelligence and sustainability has also been launched to nurture a new generation of tech-savvy scientists to address critical environmental challenges.

NTU president Subra Suresh said: "We will encourage and motivate current and future generations of students and staff to participate in our journey to address some of the most pressing global challenges.

"Our research, innovations and discoveries through interdisciplinary collaborations with industry



Nanyang Technological University will set up a new NTU Sustainability Office to coordinate and drive its sustainability efforts, as it aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2035. PHOTO: NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

and government will provide opportunities and solutions to tackle these challenges at scale."

Professor Suresh said that seven multinational organisations, including HP and Hyundai, have committed to become key partners of NTU's sustainability journey.

The university also plans to address food waste. It has ongoing research and development in food waste management, food safety and food tech.

It will also install food waste digesters in campus canteens to compost food waste to produce fertilisers.

To support its green goals, NTU will issue sustainability-linked bonds from time to time under a \$1

billion medium-term note programme arranged by OCBC Bank.

Other autonomous universities in Singapore are also doing their part for sustainability.

The National University of Singapore, which aims to be carbon neutral by 2030, picked up the top award at the Building and Construction Authority's annual Green Mark Awards last month.

It was named the Green Mark Platinum Champion after clinching 50 Green Mark certifications for buildings across its campuses this year.

The university has adopted various strategies such as motion sensor LED lighting and solar panels to reduce energy use by more than 50 per cent.

The Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) has implemented various initiatives, including the use of energy-efficient LED lighting.

Its SIT@Poly Buildings achieved their Green Mark Platinum recertification last year, a spokesman said.

He added that SIT's future campus in Punggol will have the first multi-energy micro-grid in Southeast Asia and a district cooling system for efficient, centralised cooling of multiple buildings.

"Such sustainable systems will support the university's facilities such as classrooms, laboratories and common areas while reducing their carbon footprint."

yshuhui@sph.com.sg