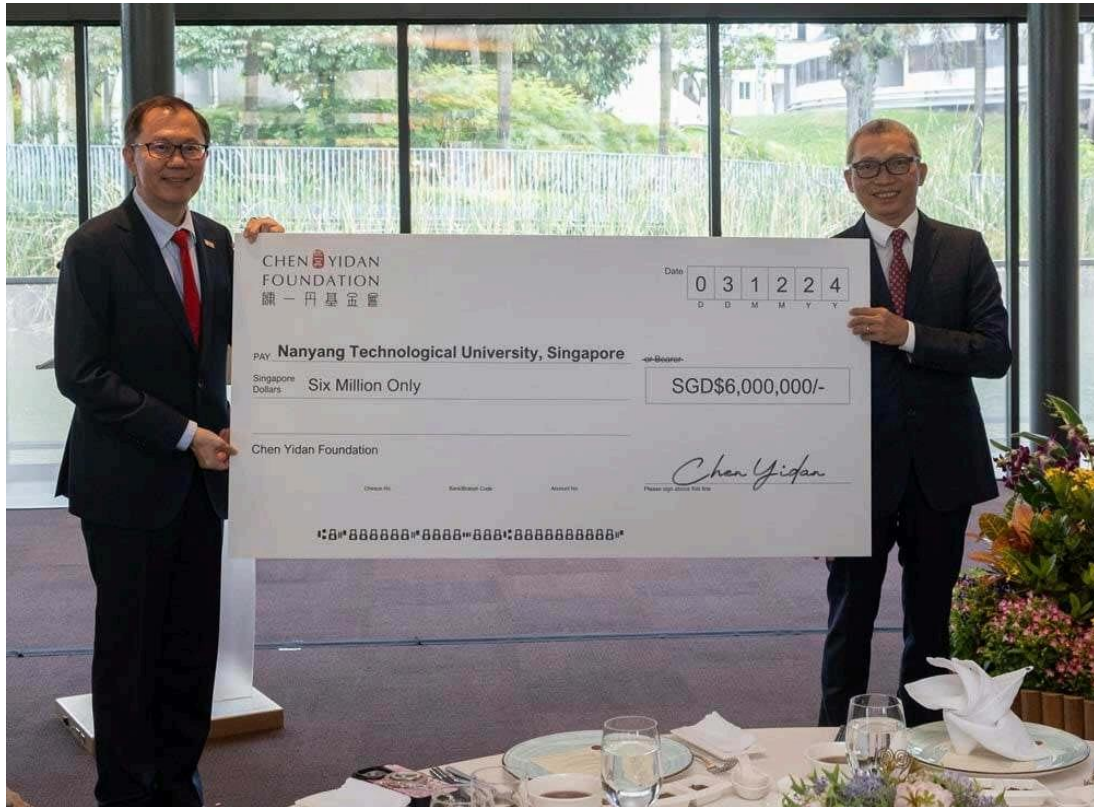# New Professorship in AI established with S$6 million gift from Chen Yidan Foundation

By **Angela Chau**   -   05/12/2024

Image: (left) Professor Ho Teck Hua, NTU President and Dr Charles Chen Yidan, Founder and Director, Chen Yidan Foundation at the cheque presentation at NTU.

The **Chen Yidan Foundation**, started by Dr Charles Chen Yidan, a Core Founder of Tencent, one of Asia's largest internet companies, has pledged a gift of S$6 million to **Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore).**

The gift aims to attract the world's top talents in AI to NTU to push the boundaries of AI education and research, and drive thought leadership in AI.

NTU will set up the **Yidan Professorship in AI** to launch an endowed Professorship to help shape and drive the University's academic and research programmes within the fields of AI and AI in education.

The Chen Yidan Foundation is a philanthropic organisation dedicated to advancing education development, research, and innovation worldwide. Dr Chen also established the Yidan Prize, one of the world's largest education prizes that recognises changemakers who inspire progress in education.

Beyond the Professorship, the gift also supports the advancement of research and education through curriculum development, research grants for NTU faculty to pursue AI-focused projects, and global collaborative initiatives.

It will also be used to set up a global education forum which brings together thought leaders across the world to share insights on cutting-edge research findings.

The gift was formalised today in a cheque presentation ceremony held on the NTU campus. Following the ceremony, Dr Chen Yidan participated in a fireside chat which discussed AI's

unrelenting impact on education, moderated by Professor Luke Ong, NTU Vice President (AI & Digital Economy) and Dean of CCDS.

NTU President Professor Ho Teck Hua said: "NTU deeply appreciates the gift from the Chen Yidan Foundation to establish the Professorship in AI. It will help to attract top talent to pioneer groundbreaking research and educational models in the rapidly evolving field of AI. The gift exemplifies the Foundation's steadfast commitment to create a better world through education. This commitment aligns with NTU's mission to nurture future-ready graduates and be a leader in the AI revolution. Together, we aim to shape the future of AI and its applications in education."

Dr Charles Chen Yidan said: "Chen Yidan Foundation is committed to fostering a diversified education ecosystem through interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, cross-regional, and cross-group collaboration. Looking ahead, we believe that AI will play a transformative role in shaping the future of learning. NTU has always been at the forefront of multidisciplinary innovation, and its open attitude toward AI education, research, and innovative applications has facilitated this collaboration. We hope that this partnership will lead to breakthroughs and effectively advance educational research and cooperation between Singapore and China, particularly with the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area."

Advancing research in AI and education

The **Yidan Professorship in AI,** administered by NTU's College of Computing and Data Science (CCDS), will bolster NTU's ability to attract internationally recognised AI academics to drive transformative innovations in this rapidly evolving field.

The Professorship will drive groundbreaking advancements in AI research and education and bring together top talents from around the world to collaborate on solutions that benefit Singapore and the global community.

Professor Luke Ong, NTU Vice President (AI & Digital Economy) and Dean of CCDS, said: "AI is one of NTU's top priorities, as the technology promises to reshape the world to come. The Yidan Professorship in AI strengthens NTU's leadership in the field, enabling us to attract top talent and advance education and multidisciplinary research at the forefront of AI innovation."

The gift drives cross-border efforts to advance education development and research, particularly fostering collaborations within Asia.

In addition to promoting curriculum development and research collaborations between universities, it will provide research grants for projects focused on AI in education. For example, the gift will fund opportunities for students from NTU, Shenzhen and other parts of China to undertake exchanges, internships and joint research programmes.

Additionally, NTU will organise the NTU Global Forum in Education, to be held in China starting in 2027.

The two-day conference, expected to be held every 18 months, will convene world-class researchers and thought leaders to share innovative and groundbreaking research insights at the intersection of AI and education.