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NTU president Subra Suresh to step down in December



Professor Subra Suresh is the fourth president of NTU since its founding in 1991. ST PHOTO: FELINE LIM



Amelia Teng
Education Correspondent

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SINGAPORE - Professor Subra Suresh, 66, will be stepping down as president of Nanyang Technological University (NTU) at the end of December, after five years at the helm of the institution.

In a statement on Monday (June 6), NTU said that a search committee will be set up to identify his successor.

In an e-mail message to students and staff on the same day, Professor Suresh said: "The lingering effects of a global pandemic have precluded my immediate and close-knit family, like so many others separated across continents, from coming together over a protracted time, even for significant family life events."

"The much-anticipated recent news of the arrival of our first grandchild later this year and a strong desire to be in closer geographical proximity as a family have convinced my wife Mary and me to return to the United States sooner than we had originally envisioned."

Prof Suresh is the fourth president of NTU since its founding in 1991 and the inaugural holder of the Distinguished University Professorship, the highest faculty rank at the university.

He was previously president of Carnegie Mellon University in the US from 2013 to 2017. Prior to that, the leading American scientist served as director of the National Science Foundation, a role to which he was nominated by former US president Barack Obama, and as dean of the School of Engineering at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

In his message to the NTU community, Prof Suresh said: "At this time of reflection, there have been so many accomplishments by all of you, our faculty, staff, students, and our leadership team, during the past few years in which I take great pride.



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"I will leave knowing that NTU is a world leader taking its rightful place among the top universities of the world. Together, we have strengthened NTU's foundation which my successor will be able to build on."

Thanking Prof Suresh for his contributions, Ms Goh Swee Chen, chair of NTU board of trustees, said: "During Subra's tenure, he further established NTU as a top global university, broadening affiliations and expanding collaborations with major academic institutions and industry players internationally.

"Under his leadership, Subra and his team introduced curriculum innovations and digital technologies, offering a top quality education to our students. NTU has made progress over the last three decades and Subra's vision for higher learning will continue this momentum."

During the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, Prof Suresh and his wife made a personal gift of \$100,000 to seed the NTU Priorities Fund, which has now grown to \$8.9 million, in support of students with urgent financial needs.

Since January 2018, Prof Suresh oversaw a number of key initiatives, from a university-wide consultation and development of the NTU 2025 Strategic Plan to chart the next phase of growth to establishing the NTU Sustainability Manifesto - its commitment to sustainability efforts - and a sustainability-linked bond which has raised \$650 million.

Besides raising NTU's academic profile internationally, Prof Suresh has also remained active in research, publishing several papers with NTU researchers and local and global collaborators in top international journals.

His work has also led to a number of NTU patent applications and an NTU-affiliated technology start-up. He has been awarded 19 honorary doctorates, seven of which were conferred on him during his tenure as NTU president.

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