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NTU TEAM AMONG TOP 10 IN INTERNATIONAL ‘NANO-PRENEURS’ COMPETITION

A team of researchers from NTU competed against more than 70 teams from 30 countries and emerged among the top 10 in the first ‘Nanochallenge – International Business Plan Competition’ held in Padua, Italy in November. The team, Nano Advanced Technology (NAT), was made up of post-graduate researchers from NTU’s School of Materials Science and Engineering.

NAT’s submitted entry was a plan to develop innovative manufacturing technologies to deliver quality ‘nanopowder’. Nanopowder can be used as surface coatings or as materials fillers which can improve product performance in products as varied as bullet-proof vests, surgical knives, airplane brakes and watches.

The unique competition seeks commercially viable business plans from around the world for innovative start-ups to produce and commercialise products and services in Nanotechnology. The top 10 teams are those deemed to have the most promising ideas by a panel of judges made up of industry professionals, scientists and entrepreneurs. The competition was organised by Veneto Nanotech and boasted a grand prize of €300,000 start-up capital and services in-kind. (Veneto Nanotech is a research & development cluster in Veneto, Italy created by the Italian Ministry of Education.)
Team leader Alfred Chia said: “This competition tested not just our technical innovativeness but put to test our business strategies as well. Though it would have been nice to have won the grand prize, we feel that the greater significance of this competition was the opportunity to present our ideas in front of an eminent panel of industrial and commercial professionals and getting their feedback. It was an excellent networking opportunity as well, and the acquaintances we’ve made will surely come in handy in future.”

He continued: “Being in the top 10 in this competition has further bolstered our confidence that we do have a viable product and a sound plan. We will now further refine our marketing strategies based on the feedback from the judges and seek investments to bring our product to commercial fruition.”

The team’s advisor, Associate Professor Ma Jan from NTU’s School of Materials Science and Engineering, said: “We encourage our students and staff not just to come up with innovative solutions but to explore ways of bringing their ideas to market. Already, the School has incubated two start-ups and we hope to nurture many more.”

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About Nanyang Technological University

Nanyang Technological University (NTU) is an established tertiary institution.

Our university has a distinguished lineage with roots that go back to 1955. Today, we are a research-intensive university ranked among the top 50 universities in the world. We have a strong engineering college ranked among the best globally, a business school with one of the top 100 MBA programmes in the world, an internationally-acclaimed National Institute of Education, one of the best communication and information schools in Asia, and a biological sciences school at the forefront of Singapore’s life sciences initiative.

NTU has established three new schools – the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, School of Art, Design and Media, and School of Physical and Mathematical Sciences. With the comprehensive curriculum, vibrant campus life and international experience, the university is in the process of realising its New Undergraduate Experience initiative.

A traditional strength of the university is the high employment rate and high remuneration received by its graduates. Strong international relationships are also a hallmark of NTU. We have collaborations with more than 250 institutions worldwide, including MIT, Stanford University and Cornell University in the US, Peking University, Tsinghua University and Shanghai Jiaotong University in China, Waseda University in Japan and many others in Europe and Asia.

For more information, visit [www.ntu.edu.sg](http://www.ntu.edu.sg)
About Nanochallenge and Veneto Nanotech

Nanochallenge is an international business plan competition created in order to promote the creation of hi-tech start-ups and to individuate the greatest talents in the nanotechnology sector. It is the first nanotechnology competition of this type organised in Europe and it is open to teams coming from any part of the world.

The Grand Prize of €300,000 is one of the largest among all business plan competitions. The amount of money is intended to effectively cover the capital requirements for a new start-up. In addition to that, in-kind services are tailored to provide valuable support for all the organisational needs a business and its founders have to face. The winner of Nanochallenge is expected to translate his business idea in a new, hi-tech, innovative and successful nanotech start-up.

71 Teams entered Nanochallenge 2005, coming from Australia, Belarus, Canada, Chile, China, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, New Zealand, Portugal Russia, Spain, Sri Lanka, USA, Sweden and Switzerland.

Veneto Nanotech is the corporation joined by the Universities of Padua, Venice and Verona, the Region of Veneto, the Minister of Education, University and Research, and various public institutions and private companies, in order to coordinate the initiatives and to unify the strategic vision of the Italian nanotechnology cluster

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