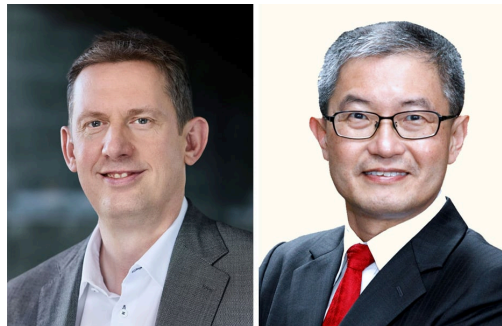


Top Biomedical Scientist Joins NTU as Deputy President

Image: (left) Prof Christian Wolfrum will be appointed NTU's Deputy President and Provost-Designate from 2 Dec 2024. He succeeds Prof Ling San (right) who will step down from his role as Deputy President and Provost on 30 June 2025.

NTU today announced that Professor Christian Wolfrum, an eminent biomedical scientist, will be joining the University as the



next Deputy President and Provost.

He succeeds Professor Ling San, who will step down from his role as Deputy President and Provost on 30 June 2025. Prof Wolfrum will be appointed Deputy President and Provost-Designate from 2 December 2024 and will take office as NTU Deputy President and Provost on 1 July 2025.

Prof Wolfrum joins NTU from ETH Zurich, the best university in continental Europe, where he is currently Vice President of Research. He is also a member of ETH Zurich's Executive Board.

Announcing this new appointment, NTU President Prof Ho Teck Hua said: "We warmly welcome Prof Christian Wolfrum as our Deputy President and Provost-Designate. The global search began earlier this year and we had a number of top academics interested in joining NTU. This is a reflection of NTU's international standing amongst global universities.

"As a scientist, educator, and academic leader, Christian has a wealth of experience and achievements in enhancing the quality of learning, teaching, and scholarship. I look forward to working with him to chart NTU's next chapter of growth as a world-class institution," Prof Ho added.

As the next Deputy President and Provost, Prof Wolfrum will serve as NTU's chief academic officer, overseeing college deans and school chairs to advance educational and research excellence and ensure high-quality academic programmes. Committed to holistic talent development, he will strengthen NTU's human capital in its pursuit of distinction.

Prof Wolfrum said: "I have seen NTU make big waves on the global stage as an institution that is agile, dynamic, and known for its pursuit of excellence. I am very much looking forward to the new challenge. The future leadership role at NTU appeals to me because I really appreciate the culture and the highly dynamic environment of the university and the country.

"The role of the Provost involves responsibility for education as well as research, both of which are very important to me. I believe that research and education in a university are deeply intertwined, and am excited to help sustain an environment where discoveries in the lab inform classroom teaching, and where questions raised by students inspire new research."

Prof Ho thanked Prof Ling for his extensive contributions to NTU as Deputy President and Provost. As Provost, Prof Ling drove a number of strategic initiatives in education, including aptitude-based admissions and the Interdisciplinary Collaborative Core curriculum to cultivate employable, future-ready graduates, and the Fleximasters programme for adult learners.

He co-led the development of NTU's Data Science and AI programme which was ranked among the world's top AI and data science undergraduate courses by Forbes in 2021. He was also instrumental in establishing NTU's first inter-college school for chemistry, chemical engineering, and biotechnology.

Prof Ho said: "Prof Ling's leadership has been integral to the growth and continuing success of our academic endeavours. Besides talent attraction, his many other contributions include enhancing NTU's promotion, tenure, and emeritus faculty schemes, and driving the University's wellbeing initiatives and mentoring programmes."

A renowned scientist, educator, and academic leader

Prof Wolfrum's belief that research and education are deeply intertwined stems from his 17-year career at ETH Zurich, where he has worn many hats - as a scientist, educator, start-up founder, and academic leader.

Since 2007, he has been teaching and conducting research in the interdisciplinary field of biomedicine. His research focuses on the fundamentals of fat cell formation and its impact on how metabolic diseases such as obesity and Type 2 diabetes develop. A Professor of Translational Nutritional Research, he has authored more than 150 peer-reviewed publications and 38 book chapters and reviews.

His goal to translate his findings into real-world applications led him to co-found two start-ups such as ETH spin-off Glycemicon AG, a biotechnology firm focused on developing foods to manage prediabetes, diabetes, and obesity.

"I very much regret the departure of Christian Wolfrum. As Vice President of Research, he has initiated important things in his short time in the Executive Board. In particular, he has strengthened research relevant to medicine and expanded ETH Zurich's corresponding network. In the field of digitalisation, Christian Wolfrum has provided substantial impetus for trustworthy AI. We will miss his collegiality, passion and commitment to scientific excellence in Zurich. I wish him all the best and the greatest possible success in his new professional challenge in Singapore," says ETH President Joël Mesot.

Prof Wolfrum's Singapore connection

No stranger to Singapore, Prof Wolfrum is the Co-Chair of the Governing Board of the Singapore-ETH Centre, a research institute set up by ETH Zurich and Singapore's National Research Foundation in 2010. From 2019 to 2022, he was Parkway Pantai Professor of Healthy Ageing at the National University of Singapore.

Said Prof Wolfrum: "Working with colleagues in Singapore, I have seen firsthand the remarkable efficiency in Singapore's academic and research ecosystem, as well as the strong emphasis on research translation.

"In my new appointment, I look forward to deepening the culture of interdisciplinary research and education at NTU, so that we can keep expanding the boundaries of knowledge and empower our students to tackle the complex challenges of tomorrow."

Prof Wolfrum, a German citizen, studied undergraduate chemistry at the University of Münster and obtained his PhD in Biochemistry there. Prior to joining ETH Zurich in 2007, he spent six years at the Rockefeller University in New York as a postdoctoral fellow.

Throughout his career, Prof Wolfrum has received accolades including the Max Rösler Award, the Young Investigators Award of the European Federation for the Science and Technology of Lipids, and the H.P. Kaufmann Award. He was elected a member of Germany's National Academy of Sciences, Leopoldina, in 2023.

Prof Ho said: "Prof Wolfrum's career has earned him respect and accolades as an outstanding scientist and leader with a deep understanding of the global tertiary education landscape. I am confident that he will continue to raise NTU's profile as a top institution known for academic excellence, and research and innovation impact."