

# Top Energy Storage Scientist Joins NTU as VP for Industry

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Mirage News

Image: Renowned energy storage scientist Professor Shirley Meng (left) succeeds Professor Lam Khin Yong (right) as NTU's next Vice President (Industry).

Renowned energy storage scientist Professor Shirley Meng will join NTU Singapore as its next Vice President (Industry)

She will also be appointed Distinguished University Professor, the highest faculty rank at NTU Singapore bestowed on faculty members with extraordinary scholarly achievements that span different disciplines.

As Vice President (Industry), Professor Meng will lead the University's efforts to forge partnerships with leading global companies and institutions, and to establish joint research institutes worldwide, enhancing NTU's global standing.

An NTU alumna, Professor Meng traces her path in materials science and engineering to her undergraduate years at the University, where an early experiment with a superconducting oxide - and the magnetic levitation it produced - set the course for her career.

NTU President Professor Ho Teck Hua said: "It is wonderful to welcome Shirley back to NTU, where her journey in science began. Energy storage is one of the defining technological challenges of our time, and she is one of the world's foremost authorities on it.

"Her ability to bridge cutting-edge research with industry application makes her the ideal person to lead our industry engagement efforts. She brings the vision and experience we need as NTU deepens its engagement with global industry partners and advances its NTU2030 ambitions. I look forward to what she will build at NTU."

Professor Meng formally begins her tenure at NTU on 1 July 2026. She succeeds Professor Lam Khin Yong, who will step down in May after decades of service to the University.

On why she decided to join NTU, Professor Meng said: "NTU gave me my first degree in science and engineering, nurtured my passion and love for science, and set me up for a lifelong journey as a thought leader. I am honored to be entrusted with this leadership position and inspired to be part of the leadership team to bring the University to new heights.

"I hope to strengthen the vibrant community at the University and build new bridges to our global partners. Together, we will continue to champion fundamental sciences for real-world impact, to push the frontiers of technologies to shape a better future, and drive interdisciplinary collaborations to give our students the best learning experiences."

A leader in next-generation battery science

Professor Meng is currently the Liew Family Professor in Molecular Engineering at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Molecular Engineering (UChicago PME). She leads the Energy Technologies Initiative, anchored at UChicago PME, which serves as a core part of the Institute for Climate and Sustainable Growth (ICSG).

Professor Meng will maintain a partial appointment at UChicago PME for a transitional period and continue to be involved in the University's Energy Transition Network, a programme established by her to safely, quickly, and cost-effectively transition the globe from fossil fuels through a collaborative approach.

Before joining UChicago in 2021, Professor Meng held faculty positions at the University of California, San Diego (UC San Diego), and the University of Florida. She remains an adjunct professor at UC San Diego, a role she has held since 2021.

Professor Meng is known for pioneering an integrated approach that combines first-principles modeling with advanced experimental techniques such as cryo-electron microscopy and operando spectroscopy methods, enabling breakthroughs in battery performance, safety, and sustainability.

Her research has advanced energy storage solutions critical to the global transition to clean energy and has been widely cited and translated into patents. In 2024, her research group, the Laboratory for Energy Storage and Conversion, reported the world's first anode-free sodium solid-state battery, bringing affordable, fast-charging, high-capacity batteries for electric vehicles and grid storage closer to reality.

Her lab work with students has also spun out battery start-ups, including South 8 Technologies, which was spun out of UC San Diego and commercialises liquefied gas electrolytes (LiGas). This technology allows lithium-ion batteries to operate in extreme temperatures, ranging from  $-60^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $+60^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Professor Meng serves as a scientific advisor to the company. She also co-founded UNIGRID, a US-based sodium battery company, and ExPost Technology, a US-based battery recycling and upcycling company.

She has served as the founding director of the Energy Storage Research Alliance (ESRA), a US Department of Energy-funded innovation hub advancing next-generation battery technologies, during her tenure as the chief scientist at Argonne National Laboratory (2022-2025).

Beyond her research, she contributes to national science boards and corporate councils in advisory roles, helping to shape energy research and guide the commercialisation of emerging battery technologies.

Professor Meng has received international honours for her contributions in science, including the Shep Wolsky Battery Innovation Award, the Faraday Medal from the Royal Society of Chemistry, the American Chemical Society Research Excellence in Electrochemistry, the Electrochemical Society Battery Division Research Award, and the US National Science Foundation CAREER Award.

She is an elected Fellow of the Electrochemical Society, the Materials Research Society, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

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